



**The politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria: People, culture and power in the  
Calabar Festival**

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**By**

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## Abstract

Cultural tourism has been the subject of numerous academic and policy engagements in the Global North for its broad social, economic, and political functions in cities (Richards, 2018; Du Cross & McKercher, 2020). In the Global South, similar trends are emerging with dynamic patterns of exchange and transformations, yet they have captured much less academic attention so far. This thesis attempts to address the gap by analysing a particular case study in Nigeria, the Calabar Festival. Specifically, the research aims to unravel the dynamic interactions between the state, tourists and local communities as they interact and challenge each other in producing and consuming the festival. Drawing on ethnographic and policy research of the Calabar Festival, I seek to create an enhanced understanding of how cultural tourism can be a force reshaping situated power dynamics by setting the contexts for new relational frameworks that influence the cultural processes of places. The research findings unravel a complex interplay of power relations among the various stakeholders across geographic spaces. The Calabar Festival is a highly politicised event that connects broader local and transnational social and economic development practices and cultural negotiations through tourism. This study offers two original contributions. First, taking Du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture as a theoretical starting point to understand cultural tourism processes, this thesis develops the neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework and thereby demonstrates how the state, tourists and locals mutually construct destinations' cultural offerings. Through interaction with each other and the event, these stakeholders are equipped with different power forms, to influence and contest cultural meanings on social and individual levels. Second, by advancing the notion of tourists as 'modern cultural curators,' this study highlights the spectrum of curation outside the traditionally restricted system of learnt practices, extending to one formed around more open and reciprocal exchanges. This thesis concludes that the interaction of stakeholders in the tourism circuit and their co-creation of cultural meanings appear to blur the boundaries of established forms of cultural agency, particularly as tourists are currently seen to perform as modern cultural curators. In doing so, the neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework provides a robust framework to understand current cultural conditions better.

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## **Dedication**

In loving memory of my late Dad, Mr Leonard Chidiebere Onyegbulewanneya Obijuru.

To God for his infinite goodness to me.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

Festivals have been understood to be cultural expressions of people living in particular places [...] premised on movement, interaction and the exchange of people, ideas and money, both as flows circulating within the festival landscape itself and between the festival site and elsewhere. Equally, the cultural meanings produced at the festival site have always displayed the influence of forces prevailing both locally and in other geographic spheres (Quinn, 2005a:235).

My curiosity about the Calabar Festival was piqued by a visit in December 2014 when I accompanied my sister on a seven-day tourist experience in the city of Calabar. As I sat by a stall observing the events of the cultural festival, I could see why it is popularly acknowledged as the hub of cultural expressions. Different cultures of the Cross-River State people and of the many Nigerian ethnic groups were represented in arts, performances, music, dance, costumes, and artefacts during the festival. It was also not difficult to observe how these local cultural elements were transformed into tourists' products and souvenirs; performances normally reserved for traditional festivals like the Ekpe masquerade were performed for touristic consumption and the landscape glittered with modern aesthetic decorations such as in lightings, gigantic deflatable balloons and colourful ribbons. My informal conversations with a range of participants suggested that there was a coordinated effort by government officials, tourism industries and some local communities to internationalise the festival while commodifying culture. One could describe this almost as a conscious tourism strategy to position an ancient city within the global tourism frame. It was evident that the cultural meanings produced at the festival demonstrated the dynamism of forces locally and across geographies. Thus, I wondered how the diverse stakeholders negotiate what is produced and consumed at the festival and the

different power dynamics at play. Since culture is a key instrument of place event production and consumption, I wondered how it is curated and who is involved in its curation. Inspired by these thoughts, this thesis examines the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria through a study of the Calabar Festival. Specifically, I analyse the dynamic interactions between the Cross River state government, tourists and locals as they interact and challenge each other in producing and consuming culture during the Calabar Festival.

This introductory chapter is divided into five sections that aim to introduce the reader to the context of my study. In the first section, I will begin by explaining the aims and objectives of this study, and state the research questions to foreground the study. The second section provides a background, focusing on how Africa's rich diversity of indigenous culture and heritages places the region in a prime position for the development of sustainable tourist-based economies. Yet, the dearth of academic engagements from the African (particularly Nigerian) perspective, the emerging contentions in the modern circuit of tourism interaction such as the role of various stakeholders in cultural curation and their inherent power dynamics, necessitates a study of the range of associated relationships, impetuses, and outcomes that inform the production and consumption of contemporary cultural tourism/festival beyond the dominant western frameworks. Following this, in the third section, I explain my theoretical approach to the study, discussing in particular that reconsidering politics from a cultural perspective will add more insights to understandings of power relations within a tourism circuit and enhance a reader's knowledge of how 'politics' is defined and applied throughout this thesis. In the fourth section I highlight my study contributions and in the fifth section, I will outline the thesis structure.

## **1.1 Research aims and questions**

This thesis analyses the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria, providing insights into how stakeholders negotiate power relations and culture. Specifically, it aims to analyse the dynamic interactions between the (Cross River state) government, tourists and local communities as they interact and challenge each other in the production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival. To achieve this aim, the following questions are set to guide the study:

- 1) What is the nature of the power relations between the (Cross River state) government, tourists and local communities in the production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival?**

This research examines the politics of cultural tourism drawing on the Calabar Festival. It is important that tourism research is not conceived as a collection of mere commercial activities, but a combination of what MacCannell (1992:1) referred to as ‘ideological framing of history, nature and tradition’ and as he elaborates ‘a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs’. As I will analyse in my empirical chapters, these framings involve varied stakeholders with different motivations. These stakeholders all tend to exert different forms of power at different capacities in the reshaping of culture, such that their interactions are often embedded with interminable negotiation and contestations. Thus, the politics of cultural tourism is a valuable space to study the multifaceted interactions and negotiations (Crouch, 1999) that occur within tourism process and practices. I will do this by analysing the production and consumption of culture and the inherent power relations within the Calabar Festival.

## **2)How do tourists perform as modern cultural curators within contemporary tourism circuits of interaction?**

This study develops a conceptual framework, namely ‘the neo circuit of cultural tourism’, to enhance understandings of empirically emerging issues in culture and tourism processes. I aim to add to discussions on these dynamics by extending Du Gay et al. (1997) circuit of culture theory, to show how cultural tourism works in modern societies. Through analyses of Du Gay et al.’ (1997) five relational model of cultural production and consumption the theme of cultural curation is generated in chapter two of this thesis. My empirical chapters will further demonstrate that analysing the intricate power relations performed by varied stakeholders in cultural curation situates tourists as modern cultural curators within the new circuit. As I will elaborate in the next section, if the goal of the curator is to create meaning and provide context for new art (O’Neill, 2016) and if the tourist is involved in knowledge sharing and the co-creation of situated cultural meanings where they influence the preservation and reproduction of specific cultural resources, then, cultural studies have to look beyond the curatorial discourse that is rooted in the museums, and investigate how modern cultural meanings are derived through exchanges, preserved and applied outside of the gallery. As (Tsaor, Yen, & Teng, 2018) observed, tourists are the main actors of cultural exchanges, thus, their influence on cultural development demand a more critical analysis. My goal is to critically evaluate the model’s applicability to the Calabar Festival setting.

## **3) What sociocultural changes are induced by tourism politics on the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture?**

This study assesses how the power relations between the three key stakeholders vis-à-vis the tourism encounter, influence the Calabar Festival and impact on the city’s social and cultural spheres. Mason (2003) observed that tourism contributes to various social and cultural changes

in host cultures and place events. Although several studies suggest that destinations value changes towards modernisation and competitive advantage (Oakes, 1993; (Markus & Cameron, 2001; Richards, 2006), cross-cultural exchanges can create contentious changes over time. Analysing the Calabar Festival will demonstrate how tourism dynamics induce particularly, changes in entrepreneurial dispositions, demonstration effects and the commodification of lived culture. More so, as various stakeholders, such as the state, private investors, tourists, and locals, compete to exert control, I question how precisely these interactions alter cultural meanings and events. The analyses will also illuminate some critical issues such as how tradition is currently being selected to be produced as a tourism product, what resistances form against certain aspects of change, and to what extent different actors can accept given levels of change. These analyses have so far been underdeveloped in studies of tourism politics in Africa, hence, the importance of this study. In this regard, my thesis will suggest policy recommendations aimed at sustaining cultural tourism in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. Having explained the research aim and questions, the following section will give background and justification of the study.

## **1.2 Researching cultural tourism in Africa and situating Festivals in Nigeria.**

Today, cultural tourism has become the subject of numerous academic and policy engagements as a significant and rapidly expanding market sector in Africa and many global regions. World travel and tourism council (WTTC, 2021) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2021), note that cultural tourism accounts for forty percent of world tourism revenue and forty percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in African countries, with high potential for inclusive growth and development. In Western countries, scholars (for example, Du Cros & McKercher, 2020; McKercher & Du Cros, 2003; Richards, 2013; Silberberg, 1995; Smith, M. K., 2015), have investigated the complex dimensions, practices and relationships involved in cultural tourism such as who cultural tourists are, what

they consume, how a tourist relate to the culture of the destination, what significance tourism and the tourists have for the locals and the destinations' culture and others. However, as Akama and Sterry (2000) observed, the phenomenon has remained empirically under-researched in Africa (excluding Akama & Sterry, 2000; Christie, Fernandes, Messerli, & Twining-Ward, 2013; Christie, Christie, Fernandes, Messerli, & Twining-Ward, 2014; Dieke, 2000; Moswete, Saarinen, & Monare, 2015; Moswete, Saarinen, & Manwa, 2016; Novelli, 2015; Saarinen, 2016; Salazar, 2012; Tomaselli, 2012); and Nigeria particularly (excluding for example, Ezenagu, 2020; Andrew-Essien, 2018; Endong, 2017; Esu and Arrey, 2009; Ezeuduji, 2013), especially from a qualitative perspective. More so, many of these existing literatures have explored the role and power of locals and state agencies in curating cultures offered for tourism activities, but are yet to empirically explore the role of tourists within the modern processes of cultural curation. This gap, and the inherent power dynamics among peoples in tourism development have necessitated this analysis from an African perspective.

Generally, African countries are endowed with a rich diversity of cultural resources that include numerous ethnic groups, traditions, archaeological sites, museums, art paintings and carvings, cuisine, and other heritage resources (Tomaselli 2012). Arguably, in many respects, these offer great potential for tourism and economic development in the continent. Novelli (2015) notes that for a long time, the continent has been plagued by rising political instability and economic challenges. However, faced with increased global competition and the need for social and economic development, many African countries are turning to cultural tourism for differentiating and renewing destinations' offering (Christie et al., 2013). Although the development of tourism varies among countries in the region (Dieke, 2000), in recent times, Manwa, Moswete and Saarinen (2016) observed that countries such as Kenya, Seychelles, South Africa, Egypt have recorded rising figures as tourist destinations. Across many other African countries, there is the proliferation of cultural events and arts festivals, cultural World

Heritage Sites are being developed as “key anchor projects” for tourism destinations (Rivett-Carnac, 2011: 6). Example of some of these include Great Zimbabwe in Zimbabwe, Kilwa Kiswani in Tanzania or South Africa’s Cradle of Humankind and Mapungubwe National Park.

Particularly in Nigeria, cultural tourism has drawn considerable attention in government policies. (Dantata, 2011) notes that the tourism development policy was first rolled out in 1990, but interest in organised tourism by the Nigeria’s government started way back in the 1960s with the Obasanjo’s regime in 1976 establishing the Nigeria Tourism Board (NTB) now Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) and giving it a ‘preferred sector’ status. Other regulatory policy frameworks included the Federal Ministry of Tourism and Culture, the Presidential Council on Tourism, the Federal Ministry of Tourism and its Departments and Agencies with same at the States’ level and Local Tourism Committees which falls in line with the provisions of the National Tourism Policy (NTP) of 2005, the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) of 1992. Also, these were strengthened by the drafting of the Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan (NTDMP) of 2006 through the support of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Master Plan provides strategic recommendations and action plans in all areas of tourism policy and practice, in which it prioritises the exploitation of cultural assets such as heritage sites, events and traditional festivals for cultural tourism development.

With regard to cultural festivals, they are deeply embedded in the social, political and cultural practices of the Nigerian people. As a multi-cultural country with over 500 ethnic nationalities, Andrew-Essien (2018), observed that Nigeria offers a huge diversity of cultural festivals, many of which started as community folk entertainment but overtime, developed into international tourism attractions. Some of the most prominent festivals include the national festival of arts, the new yam festivals of Eastern Nigeria, the Durbar and Argungu fishing festivals in Northern

Nigeria, Leboku and the Calabar Festivals in the South, Osun and Eyo festivals in the West, and others. However, two significant festivals in the development of organised cultural tourism in Nigeria were first, the national Festival for Arts and Culture (NAFEST) 1965, organised to foster peace between the fighting factions in the Nigerian-Biafran Civil war (Essien-Udom, 1971). Second was the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC 77). FESTAC 77 celebrated African cultural foundations to recapture the authenticity of the black cultural heritage (Apter, 2016) Simultaneously it also demonstrated contesting power relations and ideological fracas in the production of cultural festivals in Africa, where alliance of the Senegalese (Leopold Senghor) and Nigerian (Lt-General Olusegun Obasanjo) heads of state as co-patrons, later devolved into a competing Afrocentric identity politics against some regions (North Africans). While these discussions offer broader perspectives on stakeholders' interactions with culture and power relations in tourism development, empirical analyses of the interactions between the Cross River state government, tourists and locals during the Calabar Festival, provide an enhanced understanding of contemporary cultural tourism dynamics in Nigeria.

The Calabar Festival was founded by the Cross River State government in 2004 as a state government's initiative to revive local culture and enhance tourism as an income and leisure strategy (Eja & Otu, 2015) Recent academic and policy research acknowledge the Calabar Festival as 'the biggest and longest multi-dimensional, multi-faceted culture, tourism, leisure and entertainment event in West Africa' (CRSTB, 2018:14). The Calabar Festival provides an ideal case study for the analysis of the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria because, while it attracts millions of tourists globally, (for example, it attracted 2.8 million tourists in 2017), it also offers a space where stakeholders influence and challenge power in the arenas of production and consumption of culture and cultural resources for tourism (CRS Bureau of Statistics 2018), and highlights tensions around cultural conservation and tourism



development. These tensions reflect how external and internal forces influence and compel each other. On the one hand, there are those who engage in tourism development to earn income or to modernise their traditional offerings. On the other hand, there are those whose cultural tastes must be satisfied. Yet, there are others who want to protect local heritage from negative tourism influences. Combined in a particular setting, these dynamics raise important questions concerning the preservation of cultures offered for tourism and who can actually be identified in the domain of modern cultural curation.

Cultural tourism requires the preservation of a place's culture and heritage resources, and cultural curation is an important discourse in its context. (O'Neill, 2007) observed that, traditionally, the curatorial role involved the collection, archival and preservation of art works, organising activities including care of collections and the development of exhibitions, festivals and more. Today, Richards (Richards, 2020:9) states "the art of curation has become essential in the digital age", with tourists as content creators undeniably implicated in curating through digital and social media. Further, Good (2017:7) states, content creators act as trusted guides helping us to understand the world around us and ourselves: they are 'culturally... not just shortcuts to the "essence" of something, but they also shape and define the character, the perimeter of who we are, of what we are interested in, what we like, give value to and seek'. These arguments arguably, endow tourists with certain amount of power as cultural curators, but as chapter Two will show, this aspect of tourism politics is yet to be explored and the art of curation has often been situated on the culture industries at destinations or sometimes, locals. My thesis builds on these arguments to develop the conceptual framework of the neo circuit of cultural tourism model which provides the much-needed broader perspective on power relations by illuminating different levels of power at all stakeholders' levels in the production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival, incorporating the processes of cultural curation.

Furthermore, power conceptualisations in this thesis are influenced by Foucault's (1978) notion of power as a relationship rather than an entity. In line with such understanding, I discuss power as the capability to influence conducts and decision-makings in order to attain desirable outcomes through the use of culture and resources, as well as the exercise of knowledge, values and policies by a person or a social unit. While I will expand on this in chapter two, I refer to three types of power within tourism namely, knowledge power, economic power and bargaining power. In analysing these aspects of power, I uncover how various stakeholders influence and challenge each other such as in the relationship between the tourism and culture industries, and further by the varying production and consumption practices of cultural resources by industry, tourists and locals. As Leask and Fyall (2006) argued, it is challenging to create a balance between tourism and conservation practices and conflicts frequently arise between the large number of stakeholders involved, more so, when they do not understand and match each other's cultural needs. With an empirical focus on the Calabar Festival, this thesis addresses some of these politics by analysing how different stakeholder negotiate power and culture within the tourism circuit. At this point, it is important to clarify my understanding of the notion of politics as applied to this thesis, which the following section addresses.

### **1.3 Reconsidering politics in cultural tourism settings**

This section offers a more insightful cultural perspective to understanding politics in cultural tourism as applied to this thesis. Generally, when we hear of politics, what comes to mind is power relations between political structures or a state's power to enforce laws (see Dahl, 1991; Lasswell, 1950; Weber & as a Vocation, 1991). My research requires the application of politics in a particular place-based event. As such, following West (2014), McCann (2002), Soja and Hooper (1993), my analyses will take a multi-level approach, highlighting the new cultural politics that empowers multiplicity of stakeholders and strategic alliances across local and transnational frontiers. As McCann highlighted, this dynamic approach to cultural politics can

be traced to academic studies in sociology and geography during which a strong tradition of classifying and ordering difference in a binary manner emerged such as between economy and culture, us and them, dominant and marginal among others.

Soja & Hooper (1993), suggested that in the analysis of politics, the binary thinking was insufficient as it often highlighted only the power of the (western) dominant. Britton (1980; 1982; 1991), whose works remain relevant in tourism studies contended that transformations in destinations in the emerging economies are products of the process of capital accumulation by transnational corporations. These corporations exert strong economic power in a globally connected world, and from which destinations in the developing world have little capacity to oppose. Such unequal power dynamics have resulted in tourist rhetoric that idealises ethnic cultures as commodities in the universal consumerist economy (Dann, 1996). Also, John Urry's (1990), notion of the 'tourist gaze' referring to how tourism activities are systematised by the tourist gaze, further articulates how the influence of the global consumerist economy shape tourist destinations, particularly in developing nations. For Urry, gazing is about consuming and photographing signs or markers as socially and technologically mediated ways of seeing. This partly aligns with my proposed notion of tourists as modern cultural curators as photographing and mediating representations to suit the tourist gazes form ways through which tourists curate culture in modern times (Santos and McKenna, 2015). But unlike Urry who argues that tourists are framed and fixed rather than framing and exploring, I argue that tourists are today, involved in framing and co-constructing situated cultural meanings. Thus, rather than focusing on the global capitalist economy, my research considers the interactions between the Cross River State government, tourists and locals, to highlight the apparent, latent and inadvertent structures of power and influence.

Building on the work of Soja and Hooper who argue for a cultural politics of multiplicity that attends to the strategic alliances of stakeholders, I align my thoughts with Okure (2020), to demonstrate that complex and sometimes contradictory politics and ideologies beyond economic relations entwine in Nigeria's cultural tourism space. However, unlike Soja and Hooper, this thesis emphasises the links between the cultural and relational in understanding tourism politics. Taking this stance requires the acknowledgment that cultural politics encompasses the (re)negotiation of power and culture between peoples at both social and individual levels through an encounter with the place, events and the people within that place (as I expand on in Chapter two). As a consequence of cultural negotiations, I justify the role of tourists as modern curators of culture. This critical stance stems from data from the literature (see chapter two) claiming that the quest to satisfy tourists' tastes progressively drives the conservation, reproduction and re-negotiation of culture in contemporary tourism settings. As I highlighted earlier, if curating involves the mediation of culture, audience and context, then the curator's responsibility is bound to evolve and expand, especially given the rise of the curator as creator, whose constructions feed into cultural meanings and reproduction for tourism. Thus, I suggest that culture and tourism have contexts, influence, and outcomes that reflect the power dynamics of numerous people and geographies.

Additionally, my thesis requires studying politics outside of the 'West' and the 'state'. Previously, politics and political economy were linked, with Western predominance based on exploitation (Meethan, 2004), and various destinations outside the Western territories have been designed to appeal to Western tourists as the exotic other. However, the dual categorisation of 'Other' and 'Self' has problems within and of itself. As Teo and Leong (2006) argue, the host and other guests affected by their own unique location challenge and subvert otherisation. In this sense, I will argue for a term I call 'cultural co-coloniality' in tourism practices. The term emphasises a range of worldviews on power beyond the simplistic

dichotomies of ‘Third-world’ and ‘Eurocentric’ fundamentals, or modernity beyond colonialism. In line with this I propose that we produce knowledge collaboratively through exchange, although, by emphasising the non-West, particularly in the Nigerian context, I am careful not to ignore the country’s extensive ties to the West and the post-colonial legacy of such a (multicultural) milieu. Nevertheless, the goal is to theorise tourism politics from a non-Western viewpoint to (re)structure the world in broader relations and locate knowledge from the African setting. This issue is critical to understanding the Calabar Festival’s status as a contemporary cultural tourism attraction.

Thus far, analysing these central negotiations in the politics of cultural tourism production and consumption in the Calabar Festival will help to understand how key stakeholders negotiate the production and consumption at social and individual levels. It will also improve our understanding of how tourism politics might have consequences for the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture, while situating tourists as modern curators of culture in the tourism circuit. In the next section, I outline my thesis contributions.

#### **1.4 Research Contributions to Knowledge**

The contributions of this study combine the methodological, theoretical, conceptual, and empirical. Theoretically, this study draws from Du Gay et al.’s (1997:2) “circuit of culture” model, which describes cultural meaning-making as relational processes of representation, regulation, identity, production and consumption. Du Gay et al. (ibid) use the Sony Walkman as a typical cultural artefact and medium of modern culture’ to explain the relationships among producers and consumers in constructing cultural meanings in late modern societies. While their model has remained relevant in various cultural practices, it has sparsely been applied to cultural tourism. In this study, I extend this model by giving it a more specific theoretical and conceptual basis through an empirical case study based on a cultural tourism event. While it

highlights the performance of ‘stakeholders’, which can meet calls in the literature for a more relational approach to cultural tourism-related issues, a revised version of Du Gay et al. titled neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, specifically includes the relational processes of curation and power relations in the cultural tourism circuit of interaction.

Although the concept of power has received extensive study in the social sciences, it has often been partially studied in tourism literature (Cheong & Miller, 2000; Church & Coles, 2007; Hall, 2010). Much attention has primarily been focused on examining the dual inequalities of power between, for example, powerful tourists and disempowered locals (Smith, V. L., 1989) gazers and the gazed upon (Urry, 1992), dominant and the dominated (Gibson et al., 2006), and power within a broad policy setting (Hall, 2008). However, Schiller & Salazar have called for more theorisation that challenges binarism, given the frameworks of increased global mobility and commercialised relationships. While these existing academic works have helped enhance our knowledge regarding the effects of power on tourism processes, this research contributes to the conversation regarding the appropriate level of power analysis. The analysis occurs through an empirical consideration of power that goes beyond these dual categorisations to explicitly situate power in the tourism circuit of interaction and analyse how different stakeholders co-perform power.

Also, advancing the notion of tourists as modern cultural curators within the circuit of tourism interaction adds new knowledge to cultural tourism literature. Existing literature about curation and the curator (for example, Good, 2017; Kreps, 2013; Golding & Modest, 2013; O’Neill, 2016) have often focused on cultural intermediaries at museums, artwork, and exhibition spaces. To my knowledge, there tends to be no literature which explicitly categorises tourists as modern cultural curators. However, what has emerged in this study is that the convergence of production and consumption, as prescribed by Du Gay et al.’s model, has opened spaces for

new forms of relational and negotiated patterns of cultural exchanges (Bhabha, Homi K., 1994; Ostrowska, 2017). Remarkably, the market logic of prioritising the tourists' taste opened up frameworks of inclusivity and exchanges that alter the local power dynamics and, at the same time, empower tourists as active agents in determining how local cultures are represented and curated. Advancing tourists as modern cultural curators add new knowledge to cultural tourism studies.

Conceptually, this study introduces the notion of cultural co-coloniality and practically applies its understanding and significance to a specific cultural tourism setting, the Calabar Festival. The concept refers to a range of perceptions and practices which allows mutuality, proposing a system where people produce cultural knowledge beyond Third World and Eurocentric dichotomies. This standpoint offers a renewed understanding of the world as an entity fostered by cooperation and reciprocal relationships rather than oppression. It then contributes to further understandings of how festivals are a naturalised arena where diverse networks co-produce local knowledge, global local meanings (re)negotiated (Quinn, 2010), and new relationships and socio-cultural practices are (re) formed as experiences are constantly adjusted to suit actual realities. The research presented here gives an in-depth look at the processes of a critical contemporary example of a cultural event that claims to have successfully helped in repositioning an ancient city, with the richness derived from ethnographic methods and embedded field research offering lessons in how people utilise culture and the processes and practices involved. Methodologically, ethnographic methods offer an opportunity to explore this area in a way that complements existing research without replicating it.

Finally, this study offers significant guidance to destination managers for effective policymaking. As Edgell (1990) observed, the highest purpose of tourism policy is to integrate the economic, political, cultural and intellectual benefits of tourism cohesively with people,

destinations and countries, to improve the global quality of life and provide a foundation for peace and prosperity. This study demonstrated that culture is now an integral aspect of urban development policy in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. While this can be so for other destinations and attractions, there is a significant benefit of understanding cultural events processes from a perspective that does not focus exclusively on the established benefits of tourism and economic outcomes but rather one that also evaluates the kind of governance (in line with Harvey, 2002) that has been adopted to achieve such events. The findings here, offer a renewed understanding of people's interaction with power and culture

### **1.5 Structure of the thesis**

So far, this chapter has offered a general introduction, discussing how African societies exploit their cultural resources for tourism with the aim of social and economic development. Recognising that the politics of cultural tourism involves many groups who try to assert varying degrees of power and influences, my thesis aims to unravel the dynamic interactions of stakeholders in cultural tourism production and consumption, incorporating the practices of cultural curation. Such analysis involves examining the power dynamics between the (Cross River State) government, tourists and local community members as they interact and contest each other in the development of the Calabar Festival. This chapter has also set out my interpretation of power and cultural politics from a more insightful cultural perspective. Throughout this thesis, I draw on such interpretations, which is not restricted to conceptualisations of absolute state power, but rather, of strategic alliances among stakeholders across levels.

**Chapter Two, titled 'The politics of cultural tourism'**, provides a theoretical foundation for understanding current cultural tourism, their dynamism and interpretations, which were helpful in analysing the Calabar Festival case study. In this the chapter, first, I analysed the concept of



cultural tourism as a form of experience from both the individual and social motivation perspectives, and festivals as cultural sites of socio-political negotiations; to contextualise the Calabar Festival case study. Second, I reviewed Du Gay et al's (1997) circuit of culture model, and highlighted how culture is negotiated by producers and consumers, who are interconnected in a dynamic circuit of interaction, where they influence each other and cultural processes in a dynamic circuit. Third, I reviewed the concepts of power and stakeholders' relations of power. Three types of power namely knowledge, bargaining and economic powers, were identified to influence cultural negotiation and processes. Fourth, I situated stakeholders' interactions from a global-local perspective, and that raised issues concerning the challenges of cultural conservation and hybridity. These issues were discussed as outcomes of circuitous power dynamics where globality is contested and negotiated by locality. Thus, I introduced the concept of cultural co-coloniality as a consequence of modern cultural tourism politics, birthed by the hybrid disposition of places in the co-creation of meanings. These discussions signalled that the global-local interaction creates spaces for new forms of relational and negotiated patterns of cultural exchanges (Ostrowska, 2018; Bhabha, 1994), while the convergence of production and consumption in the tourism circuit of interaction (Du Gay et al, 1997), tends to blurs established the boundaries of cultural agency, particularly in cultural curation. Thus, I proposed a revision of the Du Gay et al's (ibid) model, to include the concepts of power and curation.

**Chapter Three titled “Methodological approach: Researching the Calabar Festival”,** describes this thesis' methodological approach in two sections. In the first section, I discussed the methodology adopted in conducting this ethnographic study, encompassing participant observation and in-depth interviews with local community members, tourists and government authorities in Calabar. I also gathered city development reports and policy directive documents on tourism development, such as the Cross River State tourism masterplan, as a secondary

method, and analysed these thematically. Each method was expressed through critical study frameworks, providing reasons for the use of each method and detailed information regarding their execution and analysis. Finally, in the second section, I discussed the Calabar Festival as the specific context of this research. Calabar Festival is argued to be the culture and tourism hub of Nigeria, which serves a variety of social, political, and economic goals while incorporating a diverse range of cultural practices, stakeholders, and interests on a global to local scale; thus, it offers an excellent case study for an empirical analysis of the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria.

**Chapter Four titled “Producing the Calabar Festival: Cultural processes and stakeholders’ interactions”**, is one of two empirical chapters of the thesis which analysed the data collected over a 3-year span of fieldwork during the annual Calabar Festival. I drew my analysis from data collected through interviews, ethnographic observations, policy documents encompassing the state tourism masterplan, and the festival’s marketing materials from the state Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Analysis revealed that the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is the key governmental body responsible for planning, implementing, and regulating all state culture and tourism activities, including the Calabar Festival. However, similar to the ideas of Du Gay et al. (1997), to produce an all-inclusive tourism experience and sustain the attraction’s footprint in the global tourism space, the ministry, through a set of strategies, functions in collaboration with various departments and agencies, international organisations, and local cultural agencies, where they all influence each other in an interaction circuit while also being regulated by global tourism market trends. Nevertheless, it was also evident that the market-oriented interpretation of cultural tourism policies and practises in Calabar favours the preferences of tourists, thereby changing the local power dynamics. Within such a context, both the tourism and culture sectors work to meet the needs of tourists, who are then empowered as active agents in the production, conservation, and sharing of cultural knowledge.

**Chapter Five titled “Negotiating cultural processes: Tourists, curation and power dynamics”** analysed the interaction of tourists with culture and other stakeholders, their consumption practices, participation and influence on cultural processes. I demonstrated the influence of tourists in cultural curation centred around three key elements: production, conservation and sharing of cultural knowledge. The chapter establishes that, like production, consumption is a contested space where different consumers can negotiate and challenge existing power relations. Through consumption, tourists can overturn conventions by creating their own meanings through sensuous experiences, including gazing and touching, situated roles and performances in seeking to consume the authentic. Findings further suggest that tourism consumption opens up a contested space for the (re)construction of local cultural meanings as local communities become influenced by global flows (Cornelissen, 2017). While some locals claimed that the hybridisation of ‘local culture,’ found as an outcome of global-local cultural exchanges, diminishes cultural authenticity, many officials and more locals believe that the intersection of the global and the local is helping them reinvent and reinforce the continuity of ancient cultural forms. The latter argument forwards the rhetoric of tourists curating culture since tourists’ production-consumption dynamics position them in traditional power hierarchies of curation.

**Chapter six titled “Contemporary politics of cultural tourism: The Calabar Festival and application of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model”** concludes the thesis by reviewing the arguments made across the chapters and the key findings of my research. The arguments are then combined to advance the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, reinforcing that cultural politics extends beyond consumption, representation, regulation, identity construction and the conventional function of cultural production. It includes the mechanisms of curation and dynamic power relations. As the findings raise the possibility that tourists become positioned in traditional hierarchies of production, consumption and circulation of cultural

knowledge, I found it significant to revise Du Gay et al.'s model to include the empirically emerging issues of power and curation. The revised model 'neo-circuit of cultural tourism' demonstrates that all stakeholders actively exert different forms of power on cultural processes through a connected interaction circuit. In this context, the new model offers a case-specific analysis of these relational dynamics while framing tourists as modern cultural curators.

## **Chapter Two**

### **The politics of cultural tourism**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation to this thesis by critically discussing key strands of literature on cultural tourism dynamics in order to place the study within current debates. Du Gays et al's (1997) circuit of culture model is usefully applied here, to understand how cultural meanings are produced and consumed in a dynamic cycle, in relation to stakeholder's interaction. As I highlighted in chapter one, cultural tourism encompasses a diverse set of cultural resources and practices, and the interaction of complex groups across geographies, often with conflicting motives, ideologies and power relations, resulting in different sociocultural outcomes (Aitchison 1999). The review of these attributes forms the focus of this chapter to emphasise research gap that this study aims to address. Also, tourism, politics has frequently been studied through a one-sided perspective which situates power on either the state, tourists or locals but not simultaneously on all actors. Sociological studies have conventionally reflected an unbalanced binary involving for example, powerful tourists and disempowered locals (Smith, V, L, 1989), dominant and the dominated (Gibson et al., 2006), gazers and the gazed upon (Urry, 1992). However, Glick Schiller & Salazar (2013) called for more theorisation that challenges the binarism, given the frameworks of increased global mobility and commercialised relationships between policy makers, tourists, cultural industries and local communities (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013) and their intricate power relations. This analysis is critical to identifying the nature of power performed by each stakeholder in the tourism circuit and understanding the outcome of tourism politics on local culture and events. More so, the curatorial practice which is central to modern cultural tourism development has received little academic attention with very few exceptions (O'Neil, 2012; Kreps, 2013; such

as Richards, 2021 and 2018). Therefore, at the end of the chapter, I will combine these discussions to suggest an expansion of Du Gay et al's model.

This chapter is divided into five sections, first, it discusses the concept of cultural tourism, recognising its components, tourism and culture and then, reviews the cultural politics around festivals to contextualise the development of Calabar's festival. The second section reviews Du Gay et al's (1997) circuit of culture model, to foreground understanding of how producers and consumers relate with themselves and with cultural resources. To provide insights into how these cultural processes are negotiated by stakeholders, the third section clarifies the stakeholders under study, reviewing the concepts of power and stakeholders' relations of power. In discussing the people, power and culture dynamics, the fourth section situates their interactions in a global-local perspective, within which the section analyses the notions of cultural conservation and hybridity, and introduce the concept of cultural co-coloniality, constructed as a consequence of modern cultural tourism politics, birthed by a cosmopolitan outlook to meaning-creation. In the fifth section, I suggest a reworking of Du Gay et al's models to the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, to address the identified gap in literature bordering on the themes of power and cultural curation.

### **2.1.1 Cultural tourism, a theoretical perspective**

Cultural tourism is a highly contested concept with various definitions. For clarity, this section first discusses the meanings of both culture and tourism, before defining the cultural tourism concept. The sub-section then reviews literature relevant to the cultural politics around festivals.

Raymond Williams (2011:54; 1958) famously describes culture as ordinary practices, where ‘all facets of life are entangled in a web of conventions and institutions which inform the meanings that are shared by a wider social life’. Williams definition highlights how people are mutually connected by collective norms and values, through which they regulate and make common meanings of their existence. These include for example, everyday life rituals, institutions, practices and art (for example, language, food, ways of dressing, festival, symbols, human traits and creative efforts), which are generally lived, re-enacted and transferred to generations through learning and communication.

To research culture in its broadest sense, Williams categorises culture into three facets: first is the experienced culture of a specific era and place, which is only fully accessed by people who live in that era and place; second is the documented culture of all types, ranging from art to the most mundane of realities, such as an era’s culture (intellectual and imaginative work); the third is selective traditional culture, which serves as a link between lived cultures and historic cultures. Williams’ argument suggests that although people may not exist in particular era, they can however, analyse eras through records and knowledge of its common qualities, activity patterns, and structures of feeling. For example, in today’s world, People born in the 21st century, for instance, can understand and relate with the behavioural patterns of people who lived in the 16th century using perhaps, archival documents or other similar sources. These elements lead to the formation of ‘tradition’, which Williams (Williams, 1961:96) referred to as a ‘continual selection and re-selection of ancestors’. Although Williams categorisation helped challenge the previously popular, strict and elitist cultural approaches (See Eliot, 1950), Gallagher (1992:93) criticised Williams’ categories based on his ‘disdain of abstraction’. Gallagher criticises that in an effort to subvert the duality of art and material practice, Williams neglected the object outside individuals to which their ideas relate. Gallagher subtly disagreed

with Williams for discarding a realist and existential knowledge as the basis for a theory of culture, hinting that signification is a precondition of any possible knowledge rather than practice.

Despite the criticism, Williams' resolve on the relevance of everyday practices and rituals gives much insight into people's interactions with identifiable patterns and practices. Thus, I build on Williams' definition to argue that culture in both the conservative and radical form is a set of values embodied as the extant realities of our constantly changing societies, concretised by abstraction and social practices. This notion of culture will highlight how reality can be constructed, negotiated and resisted in a tourism context where individual, local, national and global meanings circulate and collide. As Church and Coles (2007) note, the study of tourism offers social scientists a greater insight into the nature of modern-day life and an ideal empirical setting to appraise the value of current worldviews.

The concept of tourism is equally complex with diverse definitions. Although there is no single encompassing definition, previous scholars have traditionally linked tourism to a quest for authentic experiences that lack in everyday life (MacCannell, 1999), a break from the routine (Graburn, 2004), an opportunity to gaze upon exotic sights (Urry, 2001) and for economic benefits (Robinson & Picard, 2006). Thus, it can be argued that the study of tourism encompasses social, cultural, economic, individual, corporate or specialised interests. However, for enhanced insight into peoples' dynamic interaction across geographies, this thesis provides an understanding of tourism, drawing from Franklin and Crang (2001). They observe that tourism is no longer a specialist consumer product, mode of consumption, or a relatively transient ritual of modern national life, rather, tourism has become a significant modality through which transnational modern life is organised. Study on travel by Holloway



and Humphreys (2019) places tourism as a central part of understanding social (dis)organisation but also show how it can no longer be entirely isolated from everyday life practices. Studies have variously highlighted aspects of social disorganisation in terms of impacts and practices such as over-tourism (Milano, Novelli, & Cheer, 2019; Capocchi, et al, 2019; Goodwin, 2017), sustainability (Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Hall et al., 2015), cultural degradation (Daly, Dias, & Patuleia, 2021; Pradana, 2018), local spatial displacement (Sirima & Backman, 2013) and others. Yet, cultural tourism, the broad focus of this research, has become one of the fastest growing sectors for its varied social, political, and economic functions across cities; particularly, as culture, tourism and politics have become inextricably linked.

As far as cultural tourism is concerned, it is a broader concept; despite being a well renowned subject of academic enquiry, there seem to be a challenge in providing a unified definition. One significant contention border on defining the elements of culture and tourism, which, as I have discussed above, are also difficult to explain. Fabrizio, Snowdon, Prasad (2000) pointed out that culture itself is difficult to define because it “evolves and changes overtime, therefore the multifaceted relationships it shares with tourism also change”. This means that the concept will continue to mean different things, depending on the existential realities of people, time and place. More so, the democratisation of culture and the increasing convergence of culture and everyday life (Mckercher & du Cros, 2002; Richards, 2007; Urry, 1990) makes a single definition more challenging.

The definition of cultural tourism for this thesis, is influenced by two key scholars. Firstly, Stebbins (1996:948) who focuses on the ego-consciousness outlook to cultural tourism and states “Cultural tourism is a genre of special interest tourism based on the search for and

participation in new and deep cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological”. This definition prioritises individual values in cultural tourism experiences. Even though it downplays social or collective meaning making, its strength rests on the recognition of the immersive role of the tourist, who does not simply observe but participates in the cultural space for a self-satisfying experience. Thus, cultural tourism involves personal sensuous experiences, for example, consuming heritage landscapes, visiting a museum or partaking in a local festival; meanings, via consumption is constructed at the individual level. In understanding these experiences, I argue, we can appreciate how specific actors negotiate cultural production and consumption.

The second scholar I draw from is Richards (2018), who explains cultural tourism as, forms of tourism activities where the tourists’ central motivation is to experience, uncover, learn and even consume the concrete and abstract cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. For Richards, these attractions/products relate to a set of implicit (and intangible) ways of a society including historically specific, socially constructed and transmitted norms, values, beliefs, traditions and symbolic expressions such as rituals and festivals. Intangible cultural heritage represents inherited traditions from the past, contemporary rural and urban practises in which diverse cultural groups participate. Richards further explains that cultural tourism also broadly involves the explicit (and tangible) production of a society represented in its arts, heritage sites, crafts and cultural products. For instance, whether it is historical or archaeological sites (like the Kenyan Kaya forest or the Ugandan Kasubi Tomb), or merely shopping for handcrafted art, both tourists and local people can participate and gain different experiences (Prentice, 2001) of acquiring knowledge of history, or consuming ancient cultural products, and of contemporary people’s way of life. Unlike Stebbins, Richards takes the focus away from the individual tourist’s experience in favour of a collective consumption space as a whole. In this way the cultural cannot be separated from the social and everyday living

practices that both constitute each other.

These definitions represent the broader nature of contemporary cultural tourism, illuminating a field of inclusive cultural practices and motivations, such as satisfying individual curiosity and collective meaning making. However, it must be recognised that they both emphasise people's movements across geographical locations outside 'their own', which fails to account for tourism within one's own cultural setting. For instance, certain forms of employment and occupational specialisations can alienate people from their cultural roots, seen particularly in places experiencing increasing urbanisation and modernisation. While employment can take people away from their places of origin, specialisation can estrange people from social groups and activities within the same cultural environment (Simmel, 2012). In each case, partaking in a cultural festival or simply 'experiencing' a local museum is cultural tourism and may not be suitably classified as outside the host community. Therefore, this thesis argues that cultural tourism involves any travel motivated by cultural sensitivities within or outside one's cultural setting, to engage with peoples' ways of life, either to explore, educate, find belonging, or simply for personal gratification.

While many practices constitute cultural tourism, this study primarily focuses on festivals to analyse the dynamic interaction of people, power and culture. Festivals are interactive cultural tourism spaces, enabling people to express themselves and negotiate broad socio-political and cultural issues (Getz & Timur, 2012), yet, they serve as sites of power relations and contestation involving multiple actors across diverse frontiers (Cudny, 2016). These contrasting functions make it an interesting site for analysis of cultural tourism politics. Moreover, as I mentioned in chapter one, there have been sparse attempts to explore how the relational networks of external and internal stakeholders influence practices and constitute aspects of local cultures in African societies. My empirical research attempts to redress this

situation by interrogating the frameworks that give people and places specific meanings (Crang, 1998), how stakeholders negotiate with each other, power and culture. The next section reviews literature around these central issues.

### **2.1.2 Festivals as cultural sites of socio-political negotiations**

In the current debate about cultural tourism, cultural festivals play significant social, political and economic functions in places, including serving as attractions, image making, enlivening inactive attractions and stimulating place development. Though cultural festivals are described as controversial sites for cultural contestations (Thomasson, 2022), social scientists (such as Cudny, 2016; Woodward, Taylor, & Bennett, 2014) observe that festivals are culturally shared experiences which help in building social cohesion and reproducing social relations. These scholars agree with Hall's (2004:1989) notion of 'shared experience' as the direct cultural and social impact of festivals for participants and host communities. The shared experience as observed by Hall involves reviving customs, building community pride and participation, validating social groups, introducing new, opposing and challenging ideas, and expanding cultural perspectives. In the context of cultural tourism, Boissevain's (1996) study on traditional festivals and ritualised performances in Malta demonstrated that Festivals improved community identification by empowering locals, fostering a sense of unity around local symbols; village and national identity by expanding the presentation of cultural uniqueness to an outside audience (tourists) and promoted individual identity by providing persons the liberty to involve in a public event. Their findings suggest that festivals can offer performative spaces where statements about culture and place are made at the individual, community, national and international levels.

However, festivals can also be understood as sites of numerous contestations and power

struggles among people. Bakhtin's (1984) analysis of the carnival as a kind of resistance or oppositional force can also be applicable to modern festivals. Bakhtin defined carnivals as places where people may defy conventional social reality and escape society's routines and social norms, as suggested in the festival in Malta earlier discussed. Nevertheless, as Ravenscroft and Matteucci (2003) point out, the perceived liberty festivals offer is deceptive because, the society which people are hoping to escape has itself, sanctioned these events to help individuals escape the alienating effects of modernity and maintain long-term societal interest. This controversial approach places festivals exclusively within the parameters of public laws and control, dispelling any notion that they could challenge established norms or power. At the micro-level, literature have explored festival behaviours to show how human populations are culturally and socially organised, and how proximity to power is a ceaseless source of action at many levels. As observed by Smith S, J (1993), festivals are places where certain individuals and organisations advocate specific morals, fix definite meanings to place, and strive to replicate predominant meanings in varying degrees. The importance of decisions made about the production and consumption of festivals varies tremendously depending on who makes them and who mostly benefits. Yet, diverging from Smith's point on the power of 'certain individuals', I argue in line with Quinn's (2005b) assertion that festivals are arenas where diverse networks co-produce local knowledge, global meanings are replicated, and the history, heritage and identity of people and places are (re)negotiated.

People negotiate social life through festivals in diverse ways. One, which also forms a significant literary critique can be drawn from related works on carnivals which raises the subjects of cultural commodification. Scholars recognise the socio-cultural benefits of commodification on the local economies and as a part of consumer culture (for instance Shaw and Williams, 2004; Getz & Timur, and Tumor, 2012; Getz, 2012). Oakes (1993) uses his study of Guizhou to demonstrate that commodification empowers the locals towards sustaining

self-sufficiency by situating them within the tourism system and revitalising local tradition. Whereas, Ravenscroft and Matteucci (2003) have written about the increasing commodification of festivals as local culture become transformed into tourism commodities. They claim that the presence of tourists shifts the notion of the festival from celebration to spectacle, and from production to consumption. In their analysis, tourists, in their role as consumers and ‘co-creators’ (Richards, 2018), are believed to be responsible for destroying the ‘authentic’ culture and endorsing the spectacular spaces of festivals. Locals, on the other hand, may be weakened when the above-mentioned social obligations of the festival are supplanted by economic entitlements (Quinn, 2005; Ateljevic, & Doorne, 2003). One of the most extensively mentioned pieces of study that demonstrates this critique is Greenwood’s (1989:178) study of the Alarde in Fuenterrabia, Spain. Greenwood’s research characterises an overwhelming scrutiny of the commodification of a village’s public ritual. He found that public intervention to increase the festival’s tourist potential resulted in the event being “a performance for money” rather than the real. Thus, commodification is a double-edged force, believed to debase culture and at the same time, grow local economies.

Despite the contradictions surrounding commodification in festivals, Truong (2020), and Pitchford and Jafari (2008), argue that festivals are most prominent attractions used to brand the image of places as desirable for cultural tourism experiences or places to work and live. Studies have illustrated that festivals can position destinations as a tourist attraction, a market industry that attracts investors, and a place brand that attracts tourists and supports local residents (see for example, Absalyamov, 2015 study of Kazan city, Russia; Henderson’s 2007, ‘Branding of Singapore’). Moreover, Govers and Go (2009) observed that the image of a particular place, built by the influence of cultural festivals, is also co-created by various stakeholders, including tourists, inhabitants, investors searching for new locations. Here, we can see the interconnections that Du Gay et al’s circuit of culture argued. For example, the co-

creation means that both the consumers and producers are actively involved in creating the image of a place, through their mutual connectedness. However, it could be argued that without exception, these groups attempt to exert significant levels of control over the destination's image, and their relationships often result in a clash of power and interests (Ooi, 2002). Not many studies have analysed the socio-cultural implications of such power dynamics inclusively, though, Nash (1989) suggested that branding frames experiences within social power. The tourists' perception, mood, and state of mind are inadvertently influenced by her situation, whether internal (inhabitants), external (tourists), or intermediate (such as performers, seasonal migrants, city users, and others). Like Nash, Bohme (1993) argued that tourism and its broader institutional networks impose asymmetric power relations on local places, as touristic aesthetics impose underlying values on the selection, interpretation and branding of cultural resources. Thus, tourism revolutionises the social and spatial realities of cultural places, transforming traditional traits and spaces into spectacular tourist attractions. Whereas, its mechanisms can be tools of neoliberal capitalism against neoliberal capitalist accumulation because they rely on creating attractions, or new sources of accumulation from the very crises they produce through entrepreneurial systems (Cooper, 2015; Fletcher, 2011; Piva, Cerutti, Prats, & Raj, 2017)

Meanwhile, Hall and Rusher (2004:220) claim that a significant function of festivals in places is boosting entrepreneurialism. They observe that whether a festival provides jobs for the urban populace or creative engagement, urban entrepreneurialism shapes the expectations that cultural events will play a role in the promotion of cities. This is also directly linked to Quinn (2005b) who observed that festivals have taken on a new significance, interpreted as entrepreneurial displays, as image makers skilled enough to entice significant flows of mobile capital, people and services, supporting tourism market objectives with urban planning. This market-led character means that cultural festivals in modern societies are subject to policy,

production, marketing and consumption systems of power and regulation. Thus, Harvey (2001:402-03) defines entrepreneurialism as:

that pattern of behaviour within urban governance that mixes together state powers (local, metropolitan, regional, national or international) and a wide array of organisational forms in civil society (chambers of commerce, unions, churches, educational and research institutions, community groups, NGOs, and the like) and private interests (corporate and individual) to form coalitions to promote or manage urban/regional development of some sort or other.

This definition broadly regards entrepreneurialism as place-bound social processes where an array of players with rather different aims and interests are linked through specific patterns of place-practices. Thomasson's (2015) study of the festivals of Adelaide and Edinburgh demonstrates that in order to attract tourists, investors, and capital, their government and urban entrepreneurs actively utilise arts festivals to shape the physical and narrative attributes of their place into innovative hubs, though, with the dangers of local cultural erosion. While Adelaide was motivated to transform from 'conservative and staid', to a 'Vibrant City', local authorities in Edinburgh were motivated by the need to enhance and uphold the city's status as the world's Festival City. However, in such processes of supporting their claims as creative cities, they created Place myths, alias alternative histories and images, which introduced power tussle against popular constructions, between various social groups involved. For instance, unlike in Adelaide, locals of Edinburgh did not really welcome or fully embrace the constructed place myth. Thomasson highlighted that this contention was rooted in the exclusion of Scottish drama from the official inauguration Festival schedule in 1947, which led to claims of elitism and vilification of Scottish culture, still prevailing. The study gave insights into how culture and power can be negotiated and how urban entrepreneurialism can jettison social equity for



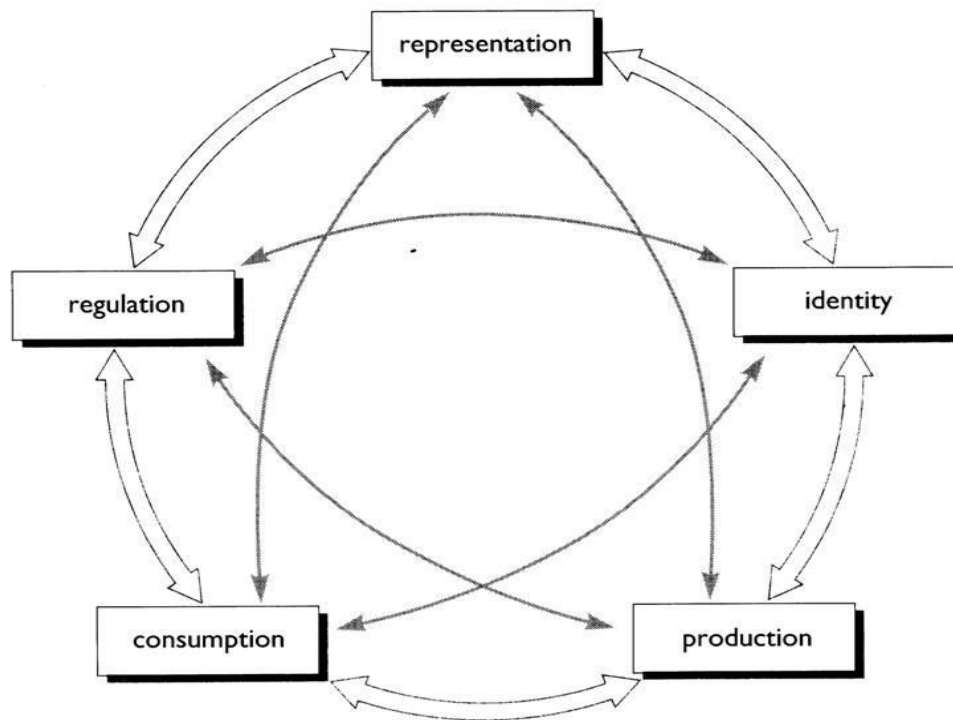
the prosperity of certain élite groups with economic, social, and cultural capital, and political power to exploit it, thus, intensifying social and territorial disparities in cities.

So far, the discussions have demonstrated that the politics of cultural tourism involves several processes, disparate stakeholders and elements who collaborate and contest each other in specific tourism settings. To effectively understand the different linkages between the elements including people, power, culture and its resources in tourism interactions it is helpful to draw on Du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture model which I will discuss in the next section.

## **As 2.2 The circuit of culture theory**

In the Circuit of Culture model, Du Gay et al. (1997:2) used the Sony Walkman as a 'typical cultural artefact and medium of modern culture' to demonstrate the social dynamics of culture in late modern societies. Their model has remained relevant in various cultural practices. Du Gay et al. touches on critical aspects of relationships that can be usefully applied to the analysis of modern cultural tourism in terms of regulation, production, consumption, representation and identity, demonstrating how they co-work to produce a shared cultural space where meanings are created, shaped, modified and recreated (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). It means that these relationships form realities increasingly influenced by participating, co-creating stakeholders who actively influence the construction of cultural meanings in today's fluid and dynamic social world. Hall (1997) highlights how cultural concerns emphasise the production and exchange of meanings between social groups. Here, cultural meanings with which to create new consumer values such as uniqueness, style, selfhood, authenticity, exoticism and others (Kwass, 2020) link producers and consumers. Culture, within this remit, is not transmitted merely from one independent realm to the other or, perhaps, from production to consumption (Du Gay et al., 1997); instead, culture is a shared meaning within a process of time, space, and viewpoint (Champ, 2008), usually an ongoing negotiation by all the constructive processes,

with varied outcomes. In this section, I will explain Du Gay's model, which forms a theoretical background to understand cultural tourism processes, and the relations of people within the circuit.



**Figure 1: The circuit of culture**

**Source: Du Gay et al. (1997)**

In cultural processes, there is the *regulation* moment. As observed by Du Gay et al. in their model, regulation has restrictions on cultural activities. The controls range from explicit rules like laws, national institutions, or systems to informal or local rules like cultural and social norms and logic that shape the culture. This moment defines what is suitable and acceptable in society and establishes the context for public relations in the area where the activities occur. For example, in the context of public relations, large business corporations like Sony manufacture many items people frequently use in their routine cultural lives, whether they be

films, music cassettes and CDs, or other types of cultural software like computer games, as well as the hardware needed to run them, like the Walkman or PlayStation. There are rules that limit the thoughts, actions, and behaviours of every group of people in a nation, city, or organisation. Because of this, certain people with economic or political influence order regulations and decide what is appropriate (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). Thus, by implication, they regulate the production of cultural products. As Du Gay et al. imply, examining how culture functions, the structure, approach, and culture of these more global business organisations, demand greater attention.

The second is *production*, where these large global businesses create meanings. As Curtin & Gaither (2007) cited, the producer develops cultural products and provides them with the desired meaning. Because culture impacts how individuals think, feel, and act, cultural meanings, norms, and values are the critical elements that call for careful attention. Global business organisations must manage these cultural processes and meanings effectively and efficiently to accomplish the results (Leve, 2012). For a message to effectively reach the minds of the intended audience, this explained how global business organisations needed to comprehend the cultural framework that already existed before infusing meanings into a message, to have the message influence the awareness of the targeted audience accurately and clearly. One example of a production process in public relations practises is the planning and execution of a campaign. Because the messages created depend on the technology available at the time of production, technological limitations are significant (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). Leve (2012) further notes that the Circuit of Culture proposes that message generation should be carried out at many venues and diffused through various procedures and practises as the process of meaning-making and meaning-taking.

Du Gay et al. described the *identity* moment as significant across each social network. Class, race, nationality, and gender are only a few of the built meanings and behaviours that make up an identity and can represent an individual, an organisation, or a country. As global business practitioners, it is crucial to consistently build and uphold the identity and image of the organisations-or any representation. The producer confers the organisational identity during production, which might be apparent in the logo, slogan, shapes, or colours. Promotions aimed at the targeted audiences typically begin this process to establish identities and increase knowledge of the company, making it easier for customers to recall the identity. According to Leve (2012), this method is also utilised to locate and build an atmosphere conducive to the consumption of campaign content. The responsibility to uphold and build an organisational or business identity grows as the audience grows.

The *representation* moment reflects an object's form, which contains and conveys its intended meaning. Representations are constructed by society rather than constantly being stated explicitly in the items. Representation refers to the description, portrayal, or symbol used to stand in for anything (Leve, 2012) The message is modified for a particular target group and moulded into a cultural artefact. All cultural artefact features displayed as part of a representation moment are intended to express specific meanings to the audience and manage how to make them accessible to the audience. This includes the content, the structure, and the mode of dissemination of the cultural artefact.

Following representation, the audience embraces the messages' intended meanings, referred to as the moment of *consumption*. Interpreting what producers strive to shape, though, might come in lacking. Consumption occurs when the audience or targeted consumers interpret the messages (ibid). Du Gay et al. argue that the consumption of messages is not always limited to the intended audience, clients, or consumers. Anyone who glances at or passes by could

likewise take in and relate to the messages through self-interpretation. A study by Tomblason and Wolf (2017) demonstrated that audience participation and message co-creation impacted other moments, such as identity and regulations. The impact is because audience members could create meanings during message consumption, which they adapted to their daily lives. Consumers are producers who actively employ situations and products in their daily lives uniquely (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). This process advances understanding but is the starting point of more processes to complete the Circuit of Culture.

This framework is precisely selected in this study since Du Gay et al. explained that they adopted this model to explain “how culture works in late modern society”. Du Gay et al.’s thesis is straightforward: Culture should be studied as an ensemble of practises entrenched in modes of production and consumption, not just as a collection of materials or a connected group of created objects. The Walkman, as technological innovation, has given people a new method to enjoy their favourite music on their own using headsets (which has led me to consider the term curation). However, this model has sparsely been applied to the study of cultural tourism. As Curtin and Gaither criticised, there is much of an organisational focus which has relegated it to -a system-level theory. A more comprehensive range of theoretical development that embraces social relations as it is practised and does not typically prescribe how social relations should be practised is made possible by a shift from a fundamental political and economic model to one based on the cultural economy (Hutton, 2015). More so, a restrictive focus on organisational social relations theory can result in viewing social interactions as a management function (Dozier & Lauzen, 2000). For instance, Metzler (2001) claimed that creating and sustaining organisational legitimacy is central to most if not all, social relations. Even relationship-based management approaches, which strongly emphasise the importance of relationships, have primarily been created from a functional perspective to support organisational goals (Bruning & Ledingham, 2000).

While Du Gay et al.'s model provides an enhanced understanding of cultural processes, it falls short of accounting for power's crucial role in social relations (for instance Cancel, Cameron, Sallot, & Mitrook, 1997; Elmer, 2000). As was previously argued by Karlberg (1996:273), "symmetry assumes that all segments of the population have the communication skills and resources to represent themselves in public discourse". The statement does not relegate power (of representation, for example) to a particular group or moment, rather, it implies that both producers and consumers command some form of control over self and social representations. However, empirical practices rarely support such an assumption. The assertion that consumers, for instance, ought to be a part of the powerful alliance puts them in place of relative power (Holtzhausen, 2002). As a result, criticism focuses on the idea that power is ingrained in relationships and cannot be disregarded or overlooked. However, a newer study (than Du Gay et al.) suggests that such a broad generalisation can be inaccurate. Although Du Gay et al. presume that the firm or organisation inherently commands social relations of power, through the use of case studies, Berger (1999) and Henderson (2013) both showed how, even though companies and governments frequently have more relative power than the general population, situational factors can change this relationship. This action shows a movement in the critical-cultural model, which also shapes the postmodern paradigm, towards a more Foucauldian (to be discussed in the next section) notion of power as localised rather than hierarchical.

More so, in the context of public relations, Jenkins (2009) applied the circuit of culture through participatory culture, described as one with limited restrictions to artistic expression and civic participation, with strong encouragement for self-production and disseminating of one's works, including some sort of unofficial mentoring where the most skilled transfer knowledge to the less skilled. It can then be argued that as a part of this culture, consumers cease to be mere consumers, but actively contribute to and create situated cultural meanings as prosumers (Alaimo, 2015; Hutton, 2015; Jenkins, F., 2006; Berger, 1999; Henderson, A. C., 2013;

Holtzhausen, 2002) and even curators. The nature of participatory culture in such context means that cultural production become 'borderless' and involve multiple cultural understandings, which can introduce and reintroduce power dynamics from creation to representations, identity construction and regulations. As Ciszek (2017) notes, the value of a participatory audience is rather determined by the power to connect with other users, producers, and consumers, to consume a product. Given the rise of this participatory culture (Tomblison & Wolf, 2017), it is important to study the nature and extent of power exercised by tourism consumers for how they influence cultural production. As Du Gay et al. (2013) simply put, production and consumption feed into each other in an endless circle: either cannot exist independently without the other.

Therefore, this shortfall concerning power prompted me to propose revising Du Gay et al.'s model to include power as a central element of the circuit of tourism interaction. Also, the recognition of the role of consumers in production and information dispersion has provoked critical thought to add the cultural process of curation to the model, where tourists, as consumers of culture, are active agents in regulating production processes. Notably, this criticism and studies (Berger, 1999; Henderson, A. C., 2013; Holtzhausen, 2002; Hutton, 2015) have shown that with the convergence of production and consumption, a framework of openness and inclusive cultural exchanges can change the local power dynamics and at the same time, empower tourists to participate in determining how local cultures are regulated, represented and curated (Kreps, 2008). While I will go on to discuss the relations of power (to fully grasp the criticism forwarded against Du Gay et al.), I will combine these ideas with empirical evidence to forward the revision of Du Gay et al. to a neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, encompassing the processes of power and curation.

## **2.3 Stakeholders network and power relations in the context of tourism research**

This research is primarily aimed at analysing the dynamic interaction between stakeholders in the production and consumption of a specific cultural festival. In chapter one, I highlighted that the politics of cultural tourism is dynamic and intersects several stakeholders across geographies. Also, in the aspects of power, I indicated in the previous section that most tourism literatures have explored the exercise of power from simply a dual perspective (Smith, V.L, 1989; Urry, 1992). While previous researches have discussed the various types of power that can influence a collaborative process independently (Tiew, Holmes, & De Bussy, 2015), there is a lack of empirical evidence as to what power types are actually involved in tourism stakeholder collaborations (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017) and who actually wield which powers. As my empirical chapters will show, the negotiations of power involve more than mere duality, rather, power is co-constituted in the processes of cultural production and consumption. For example, given stakeholders categories A, B and C, A can have causal powers over B and C, but the later categories can also have causal powers over A. Thus, in this section, I discuss the intricate power relations among stakeholders. The section begins with a clarification of this research's stakeholders. Then, I discuss stakeholders' power relations as characterised in existing literatures.

### **2.3.1 Discussions of power among stakeholders in cultural tourism production and consumption.**

Many studies analyse stakeholders from a corporate perspective, to indicate those with power or who directly have an impact on an organisation's operations (see Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997; Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005). In strategic management, Freeman (1984) defined a stakeholder as any group or individual who can affect or who is affected by the achievement of the organisations' objectives. Freeman listed the organisations' stakeholders including owners, customers, competitors, employees, suppliers, governments, local community



organisations, special interest groups, environmentalists, consumer advocates, media, unions, trade associations, the financial community and political group. However, till date, it seems there is still no universally accepted definition of stakeholder (Freeman, Philips and Sisodia, 2020) and the most cited definition by Freeman (1984) has been criticised as being too broad to identify who, or what, is really a stakeholder (McGrath & Whitty, 2017).

On the one hand, within the context of this research, key stakeholders are identified as the city government (urban culture and tourism agencies, officials and policies of Cross River state), tourists (national and international) and local communities (local performers, creatives, community leaders, local private enterprises and cultural intermediaries). This has been categorised to avoid the complexities around performative roles such as a local performing as a tourist or official being a tourist (even though those roles intersect). Foris, et al. (2020) argued that due to the fragmented nature of the cultural tourism industry, stakeholder identification and involvement is crucial for effective collaboration and tourism development. Stakeholders' perception and understanding asserts power on tourism development and their varying perceptions and interests can create conflict (Byrd, Bosley, & Dronberger, 2009) and power imbalances. In the context of destination management organisations (DMOs), Mitchell et al. applied the concepts of legitimacy, power and urgency as stakeholders' attributes. Using these criteria, the most prominent stakeholders would have an urgent claim against the firm, the power to impose their decisions, and be perceived as legitimate in exercising their power. Their research findings also highlighted that considering only a part of stakeholders' interests, and not all in decision-making, would lead to failed strategies. Thus, this research signifies that, it is important that in analysing tourism production and consumption, all stakeholders are identified in the decision-making process and power structures.

On the other hand, power is a highly contested concept, explored in tourism literature from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives (Church & Coles, 2007). Exploring the entire theoretical spectrum from which the study of power has been approached in tourism research is beyond the scope of this thesis. Therefore, in addition to my discussions of Soja and Hooper's (1993) perspective in chapter one, I will draw ideas from a few, including Foucault (1980) owing to his complex and flexible consideration of different features of power, which is particularly relevant to this study. As I pointed out earlier, Foucault proposes a disciplinary model where power is dissociated from a narrow command-obedience relationship and conceptualised as "diffuse and capillary, omnipresent, and both productive and repressive" (Allen, 2002:133). By this, Foucault contends that numerous processes such as social networks and technologies, consistently mediate and contribute to the exercise of power that operates to shape and regulate behaviour in society. Thus, as Foucault (1989:93) puts it, power goes beyond politics as an everyday, embodied and socialised phenomenon which is "produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one to another". In this regard, actors are subjected to powers that continually (re)produce the very meaning of what is considered "normal" or ordinary in society.

Unlike Foucault, Allen (2003) does not assume that power is evenly distributed but rather maintains that different modalities of power are differently exercised. He posits that while Foucault developed key insights on the dispersed nature of social power, he did not sufficiently theorise the types of power relations that arise in different social situations. Allen's advocacy for a more precise theorisation of the organisation of power also influenced this thesis to develop categories summarising the diverse power practices, tactics and techniques enacted by different social groups. Yet, Church, Gilchrist and Ravenscroft (2007) commented that Allen's categorisation of power modalities offers a useful theoretical contribution to understand what forms of power relations emerge in specific contexts. Nonetheless, while this typology

provides conceptual precision, it presents major challenges for empirical research. In practice, specifying the nature of power relations is problematic since it may not always be possible to distinguish between general modalities of power and specific tactics that permeate negotiations. Considering these divergences, this thesis refers to three types of power within tourism, namely knowledge power, economic power and bargaining power. I will briefly explain these forms and then substantiate explanations with illustrations from academic studies of how stakeholders exercise power.

First, *knowledge power* refers to power constituted in society through accepted forms of knowledge and realities or what Foucault called “discourses”. Foucault (1980) notes that every society has its regime of truth, or the types of discourse which it accepts and live as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish truth and falsehood, and the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. Foucault suggests that the practise of power constantly creates knowledge, which in turn, influences the properties of power, meaning that power and knowledge are inextricably linked. For instance, scientific knowledge can be created only as a consequence of adequately financed academic institutions, commercial enterprises, or governments, each of which is riddled with its own apparent and frequently concealed power relations, economies, and hierarchies. Importantly, these power relationships tend to determine which perspectives, ideologies, research plans and actions that are included or excluded from the spheres of truth and knowledge in a given context. This can be true to a large extent for the relationship of power and knowledge in cultural events, where knowledge as power is produced by systems and network of relations amongst social actors in various social roles (for instance, cultural and creative industries, media, government, schools) as opposed to a sovereign-based system (Church and Coles, 2007). According to Foucault (1991), this system is more efficient than a top-down structure since it disseminates power throughout society, and entails no force.

Second, *bargaining power* generally refers to the relative capacity of each transaction-related party (producers and consumers) to influence negotiations (Larsen and Coleman, 2014). Only a handful of tourism studies have investigated bargaining behaviour (Kozak, 2016; Tsang, Tsai, & Leung, 2011), and they generally examine bargaining from an experience perspective to highlight tourists' motivation, attitudes, and experiences associated with bargaining. While there seems to be no formal definition within tourism studies, it is generally recognised that bargaining power can be exercised on both the production and consumption spectrum. However, because economic incentives have been recognised as the driving force behind bargaining, an understanding of bargaining power from an economic perspective could be particularly helpful to reveal how bargaining power varies across the production and consumption spectrum. Thus, this thesis defines bargaining power loosely on Porter's (1979; 2008) supplier - buyer power. This means that usually either the supplier (for example, the producer) or the buyer (the tourist) exercise power over the other through, for instance, the need of the consumer, the price or the quality of the offered tourism product/experience.

Third, *economic power* refers to a person or organisation's power over another group, leveraging financial situations (Seabrooke, 2006). This can affect power relations in both directions: having control over financial capital or not having control over (much) financial capital. Saito and Ruhanen (2017) referred to economic power as induced power which is a positive reinforcement to entice another stakeholders' obedience by offering rewards for obedience with a command. As the source of induced power is often associated with remunerations, stakeholders with considerable financial resources often hold this type of power (French and Raven, 2001). In a tourism destination context, this might include government bodies, large private sector organisations, as well as developers or even tourists.

Contextually, it is important to clarify that these three conceptualisations of power can operate simultaneously and as the circuit of culture model proposed, each element can influence the other because they function within a collaborative circuit (see for example, Thieme, 2018 study of backpacker tourism in Colombia). However, earlier tourism literatures concentrated economic and knowledge power on governments (though not restricted to these forms). Leong (1989) considers tourism in terms of a philosophy of power, space and encounter between people, arguing that the state is an unnoticeable power in tourism, through promoting infrastructural support for services, a state can exercise financial power, and influence the flow of growth in the tourism industry. Similarly, through policy frameworks, it can shape production towards its own desired cultural shift in the tourism experience. A study of forty-one European Union countries by Peeters, et al. (2021) illuminates the different ways that governments wield knowledge power in tourism and the emergent contentions among other stakeholders. For example, some governments instituted policies to address the phenomenon of over-tourism, including the imposition of environmental taxes (on tourists or accommodation providers), while in others, tourism policies and measures are (still) significantly directed towards the growth of visitor numbers, thereby neglecting (critical) issue of over-tourism (Peeters et al., 2021). The study found that in some destinations state power was contested by local cultural intermediaries who used poor execution and enforcement of policies as tactics to oppose the policies. Therefore, political elites with symbolic authority may influence the form a cultural event takes. But while intervening in the market through policies that revealed governments' knowledge and bargaining power over tourists, the state's power can also be influenced by the financial and bargaining power of tourists and local intermediaries to challenge such policies.

Regarding the locals (including cultural intermediaries), studies categorise much of their power as knowledge-based, exerted through performances and entrepreneurial activities in marketing,

advertising, public relations, media, fashion writing, the service professions, and the producers and marketers of symbolic goods (Featherstone, 2007). Through their entrepreneurial activities, they mediate between the cultural offering of a destination and the consumers, under marketisation and aestheticisation conditions, to influence cultural production and consumption processes, through which they try to dictate taste (See for example the ‘circle of representation’ by Jenkins, O., 2003). It is highlighted in some studies that some cultural intermediaries, such as local conservationists and those who support less intense economic growth, are not able to wield equal power (see Amore & Hall, 2016; Saarinen & Rogerson, 2014; Youdelis, 2016). However, the ability to wield power continuously shifts over time. Gold (2016) and Goldberg-Miller (2015) have demonstrated that entrepreneurial agencies and creatives are exerting an increasing influence over the commercial interests of festivals. The transformation of Toronto into a ‘Cultural Camelot’ (Goldberg-Miller, 2015:25) demonstrates the significant power of locals in cultural production. Goldberg-Miller observed how the locals (with the collaboration of urban planners, policymakers and elected officials) fostered a liveable city with a strong sense of community through diverse measures of urban life. The outcome of this new focus transformed Toronto into an innovation hub, strengthening urban cultural capital and achieving its strategic aim of competing in the global creative and tourism sectors, thus demonstrating the vast power of locals.

It is also necessary to interrogate the power of tourists alongside policy and practice in cultural production. In critical tourism geography, Kulusjarvi (2020), highlighted how the internationalisation of tourism, and its commitment to market logic, shows that local tourism politics increasingly favours the preferences of tourists and tourism organisations, thereby changing the local power dynamics. This idea highlights the market-oriented interpretation of development policies taken by destinations, where local culture and heritage are utilised and thus commodified as tourism offerings. Zhang et al’s (2018) study illustrates how bargaining

power can work from the consumption side. Analysing the shopping behaviour of domestic tourists in Nanjing, China, their empirical results indicate that tourists' taste and net surplus, as measures of relative economic and bargaining power, are heavily informed by their tripography and socio-demographic characteristics, with the former being more influential. They concluded that tourists exert stronger bargaining power over small-scale tourism producers. Also, Buhalis and Zoge (2007), showed that tourists exert their bargaining power through their ability to communicate directly over the internet with producers to influence changes in their desired destination, in some instances surpassing the bargaining power of producers at the destination. These studies show that although tourists might be conditioned to particular consumption products, they wield multiple forms of power through their ability to influence production with their purchasing power, and their ability to co-produce cultural resources, collaborate, and share knowledge as content creators (Good, 2017; Richards, 2020).

Following the last argument, Urry's (1990 & 2002) tourist gaze, becomes significant in examining social relations of power. Focusing on the tourist experience, Urry draws on Foucault's idea of the panopticon and posits that the inherent power of the tourist gaze on host actors and local sites parallels Foucault's disciplining power of surveillance. Urry focuses on what tourists view and how they interpret people and places, positioning the tourist as the powerful actor in tourism-mediated interactions. Also, even tourist photography becomes an active signifying practice in which knowledge and power are relevant features. Central to Urry's (1990) thesis is that an inherent and seemingly problematic power relationship is established when people and places are subjected to the surveillance of tourists. The tourist gaze has powerful consequences for the meanings ascribed to local culture and history, and the production and consumption of the tourist experience. This argument suggests that tourists and the tourism industry, through various media (visits to particular places, tourist photographs, destination marketing), selectively categorise and mark people and places in the host

destination, rendering characteristics acceptable whilst dismissing others as irrelevant (Urry, 1990). However, a consequence for host destinations is that a range of attractions and sights may be exploited and exoticised, whilst their meanings are reconstructed or deconstructed to fit the criteria dictated by mainstream tourist consumption (Urry, 1992). Equally, the representation of a destination's culture, history and its people may become increasingly contrived and commoditised to meet tourist expectations. Thus, the tourist gaze tends to otherise local populations (Urry, 1990).

In contrast to Urry, Cheong and Miller (2000) contend that Urry underexplains the strategies and techniques that tourism practitioners use to define, constrain, and guide the tourist gaze. Cheong and Miller observe that the networks of power in tourism are constantly shifting in response to the actions of those subjected to power and those exercising power. Thus, depending on the situation, the exercise of power in tourism may be both repressive and/or emancipating for locals. Rather than the agent of power, Cheong and Miller (2000:383) view the tourist as the target because, "while tourists do acquire a gaze, actor-target power relations guarantee that it is the 'touristic gaze' of actors that manufactures the sociological gaze of tourists that Urry describes." This argument is informed by the contention that tourists/consumers are susceptible to the manipulation of locals and destination officials, considering their easy identification (through their attire, accent, appearances, and collective touring), language challenges and lack of acquaintance with the local way of life (Cheong and Miller, 2000). For example, for earlier theorists of the Frankfurt School such as Theodore Adorno (1975), Max Horkheimer (1947) and Hebert Marcuse (1964), the rise of commodity production in the twentieth century signalled the explosion of tourism, leisure, and consumer products and activities. These scholars argued that the heightened accessibility of consumer goods and activities also expanded the potential for ideological regulation and control, in which consumers have succumbed to the invisible culture industry's seduction machinery. These



theorists interpreted culture, and leisure as the depraved by-products of the culture industry, consumed by people who have been turned into submissive robots, who accept constructed meanings as they were projected by its creators or what Hall (1980) termed the preferred reading.

However, the above perspective generated considerable critique from scholars (such as Lin et al.; 2021; Rössel, Schenk & Weingartner, 2017; McFall, 2011; Denzin, 2001), because it designated consumers as passive victims of a powerful and elitist culture industry. McFall acknowledge that consumption is not just about buying products and using facilities, rather, consumption offers a site where issues of power, ideology, gender and social class negotiate and shape one another. To start with, to assert control in consumption spaces, the powerful must force their order and ideology on both the communal and private spaces of the dominated who form the “silent majority” (de Certeau 1984: xvii). Whereas the dominated can actively oppose the existing power apparatus, or even overturn it. For example, de Certeau (1984) study on consumption tactics demonstrates how nuanced daily routines might support the weak in resisting the predominate spatial representations and reclaiming living space for their own use. For de Certeau (1984), while consumption is a set of tactics by which the weak resist the strong, a tactic is a premeditated act aiming for a chance to divert the scrutiny of absolute powers. Thus, numerous everyday life practices such as lodging, talking, shopping, and others, are tactical activities that can assist people use the products to disrupt and reorder the regulated realities ordered by the powerful. Drawing on this perspective, this thesis rejects the dismissive notion of consumers as passive victims in constituting cultural realities. Part of the aim of the current study is to pinpoint the power of consumers (tourists) in the construction of situated cultural meanings.

What these arguments inform is that cultural tourism in localities is characterised by the exchange between people in multiple locations, where the powerful forces of the local and the global are co-constitutive. As Todd (1996) observed, cities are where global processes are made tangible and brought home. My research partly analyses the role of tourists (global actors) in the curation (local dynamics) of culture, and the extent to which they exercise power in tourism dynamics, thus, the importance of examining how globalisation affects local power dynamics in the section below.

#### **2.4 Global-local flows in cultural tourism practices**

Cornelissen (2017) argues that the complex dimensions of tourism comprises various circuits, networks and flows of global trade, finance, transport, marketing and production, meaning that a wide array of actors with cross-scale power configurations are involved at the global, local and intermediate levels. Chapter One identified the need to study tourism politics beyond state-community. I also highlighted how the politics of cultural tourism is dynamic and includes the intersection of several stakeholders, at different geographic regions, times, and scales. Building on these arguments, this section discusses the global-local culture and tourism dynamics. Through reviewing the relevant literatures, I will highlight how culture is negotiated across geographic borders. As my empirical chapters will show, cultural tourism is characterised by the interchange between multiple global locations within a local place where the powerful forces of the local and the global are co-constitutive.

Globalisation has been described as the compression of time and space (Harvey, 1989); time shrinkage with ‘new fluidities of astonishing speed and scale’ (Urry, 2000); the move from solid, fixed modernity to a more fluid modernity (Bauman, 2013 & 2000); or death of distance (Cairncross, 1997). Critical to these definitions is that **globalisation** is a very strong force that interconnects people, capital, ideas, and information worldwide (Raikhan, Moldakhmet,

Ryskeldy, & Alua, 2014). Teo and Lim (2003) argue that the forces of globalisation are powerful enough to unify the world or lead to ‘a borderless global economy’ and society. For example, modern transport systems, fast food chains with franchises such as McDonald's attempting to unify consumer taste with almost 31,000 locations worldwide (Stearns, 2016); the pervasiveness of mobile phones and technologies are elements of globalisation that tend to homogenise and bring people of the world closer to each other. Although, importantly, Teo and Lim further counter argue that globalisation in reality is regularly negotiated by local influences and produces place-bound distinctiveness in diverse places, it does not necessarily overwhelm local particularities and cultures. However, in order to reify the global/local contradiction, I argue that culture is perpetually redefined, contested, and restructured because of globalisation.

Arguably, the increasing concern in global flows and forces has heightened interest in locality. While globalisation remains vital in culture and tourism research, it is increasingly difficult to establish what distinguishes local culture since the rapid pace of exchange between global and local culture flows is in constant flux. Nadel-Klein (1991:502) defined localisation as:

“the representation of group identity as defined primarily by a sense of commitment to a particular place and to a set of cultural practices that are self-consciously articulated and to some degree separated and directed away from the surrounding social world”.

In this sense, localisation articulates domestic cultural practices, and reinforces cultural identities of the local community by contrasting them with cultures in other geographic localities, be these real or virtual. However, what is questionable is, given the current globalisation realities, whether localities can boast of ‘pure’ traditional practices that have withstood relational global flows. I argue that in many situations, localisation is inextricably linked to global dynamics (capital, power and events) and can be understood as a response to the globalisation process. Just like Du Gay et al (1997) assert, locality should be viewed as

fluid and relational spaces, constituted within and through its relations to the global.

New Orleans' Mardi Gras festival is one of the most cited pieces of work that illustrates how global-local forces intersect and are negotiated in cultural tourism (Gotham, 2005 & 2007). Gotham observed that the growth of new public-private networks, linking transnational corporations with local organisations and agencies to create an exotic city, exploited culture (festival) to accumulate capital. For instance, Mardi Gras 'beads' production and consumption supports the 'playful deviance' that differentiates New Orleans's Mardi Gras. As Gotham elaborates, in New Orleans the possession of beads by an individual communicates the double function of fashion, to imitate the behaviours of other revellers while also distinguishing self from others. As a power of adaptation, beads bond consumers of Mardi Gras, while as a function of social distinction, they indicate the accumulation of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu's, symbolic capital relates to reputation, with backgrounds in other forms of capital possessed by an actor such as economic, social and cultural. This conveys that beads are valuable cultural assets for the individual and group identification in New Orleans. (Ihlen, 2018). However, Redmon (2014 & 2003) observed that several factories in China now produce most Mardi Gras beads. China, subsequently ships to New Orleans, where undressing and gifting beads is a traditional ritual exchange. But despite the global-local collaboration, it was evident that conflict and negotiation between residents and community groups who express local concerns, on the one hand, and tourism officials and corporations who consent to global forces, on the other, define the fault lines of power and control over tourism within modern New Orleans.

A significant issue raised by the co-constitution of globalisation and localisation is the contentions around cultural authenticity. Arguably, the potential of globalisation to disrupt real modern life, indicate that people are alienated from their authentic realities. According to

MacCannell (1973), the alienated modern tourist then searches for the rustic and the natural, unspoiled by civilisation for authentic consumption. The tourist is fascinated with other people's 'real lives', and seeks to locate it in other periods and places because it misses from one's own environment (MacCannell, 1976). For example, the busy and mechanised pattern of work in industrialised cities might compel city workers to seek escape in destinations perceived as unspoilt or at least, different from their usual places of work, for leisure. But, a weakness identified from MacCannell's approach is that he relegated the modern tourist as an observer, and in response to this there is a fabrication of local culture to create an impression of authenticity for a tourist audience, which he referred to as staged authenticity.

In contrast to MacCannell, Cohen (Cohen, 1988:374) claims that 'authenticity' is a socially constructed notion and therefore its social (as opposed to philosophical) meaning is 'negotiable'. Cohen observed that cultural systems, generate actual, authentic worlds understood as real to them, and the relative power of those involved in the construction of such realities determines the outcome. According to Jamal and Hill (2002:87): '...authenticity can be seen as a quality of objects ascribed to themselves and not a quality of objects themselves'. Peterson (2013) demonstrates that authenticity is socially fabricated; the pursuit of a 'creative voice' destabilises the authentic image, causing reality to evolve with time, actors, and places. However, a paradox in Peterson's theory of 'authenticity work' is that in engaging in authentic work, one would appear intrinsically inauthentic, conforming and not genuine. (whether the toured have such perceptions and, if so, the aspects of their own culture they deem 'genuine' have not been adequately developed in Africa, especially concerning its history with colonialism). Thus, considering the critique of authenticity, it is essential to analyse the power structures through which such impressions are staged, how they are understood from different perspectives and, as this research will show, how tourists are situated as subjects for such constructions, especially in curating culture. Yet, these discussions spur concerns about the

notion of hybridity as it challenges notions of the authentic, and reconfigures traditional social relations of power as a result of the global-local power dynamics (Bhabha, Homi K., 2012). This is discussed in the following sub-section, in connection with cultural conservation.

#### **2.4.1 The role of tourism in cultural conservation and the notion of hybridity**

As I discussed earlier, global and local stakeholders in cultural tourism constitute each other. But the inherent contradiction is that such constitutive dynamics transforms cultures, such that a key challenge for destinations is to balance the preservation of cultural assets (Lin et al., 2021). In seeking to understand the consequences of these conflicting processes, the concept of hybridity becomes significant (Bhabha, Homi K., 1994). As Bhabha argues, cultural hybridity is an outcome of circuitous power dynamics where globality is contested and negotiated by locality by moving through signs or symbolic diversions. This section discusses hybridity and balancing relations of cultural conservation among destinations in modernity. Arguments here will be linked to the theme of curation, since it is situated within three critical ideas through which power is performed namely; conservation, production and sharing of cultural knowledge (O'Neil, 2012 & 2013).

In social sciences, the study of conservation is a divergent field encompassing various approaches, frameworks, and practices, plus diverse groups and individuals, such as natural and social scientists, local museum curators, conservation organisations, and so on (Redford, 2018). Cultural conservation is a process of implementing actions intended to safeguard the cultural relevance of a heritage material or locality (De la Torre, 2013). This can come in the form of policy regulations and practice, and both have become increasingly significant in global destinations (Guzman, Pereira Roders, & Colenbrander, 2018; Shultis & Heffner, 2016). As Carbone (2016) observed, society has collapsed in this time of global change, increasing natural resource scarcity and cultural decay. The current neoliberal world of target-driven,

business strategies and instant economic justification intensifies these risks to society. Thus, societies are finding new ways of managing natural ecosystems to protect against these risks and boost sustainability and intercultural understanding. Tourism is one significant mechanism to achieve sustainable conservation and development outcomes (Job, Becken, & Lane, 2017).

While tourism has variously been accused of eroding local cultures in destinations (Shepherd, 2002), and tourists sometimes referred to as the destructive vandals (Bhati & Pearce, 2016); in contrast, Job, Becken, & Lane (2017) observed that, by default, tourism has become the protector of place's heritage and culture. Apart from economic benefits, tourism can account for the development of cultures, the preservation of historic places, cultural exchanges and, improved international understanding. Empirical research by Van Zyl (2005), reveals that countries that have been able to either preserve or revitalise historic towns and heritages have been in the forefront of the cultural tourism industry. The study found that tourism helps to preserve the culture of destinations by stimulating an interest in the culture and heritage of host societies towards reinventing cultural pride in the uniqueness of their culture and heritage. The local pride was reflected in the reinvention of cultural villages, which attracted more tourists from all over the world, drawn by the rustic ways of life that mirrors their ancient past. The study concluded that tourists from around the world are increasingly demanding a more responsible tourism product that supports the conservation of the cultural environment. Thus, the conservation of cultural resources and the process of its conversion into tourism products provided the motivation and the inducement necessary for revitalising ancient culture of host communities.

In the African understanding, cultural conservation efforts have been geared towards preserving native culture associated with ethnic heritage lost to colonisation, westernisation, globalisation, urbanisation, multiculturalism and industrialisation (Gilman, 2020). Zambia,

renowned for its emphasis on cultural conservation, provides an example of this as the tourism website clearly states: ‘The decline of traditional customs and culture has been brought about by the infiltration of the west and western ways and the melting pot of various tribes living in the same areas’ (see Gilman, 2020:2). Through the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Zambia enacted policy mechanisms to promote local cultural forms, including cultural practices like music, games, festivals, material arts, and delicacies. However, in Zambia and elsewhere in the region, international entities, governments and non-profit organisations are tasked with creating opportunities for people to produce and consume cultural phenomena in a struggle to sustain the same cultural heritage. As Flint (2006) suggested, there was an ideological shift in the region (as is the case in the global tourism sector) towards a symbiotic relationship between those in the cultural conservation sector and the tourism sector. Accordingly, tourism industries identify that modern tourists typically seek some form of cultural experience, they then romanticise certain aspects of culture in order to achieve the multiple functions of cultural conservation, improving socioeconomic levels, and satisfying the ever-changing tastes of tourists. Though the aspects of cultures presented to outsiders is claimed to be staged, or an imitation of actual practices within the local communities, the state-directed folklorisation of these indigenous traditions often result to the hybridisation of culture (Ó Briain, 2014).

Regarding cultural hybridity, post-colonial philosophers (following critical work by Bhabha (1994; 2012) have explored the concept of cultural hybridity as the blending of diverse cultures. Bhabha (2012) defines hybridity as the mixing and modification of elements from different social groups in ways that threaten pre-existing power relations. The central point of cultural hybridity is that it reconstitutes subjects (from multiple cultural origins) to create a cultural newness, and new meanings that subverts established culturally subjective foundations. For instance, Pieterse (1995:53) presents the following list of ‘hybrid’ phenomena: Thai boxing by



Moroccan girls in Amsterdam, Asian rap in London, Irish bagels, Chinese tacos and Mardi Gras Indians in the United States, or 'Mexican schoolgirls dressed in Greek togas dancing in the style of Isadora Duncan'. This lists' unusual mix of cultural phenomena challenge the notion of cultures as internally coherent and geographically separated units. Hybridity is also employed to grasp points, which are 'on the margin' - neither completely inside nor outside. As Bhabha (1994:2) theorised, this state of cultural 'betweenness' occupies an 'in-between space which provides the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood, singular or communal - that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation'. Bhabha argues that the arrival of these spaces, the overlap and displacement of domains of difference, sustain the renegotiations of cultural value. Bhabha's hybrid identity compels new members to adhere to the shared space, while also preserving their original culture in some ways.

Alternatively, the terrain of hybridity is a contradictory space where power forces overlap. Friedman (1999) posited that celebrating hybridity is an elitist perspective since opportunities provided by the crossing of territorial and cultural borders can only be exploited by privileged groups. Friedman further explained that labelling others as 'hybrids' is an act of power by the cosmopolitan elite as it is a way of depriving them of their right to self-identification. This means that hybridity is only meaningful when it is an act of self-definition, not when it is used as a way of defining others. On another note, Bhabha (1994) criticised the binary oppositions of 'us/them' and 'self/Other' typically associated with hybridity and considered them as too narrow and oversimplified and failing to recognise processes of negotiation and resistance by those marginalised. These dissenting arguments signify that the terrain of hybridity is more about power and rhetoric than cultural essence. Notwithstanding, they highlight how power relations can reconstitute people. Amoamo and Thompson's (2010) study of how Māori (New Zealand) culture is re-imagined as the exotic for tourism consumption, can illustrate further.

The study found that in an attempt to constitute touristic identity, Māori created a hybrid identity through representations that challenged established culture and identity categorisations. Although such development promoted conflicting ideas that presented new indigenous self-determination and resistance techniques by some locals, past traditions became vulnerable to (re)interpretation and newness through the tourism encounter. Thus, Bhabha's theories about establishing cultural newness underpin my argument that contemporary tourism practices intertwine with notions of cultural conservation and hybridity. Through cultural and tourism exchanges and re-negotiations with a dynamic network of people, the uniqueness and perceived realities of people are (re)negotiated (Ryan & Picken, 2017), existing norms critiqued and exoticism, as a mode of cultural representation becomes the difference which tourists seek.

#### **2.4.2 Exoticism and cultural newness, the possibilities of a cultural co-coloniality.**

There has been a wide range of literature interpreting cultural exoticism as the representation of ethnic others from superior imperialist sensibilities (Elmarsafy, 2003; Marcuse, P., 2004; Said, Edward, 1978), but there remains a dearth of studies exploring the modern destinations' ethico-political agenda, notably as a valuable strategy for cultural dialogue with the cosmopolitan tourism market, and consumers' self-empowerment. This section addresses these viewpoints and links it with a term I refer to as 'cultural co-coloniality' within the people-power dynamics in cultural tourism practices.

Exoticism is a highly contested discourse on cultural difference, most commonly identified in the context of Said's (1979) *Orientalism* (see also, Said, 1978; 1975). Said (1978) described exoticism as the broader lens through which Europe viewed 'the East', which validated European conquest, control, and escapism fantasies. Such imaginaries are reflected in all aspects of sociocultural life and practices, notably in architecture, literature, arts, dance, theatre,

dress and religion. In tourism, Boonzaaier and Wels (2018) demonstrated how the West heavily relies on images of cultural ‘Others’ from the colonial past. They highlighted a colonial heritage that fascinates the West but debases the Western view of cultural ‘Others’ to stereotypes of Africans, the Orient, or other outsiders of Western civilisation. The binarism of us and them, conceals power imbalance because the capacity to characterise and represent diversity is found in the colonial and patrician mode of privilege and authority. However, the extent to which the West still wields such power in contemporary cultural production in postcolonial African societies demands further analysis.

This thesis takes a more flexible approach to understanding cultural exoticism by suggesting that cosmopolitanism underlies modern exoticisation approaches in tourism destinations, rather than colonial dispositions. Berghahn’s (2017) study about encounter with cultural difference illustrates how the geospatial dynamics of globalisation have transformed the exotic imaginary and its ideological underpinnings in world cinema. The study found that the contemporary construction of Self and Other downplays the binary logic of the old imperial exotic. Through the visual spectacle of natural beauty, the fascination of otherness, and collaboration, producers use exoticism to attract global audiences and promote cross-cultural dialogue that forms a model of a new type of exotic world. As I discussed previously, globalisation has transformed encounters with cultural difference, leading to cultural hybridisation and a disposition towards cosmopolitanism. Considering this stance, exoticisation is conceptualised in this thesis as a ‘cross-cultural commodity fetishism’ (Chow, 1995), that includes processes such as the deconstruction of stereotypical images of the ‘charming primitive’ (Claire, 2018) and the use of local culture and natural beauty to achieve economic interests (Setiawan and Subahianto, 2019). These definitions put exoticism within the realm of modern ethical, political and aesthetic power dynamics, which we might see through the lens of neoliberal consumer culture under capitalism.

Thus, while older notions of exoticism highlight the inequality of power by the West over the Orient or subaltern regions (Said, 1979; 1985; Elmarsafy et al., 2003; Marcuse, 2004), exoticism is also now utilised to highlight a cosmopolitan form of self-representation, which moves the focus away from the colonial narrative (Chow, 1995; Ostrowska, 2018; Claire, 2018; Setiawan and Subahianto, 2019). Through this second reading, the exoticisation of culture represents a strategic approach to cultural representation to achieve place imaginaries for national and local governments. I argue that, particularly from the African perspective, exoticisation provides a framework through which to understand how traditional cultural expressions are translated by the neoliberal tourism market in ways that are not rigidly oriented towards conservation and western domination, but a liberal co-creation of knowledge. Building on this review, I will articulate the concept of ‘cultural co-coloniality’ in the next section.

#### **2.4.3 Framing cultural co-coloniality in tourism practices.**

By the term cultural co-coloniality, I propose that encounters with cultural differences are a reciprocal process that destabilises established hierarchies between the West and its exotic Others among destinations. As Salazar (2010) suggests, at the root of cultural tourism lies historically laden and socio-culturally constructed imaginaries, powerful enough to construct peoples and places, with multiple and often conflicting perceptions of Otherness. Producers and consumers rely on these imaginaries to help translate cultural practices for themselves, to understand from the most spectacular fantasies to everyday realities. In tourism practices, while state producers might rely on their readings of tourists’ preferences with the hope of improving positive returns, consumers may rely on their perceptions of the destination (modern exotic images, perhaps informed by the media or personal contacts) with the anticipation of a positive experience. The implication of such imaginaries on production and consumption might either widen a stereotype, or long-standing cultural hierarchies among groups of people or enhance inter-cultural exchange. Thus, informed by my earlier discussions of Bhabha’s (1996)

hybridity, and Soja and Hooper's (1993) new cultural politics (discussed in Chapter One), I propose the concept of 'cultural co-coloniality' to refer to a range of perceptions and practices which allows mutuality. For cultural tourism, this concept proposes a system where cultural knowledge is produced beyond Third World and Eurocentric dichotomies, overcoming the unequal ideals of Euro-centric modernity without discarding the best of modernity. With reference to the term, relationships are not based on dominating or jettisoning local particularities but on mutual interaction with the supposed other. Since local cultures no longer have a complete traditional reality because of the hybridity of modern societies (Setiawan and Subaharianto, 2018), tourism destinations adopt diverse traditional expressions, mixed with innovations to satisfy the cosmopolitan subjects, who in turn, exploits those expressions to satisfy self-taste. Further to this, the concept proposes the construction of radical spaces where the local and global constitute each other to form spaces and events jointly created through flows of cosmopolitan tourism dispositions. For instance, cultural tourism events across Africa, Asia or the West might localise the flamboyant costume perceived to be native to the Caribbean (carnival) culture (for example, evident in the case of the Notting Hill Carnival), mobilising cosmopolitanism rather than the supremacy of some cultures over others. In this case, rather than claim dominance, societies interact in a circuit of socio-cultural exchange and synergy, creating new meanings and perceptions.

Scholars who critique globalisation might accuse this concept of eroding cultural differences and situating power in a universal system to bring an end to geography (Yeung, 1998). However, I suggest this is not the case as cultural tourism involves learning about people and places, therefore I am arguing for a borderless system of knowledge creation as regions and cultures are 'adopting' aspects of 'others' to 'adapt' to changing global realities in the struggles against race, power, capitalism and euro-centred modernity. This does not demean universalism and particularism; they are rather conjoined to enhance knowledge of tourism, as

a complex phenomenon, which influences particular identities and practices, and can in turn be influenced, in a highly interconnected world. This submission differs profoundly from the infamous forerunners of exoticism, which is premised on assumptions of European supremacist beliefs over the other, and helped to justify colonial expansion and exploitation. It instead emphasises how intertwined social actors, geographic locations and destinations are, as co-dependent creative agents, able to challenge and construct their own sense of social identity as it suits their prevailing (social, political, economic, spiritual and moral) needs.

So far, literature review has shown that cultural tourism involves a dynamic network of people who negotiate and contest each other as local, national and global forces intersect in a tourism setting. Du Gay et al's (1997) circuit of culture model has also offered insights into how people interact with key cultural processes including production, consumption, representation, regulation and identity construction. In reviewing Du Gay et al, I proposed that the notions of power and cultural curation should be included as distinct nodes in the circuit. While I have analysed literary works on how the critical stakeholders negotiate intricate power relations, in the next section, I will first explain the notion of curation and finally, offer an initial revision of Du Gay et al. to my proposed 'neo-circuit of cultural tourism' model, which this study advances to situate power and curation/tourists.

## **2.5. Developing a neo-circuit of cultural tourism model: Tourists as modern curators of culture**

As I highlighted earlier, Job, Becken, & Lane (2017), note that by default, tourism has become the guardian of place's heritage and culture by playing an important role in shaping the conservation of culture. In this section, I define the meaning of cultural curation, highlighting also, the ways tourists themselves curate culture. I suggest a development of Du Gay et al's

model to include curation and power and describe this as the ‘neo-circuit of cultural tourism’ model, through which this thesis proposes tourist as modern cultural curators.

Golding & Modest (2013) describe that a curator holds a range of meanings (custodian, steward, keeper, guardian), which positively emphasises care while negatively foregrounding hierarchies of power and a rigidity of process. This definition highlights the role of curators as safeguarding culture while acting as intermediaries among stakeholders, to forestall drastic changes that diverse stakeholders’ relations and neo-liberal policies might introduce. In a cultural sense, curators are cultural custodians who hold and make accessible large parts of history, heritage, and culture (Christine Kreps, 2013, Yeung, 1998). They are collectors, custodians, and circulators of natural history, material culture, and situated cultural meanings. There tends to be no literature which explicitly categorises tourists as modern cultural curators, as most research focuses on curators as cultural intermediaries at museums, and of artwork and exhibition spaces especially (Arnold, 2013, Christine, 2013; Golding and Modest, 2013; Kreps Christina, 2008; Richards, 2021). However, there are significant literatures, pointing to the creative role of tourists in cultural curation. To begin with, several boundaries between cultural practices, place and audience during the 1960s became unclear, provoking a shift towards market-driven, object-based art in the 1980s (O’Neill, 2012). During this era, while practices of ‘curation’ become integral to the performance of intangible heritage, the shifts further altered the system of artistic value creation away from the dominance of the intermediary art broker and towards the curator, who exercised cultural power by selecting the sources of value (Christine, 2013). In performing this role, Christine saw that the curator indulged in stylistic innovations, where cultural practices became stylised extension of branded cultural identities, physical manifestations of subjective curator self-presentation.

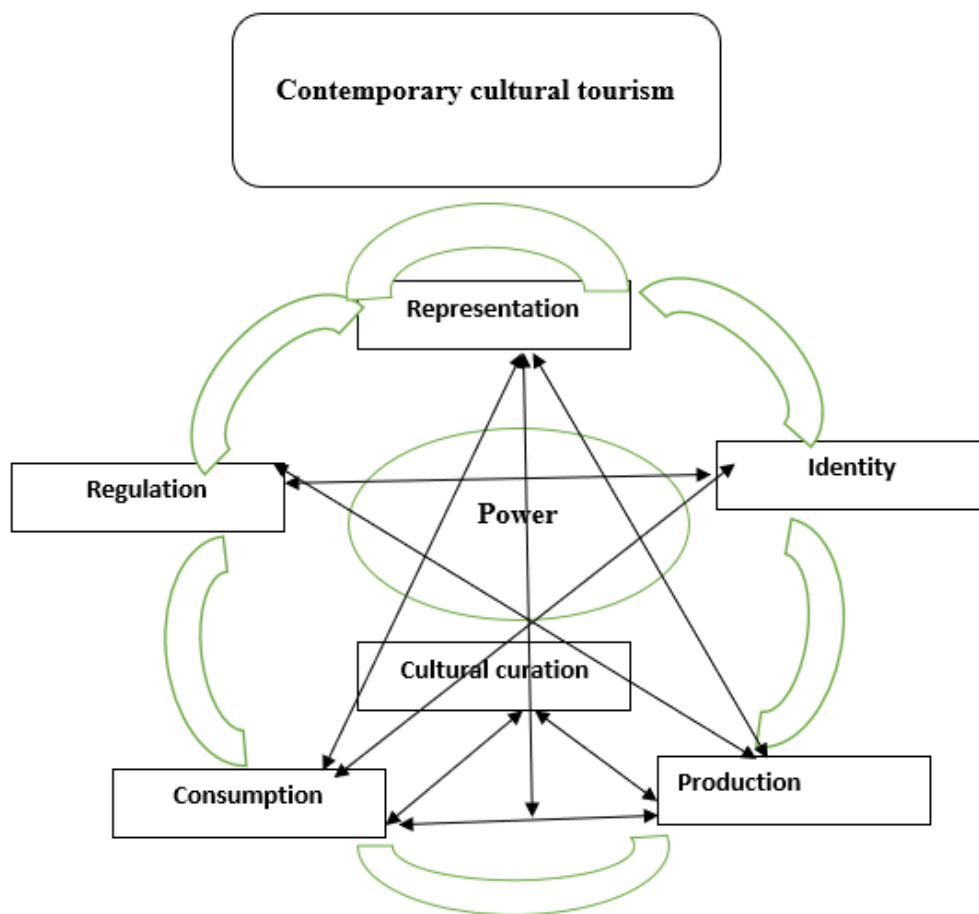
More so, Kreps (2008) suggested that, as destinations attempt to effectively attend to the needs of their diverse communities, institutions have become more receptive to those needs and interests. Additionally, they have developed a greater tolerance for opposing opinions and a greater awareness of the rights of various people to participate in how local cultures are represented and curated. Now, in numerous cultural institutions, co-curating materials and performances as well as engaging local communities is prevalent (Brown & Peers, 2005). Because of these actions, a more co-curatorial approach that is both culturally relevant and acceptable needs to be empirically established.

Richards (2021:9) observes similar shifts in curatorial practice within the tourism industry as a ‘creative turn’ which shifts exchange value to relational value, highlighting the multiplication of new identities and roles in cultural tourism. Richards points out how the art of curation has become essential, particularly in the digital age where content creators act as present-day trusted guides, helping us to understand the world around us and ourselves. While Good (2017) and O’Neil (2012) emphasised the role of digital content creators as curators, Richards situated the tourist as a content creator, highlighting how they are assuming the role of curators and acting as gatekeepers to cultural portals. For Richards, these culturally curated resources become shortcuts to understanding the essence of something, and they also shape and define the perimeter of who we are, what we seek and give value to. However, while Richards and others have focused on the role of tourists as curators through the digital space, this study combines with empirical data to demonstrate how tourists can practically perform as modern curators by propelling destinations to reinvent and preserve local cultures to create the uniqueness that tourists seek.

Thus, in this thesis I suggest to extend Du Gay et al.’s (1997) model to include these two features: power and curation as essential constituents of cultural tourism dynamics. Though



they are sometimes regarded as separate features, they are actually highly interconnected as the below figure 2 shows. While I present an initial revision of Du Gay et al.' to include power and curation identified as a gap in literature, I however, combined my fieldwork evidence to further present an updated version to ground the framework empirically, while situating tourists as modern cultural curators. The practices of 'curation' have become integral to the performance of intangible heritage (Kreps, 2008).



**Figure 2: the neo-circuit of cultural tourism: initial revision**

Source: Author

This model demonstrates the interconnectedness of stakeholders in the processes of meaning-making within a continual negotiation of cultural resources and power (Pearce, 2013). This framework suggests the intertwining of producers and consumers as co-actors in creating situated cultural meanings through exploiting cultural resources, curating culture, constructing symbolic meanings that come to represent people, and developing identities in a localised setting. Johnson (1986) argues that the values of cultural resources are constantly disseminated and converted in production and consumption and lived cultures across geographical and historical settings. My framework may assist in understanding these dynamisms among people, time, space and power. Clearly, from the drawing, power is centrally positioned in ways that all the elements cut across power diversely. More often than not, the state and enterprise are thought to wield economic and political power to overpower others towards their own interests. However, from our discussions about the different forms of power, we can understand that the politics of cultural tourism involves diverse power relations and endless negotiations among people, who exploit cultural values, aesthetic and economic fundamentals to influence the outcomes of relationships with others (see Ateljevic 2000). Within the circuit, first, tourism producers package cultural resources within the commitments of indigenous cultural and international tourism demand; second, through consumption, tourists construct their cultural knowledge and readings based on universal norms and specific cultural values; third, tourists' consumption and their readings of it are incorporated into local lived culture, and in particular crystallises to represent local social relation; fourth, the modifications and conversions in culture feeds into local cultural conservation policies and practice and back into production of culture for tourism. This circuit recognises the active ability of diverse stakeholders to construct, modify and challenge meanings.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined key debates on cultural tourism dynamics, providing insights into critical ideas around people, culture and power relations. As a concept, cultural tourism is multifaceted and challenging to define, however, the contributions of Richards (2018) and Stebbins (1996) crucially informed my definition which pays attention to integrating the individual and social dimensions of experience in its conceptualisation. I continued to analyse festivals as cultural sites for socio-political negotiations, highlighting that festivals are interactive and performative spaces, enabling people to express themselves and negotiate broad socio-political and cultural issues, (Getz, 2012) such as urban entrepreneurialism, shared identity and place branding. Yet, festivals are sites of power exchanges, involving diverse actors across multiple geographic frontiers (Cudny, 2016).

To understand the linkages between people, power and culture in tourism interactions, the chapter moved to discuss Du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture model with its five relational moments of regulation, production, consumption, representation and identity. These were usefully applied in explaining how cultural meanings are produced and consumed in a dynamic cycle, shaped and modified by diverse stakeholders (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). Following the review of Du Gay et al.'s model, I examined the key stakeholders who construct these moments and their inherent power dynamics. Power was discussed from three perspectives namely knowledge power (Foucault, 1980), bargaining power (Porter, 2008) and economic power (Seabrooke, 2006). The analysis of existing works reveals that different stakeholders exercise different power forms, sometimes multiple and concurrent. Further, the complex dimensions of cultural tourism, comprising various networks and flows, mean that these relationships are affected by internal and external influences. This led to an examination of the global-local dynamics of cultural tourism which concludes that locally constituted relationships mediate globalisation, however, the local is constituted only in, and through its relations to the global

(Teo and Li, 2003). Therefore, a growing concern amongst authors is the challenge for destinations to balance the preservation of cultural assets (Lin et al., 2021). The notions of hybridity and conservation were discussed as outcomes of circuitous power dynamics where globality is contested and locality negotiates a balance to protect heritage while satisfying the emergent tourist taste by converting cultural elements into the exotic (Bhabha, 1994). Thus, rather than the earlier colonial narratives often associated with the exotic, exoticisation comes to represent a strategic approach of self-representation by destinations, in response to neoliberal tourism market in ways not rigidly oriented towards conservation (Setiawan and Subaharianto, 2019). Sequel to this understanding, I developed the concept of cultural co-coloniality, to demonstrate how people and geographies are socio-culturally intertwined, as co-dependent creative agents, able to challenge and construct their own sense of social world as it suits their cultural tourism needs. Finally, I proposed that the notions of power and cultural curation should be added as independent nodes in Du Gay et al (1997) circuit of culture. The rationale being that cultural curation is a rapidly growing practice and discourse that is fundamentally shifting the ways in which we view and live out culture (Kreps, 2017), while changes in power dynamics between stakeholders in the process of modern tourism development have necessitated an enhanced empirical analysis. Thus, in the last section, I advanced the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, situating power as a central feature of this model and identifying tourists as modern cultural curators. In the next chapter, I will describe my methodology before discussing the working of the neo-circuit of culture through the empirical case study of Calabar festival.

## Chapter Three

### Methodological approach: Researching the Calabar Festival

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this research, I investigated the dynamic interaction between the (Cross River State) government, tourists, and locals as they interact and challenge each other in the processes of producing and consuming culture in the Calabar Festival. This chapter describes the design of the study's methodology, research philosophy, strategy, procedures for data collection and analysis. I adopted an ethnographic approach, applying three methods of data collection namely; In-depth interview and participant observation techniques for collecting primary data, while information from policy documents and promotion brochures were collected as secondary data. The rationale for the use of each method is expressed through constructivist philosophical assumption and justification. I employed thematic data analysis, building on major themes and issues that had been identified from the literature. At the end of this chapter I provide contextual information about the Calabar Festival in relation to its geo-political setting. The underlying questions that guided this research are:

- 1)What is the nature of the power relations between the (Cross River State) government, tourists and local communities in the production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival?
- 2)How do tourists perform as modern cultural curators within contemporary tourism circuits of interaction?
- 3) What sociocultural changes are induced by tourism politics on the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture?

### **3.2 The Research process**

This research examines the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria, analysing the dynamic interaction of stakeholders in the production and consumption of culture in a specific cultural tourism event. It also seeks to understand how tourism dynamics, vis-a-vis the power of several tourism stakeholders, shape cultural practices and tourism outcomes in the localised setting. Adopting a neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework, as described in the last chapter, has implications for how cultural tourism politics is conceptualised in this thesis (see Chapter two). The neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework highlighted how power cuts across all the relational processes in the cultural tourism circuit of interaction, including cultural production, consumption, representation, regulation, curation, and identity construction. Within this context, while culture is understood as a struggled-over set of social relations, shot through with the structures of power (Don Mitchell, 2000), power is seen as a multi-level construct, which may represent both a capacity and a relational effect of social interaction, influenced by wider structures of cultural politics (Allen, 2003; MacLeod and Carrier, 2010). This positioning act as a setting within which power relations is marked by endless negotiations and contestations in cultural events with different stakeholders across geographic settings. To facilitate an understanding of the complexity of the cultural tourism processes involving culture, people, and power, the constructivist method, linked to critical theory is used to understand how contextual and cultural differentials construct reality (Marvesti, 2003). This is grounded on the idea that relationships constantly change with time, conveying unique attributes and frameworks based on their context (such as cultural, political, and economic factors). These changes have impacts on people's perceptions of the world and how they interact.

From an ontological standpoint, this study views reality as complex, socially constructed, and dependent on personal or collective experiences in particular local situations (Guba and Lincoln, 2011). Guba and Lincoln point out that although reality exists, the numerous actors involved in the production of reality change, and their relationships can change what they represent. For example, the link between production and consumption cannot be constant, and the changes in connection can arbitrate reality. Also, Kincheloe and McLaren (2011) observed that the interaction between signified and signifier, objects, and concepts are certainly not constant but frequently facilitated through the social interactions of capitalism's demand and supply (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). Endogenous and exogenous variables impact and alter these interactions as they evolve over time and space. Based on this ontology, the reality of cultural tourism and its associated elements, particularly festivals and stakeholders, can be understood through a structure-agency relationship, important to assist us appreciate how reality is produced (Jessop, 2001), the nature and use of power in society and the ways in which different social groups attempt to negotiate and challenge dominant social relations (Chouinard 1996).

In my neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework, structures of power (constituted by social and cultural relationships) act together with individual and collective agency (stakeholders) to negotiate an equilibrium (cultural outcomes). The agency principle acknowledges that individuals are not passive beings but rather active agents in constructing a dynamic social world, constantly adjusting their behaviours according to their interactions with others (Jessop, 2001). The instance of stakeholders in the relational circuit of interaction emphasised how power evolves through social interactions and occurs from how people interpret the actions of others and adjust their own behaviour.

The structure represents the processes, regulations and forces through which stakeholders extend certain dominant economic and social forces in cultural production, curation, consumption, representation, and identity construction, also allowing certain negotiations for varied interests (Cox 1993). Consequently, individuals can independently introduce actions or exhibit choices in the development of cultural tourism (an independence derived from their economic power, knowledgeable and rational negotiating characters). However, people are simultaneously restricted by or susceptible to the social and economic systems that sustain the growth of the tourism industry and the preservation of cultural assets. Thus, while distinct components of society are inherently dependent on one another, they also oppose each other (Ogbor, 2001). As Carr (2000) observed, conflicts constitute cultural tourism processes and its diverse constituents, like other parts of social existence. To illustrate, tourism producers gather and organise cultural tourism commodities in view of the consumers' taste and demands. Consumers' on the other hand, impact on the cultural goods and services they consume and their influence feeds back into production. Yet, when their benefits and needs for cultural tourism are difficult to harmonise, conflicts may arise from disparate taste and power relations. Consequently, groups with sufficient access to scarce resources could have substantial influence on planning and policy decisions and those with less power may have less opportunities to influence decisions. The oppositions enhance the appreciation of the multifaceted interactions entangled in cultural tourism, mainly because its considerations go beyond isolating individual fundamentals - such as the cultural assets, the populace, and spaces, to considering co-dependence and conflicts.

Epistemologically, this study assumes that knowledge about tourism politics is believed to be personal and subjective. It is believed that the data produced are the outcome of the interaction between the researcher and the subjects of enquiry (Alharahsheh, & Pius, 2020). These interactions are critical to creating knowledge, even though the researcher is likely to have



some influence on findings because the researcher is involved in the subjective constructions of those under investigation. While constructivism assumes that individual perspectives can be constructed primarily through interaction between, and among the researcher and the participants being researched, its positioning allows an enhanced understanding of the dynamic interactions in cultural tourism, which involves complex relationships between cultural assets, actors, and power relations. As Kincheloe and McLaren further pointed out, the relationships can change as sociohistorical frameworks change. I adopted this epistemological stance to investigate different stakeholder's motives and actions and analyse how these reflect their exchanges and cultural outcomes in relation to cultural tourism. In line with proponents of critical models (Guba and Lincoln, 2004; Guillemin and Gillam, 2004; Pillow, 2003), the findings of this thesis are considered the outcome of interactions between the researcher and the subjects of research; thus, findings are thought to be value-mediated (by both the researcher and the researched). This has provided a useful method to enable my interpretations of tourism politics, how people construct and understand the cultural world, the varied power, and influences of people in mediating culture, and to assess the consequences of tourism politics on culture and tourism events.

### **3.2.3 Qualitative methods: An ethnographic approach**

Broadly, the aim of this study is to provide an enhanced understanding of the interactions of people, culture and power relations in the Calabar Festival context. This research adopted a qualitative approach in order to interpret cultural tourism stakeholder' interaction dynamics within their natural setting. Specific to power relations, scholars (for example, Tribe and Liburd, 2016; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013) have called for more theorisation to challenge the conventional simplistic binaries that dominate literature in light of increased global mobility, cultural exchanges, and commercialised relationships. Through the use of qualitative approaches, this study engenders new knowledge concerning the performance of tourists as

cultural curators in a specific setting, adding an insightful dimension to relations of power which have remained underdeveloped in tourism studies. In line with Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2013), qualitative research help researchers to gain a deeper understanding of people and their interactions with cultural tourism assets, to determine how meanings are formed within and through culture, and the impacts of these interactions on social environments and structures. Thus, rather than taking a quantitative and positivist approach which assumes that there is reality independent of people, their beliefs and interrelations, my study adopted a qualitative approach to enhance understanding of these interaction processes, power dynamics and structure of networks (Silverman, and Patterson, 2021). As I highlighted earlier, this research also recognises dialectical perspectives (Shannon-Baker, 2016) because, they help us appreciate the nature and use of power in society and how various social collections negotiate and contest established power structures to form reality. Reality, according to critical theory needs understanding through a pragmatic framework based on gathered data and knowledge (How, 2017).

Particularly, this enquiry involves analysis of the dynamic interaction between the (Cross River) state government, locals, and tourists in the processes of producing and consuming culture in the Calabar Festival. This character necessitated that the researcher studied people as a member of their cultural environment to gain an enhanced understanding of their patterns of interaction, views, actions and influences on each other. In cultural studies, ethnography has been described as ideal for examining issues of power (amongst others) in cultural processes (Van Loon, 2007) due to the flexibility in its usage. As Bohman (1991) observed, ethnographic investigation of culture and tourism practices unravels complexities by observing actual social practices through situated, empirical description, rather than focusing only on idealised reconstructions or action. For example, doing ethnography meant that the researcher went through the experience of ‘going native’ (Labaree, 2002: 116) for an extended period,

observing and interacting as active participants in studying the particulars of peoples' everyday occurrences and gathering first hand data. During the period, the researcher actively took part in some official processes (such as stakeholders' meetings and planning conferences, working at the offices within weekdays to gain first hand understanding of stakeholders' relationships, practices, and others). This process permitted me to observe some micro processes and protocols that interviews could not have revealed, such as unspoken cues and body languages. The ethnographic method was designed to gain an understanding of these dynamic interactions, perceptions and action, by being within and outside the research process as a researcher and a research tool (Madden, 2017) within this research's case study.

#### **3.2.4 Case study approach and rationale for the case study selected**

Case study research approach involves a systematic analysis of specific subject, group, event or current phenomena within their practical settings (Schoch,2020). Schoch notes that the advantage of case studies is that they can generate detailed analysis on a subject using many sources, such as observation and interviews on a case or situations. This implies that daily and critical occurrences can be observed as they occur, allowing researchers to have a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Earlier studies (such as Cohen,1989; Ritchie and Inkari, 2006; Tosun, 2002) have effectively applied the case study approach to understanding social phenomenon. Typically, scholars indicate that case study approaches help to demystify their preconceptions post research experience (see for example, Sotomayor, 2017 research in Peru) in ways that enhance perception of life's complexity (Thomas, 2021). However, despite the beneficial attributes, Willis, Jost, & Nilakanta (2007) critique case study approaches as methodologically inadequate, claiming they are merely descriptive, lack analytical rationality, and offer very few grounds for generalisability to other situations. Responding to this critique, Hyett et al. (2014), among others, points out that the construction of a robust theoretical framework can enhance the accuracy, reliability, and validity of

qualitative case studies. This improves the researcher's capacity to analyse the information gathered and relate it to the aims and objectives of the study. Moreover, analysis of the data produced from a case study may be utilised to develop new theory or to emphasise theoretical questions that may be generalised to other relevant contexts (Yin, 2013). As Xiao and Smith (2006) observed, the value of case study method rests in their capacity to consolidate many methodologies on a specific subject to develop an interpretation in connection with explicitly stated research questions.

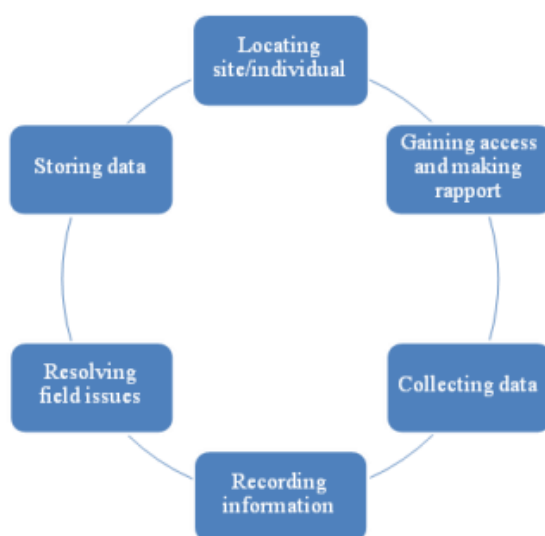
Since this study is based on a particular cultural event, a case study approach was chosen to interpret cultural tourism politics more inclusively, in relation to case-specific interactions of people, power and culture in the study context. The aim was to enable a more focused and in-depth observation and analysis of contextual issues in the Calabar Festival processes. These issues include stakeholders' relations of power, viewpoints and behaviours to relational cultural practices and processes (of production, consumption, regulation, representation, curation, and identity construction), their type of relationships, how they influence each other including culture and tourism outcomes. Additionally, Yin (2013) further defines a single case study as an empirical investigation that examines a contemporary event within its actual world, particularly when the lines between research object and setting are not readily visible. Cultural tourism is made up of both historical and contemporary elements, making it challenging to separate the phenomena from its environments. The rationale behind selecting a single case study, as forwarded by Denscombe (2003), is one might obtain ideas from examining a particular case which could have broader implications and, notably, that could not have been unearthed with the use of a research strategy that encompasses a vast number of cases. Thus, using a case study technique can be useful for understanding a scenario or body of knowledge in connection to its general components and uncovering occurrences based on specific actual experiences (Dul and Hak, 2007; Yin and Davis, 2007). Also, a single case study was used by

the researcher to test (validate or critique) the application of the proposed neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework, and contribute significantly to research and theory. Here, using a single case study is systematic, to curtail the possibilities of misrepresentation and to capitalise on the needed access in collecting the case study data (Yin, 2009).

Specifically, the choice of studying the Calabar Festival is based on two key reasons. First, the popularity of the Calabar Festival in Nigeria's policy and research as the strongest tourism brand, which hosts the 'biggest and longest multi-dimensional, multi-faceted tourism leisure and entertainment event in West Africa' (CRSTB, 2018:14; Carlson and Micots, 2022; Akpan and Archibong, 2017) is one justification. The multidimensional outlook of the Calabar Festival means that it entertains a variety of cultural expressions on a local, national, and international level, creating a unique and interactive space for cultural producers and consumers to interact. Thus, the festival can offer a significant setting to assess numerous negotiations concerning people, power, and culture, yet, it has remained under explored in academics. Second, as a tourism-driven economy, the festival's host city, Cross River state is known as the tourism hub of the country, with rich cultural resources and commercial opportunities (Williams Effiong, 2009). The increasing commercial opportunities aided by the Calabar Festival and the politicisation of tourism, have also enhanced the marketisation of cultural and heritage resources to meet the increasing demand of the tourist market. As I mentioned in chapter one, the festival attracts millions of people to the city and it is observed that the influx of tourists has introduced some dramatic transformations to the local culture and people's everyday existence (Amalu et al, 2021). The dynamics of the festival offers a setting where everyday encounters with tourists lead to performances of power and resistance played out in the arenas of production and consumption of cultural tourism. Thus, the Calabar Festival offers an important context to study the sociocultural changes induced by tourism politics on the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture.

### 3.3 Methods of Data collection and analysis

This research employed a qualitative approach, to link theory, practise, and more extensive results. In-depth interviews and participant observation were used to investigate the interactions between cultural tourism stakeholders, their relations of power, influence on one another and on cultural processes. While I conducted a pilot study in December 2017, there were two rounds of fieldwork in December 2018 and 2019, with interviews spanning into 2020. The combination of the methods also helped the researcher to identify consistent patterns across interview responses, actual actions and observed realities. Following Lincoln and Guba (1985), the data were transcribed and coded, enabling an extensive description and clarification of quality information. This analysis aided an enhanced understanding of the interaction of stakeholders, especially their relevance to power, the kinds of relationships they had, the changes induced by tourism dynamics on Calabar culture and the Calabar Festival. The data gathering procedures for this study (see Figure 3) adhered to the several stages of data collection procedures described by Creswell (2013).



**Figure 3: Data collection processes**

Source, Creswell (2013).

Initially, there was need to identify prospective participants that could supply detailed evidence as ideal candidates for interrogation concerning the research subject. The preliminary identification of policy making participants for interview was done through informal conversation with a personal acquaintance who works as the personal assistant to the secretary of the Carnival Calabar Commission. As an insider, the acquaintance was familiar with the organisational structure of the various governmental culture and tourism bodies and sub-agencies in the state. Thus, through the researcher's alliance with the acquaintance, the researcher generated a list of appropriate interview participants in the tourism sector, policy makers, research and statistics departments, Carnival commission, Conservation agencies and local community representatives (through snowballing). As Grillitsch, Rekers, & Sotarauta (2021) argued, in researching the relationships between people, tracing connections through the snowball process may be the most suitable approach. While this method is accused of being prone to bias as a participant observer tends to choose the respondents who are approachable and willing to answer; one benefit is that it is less expensive and easy to implement. Thus, identifying the different stakeholders for interviews was one thing but selecting the most suitable participants for interrogation was more important. However, the researcher's relationship with the acquaintance made it easy to create a cluster of informants, relevant to the research questions, and subsequently used these people to establish contacts with other informants. Purposeful sampling which entails choosing participants who represent the group being studied to engage with a representative sample of the population (Bolderston, 2012) was employed. Government officials were selected through snowball or chain sampling (discussed above) based on criterion sampling. Criterion sampling involves ensuring all cases that meet some certain fixed conditions of importance (Patton, 2002), which is concerned with tourism stakeholders who are involved, both directly and indirectly, in tourism decision making activities. The criteria that were met by participants included being knowledgeable about

tourism and the Calabar Festival processes; willingness to participate and dialogue; and offering an array of different views (including age, gender, education, and economic circumstances). Thus, since the research is case-specific and requires in-depth analysis, this sampling method helped in selecting individuals, groups and organisation that offered the most enhanced knowledge to the research question.

The snowballing technique also helped the researcher to recruit some international tourists, who are regular participants of the Calabar Festival, usually hosted by the state government. In this case, the researcher also identified some key unknown players that could provide rich information through a chain referral from one contact to the other. Thus, snowball sampling facilitated the identification of a more comprehensive network of valuable stakeholders. In addition, some tourists were randomly selected at the venue of the cultural festivals with no strict criteria. In such a case, the standard was participation and interests in the researched phenomena, informed by knowledge derived from informal chats with them. This arrangement made it feasible to gather their opinions without any form of bias and outside internal mediation.

Significantly, this snowballing approach enabled the researcher to develop effective informal conversational interview at all stakeholder levels because it enhanced trust, while guaranteeing a certain level of confidentiality between the researcher and those being researched. This was possible because to a greater extent, connections were then based on a chain of familiar contacts. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) explains that the informal conversational interview is absolutely based on the impulsive formation of questions in a natural interaction, characteristically one that emerges as part of the experiences of the moment and ongoing participant observation fieldwork. For example, because I immersed myself in the cultural environment as an active participant during my fieldwork, both the researched and the



researcher became familiar with each other. Thus, it was possible to ask questions at any point necessary, to clarify experiences of that particular moment, outside the set of designed questions. The questions primarily stem from the interaction with the participants based on real-time experiences (McNamara, 2008), as a strategy to better appreciate or describe what I see or experience at specific times. Due to the variable nature of the interview questions, many academics perceive this form of interview as unstable or unreliable, which makes data coding challenging (Creswell, 2007). However, because there is no fixed structure with this style of interview, many people believe it to be valuable because it provides for adaptability in ways that can elicit richer information from participants.

In relation to local participants, aside a few community leaders who were selected through referrals, other respondents were randomly selected at the venue of the events. To ensure a balanced representative sample of the population, the researcher spent a considerable amount of time in the study location and used a particularly shared linguistic (pidgin English) connection with local people to recruit participating locals. The researcher lived within the local community, in a house where the host was a local chief, therefore, it was easy to familiarise and connect with locals during the days that she was not in the government offices, or in the evenings. It was easy to obtain trust from the locals because of my association with the chief, who was also introduced to the researcher by her acquaintance. Daily, the researcher observed and engaged locals in informal conversations with clear information of the research aim. That way, the researcher created a rapport with participants, building trust, and accessing relevant information (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, the process of data collection involved gathering both primary and secondary data.

### **3.3.1 In-depth interviews**

To direct the interviewing process, maintain the reliability of conversations, and prevent the respondents from deviating from the subject of enquiry (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005), in-depth interview questions fit for each stakeholder group were designed. As Creswell (2020) observed, this sort of approach allows interviewees the flexibility to express their perspectives and feelings but it still allows the interviewer some control. It is used when the researcher has a distinct focus on a phenomenon they want to study. In this study, the focus of all interviews conducted was to understand the nature of stakeholders' interaction with each other in tourism and cultural processes (including curation), their differing power relations and perspectives to cultural realities. As Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2004) observed, to answer the study questions and accurately capture social reality, researchers can study participants' perspective, attitudes, and account of their position in more detail by using the in-depth interview method. To accurately capture social reality from participants, establishing confidence and cooperation were prioritised during the interviewing process by clearly reassuring the respondents of confidentiality and privacy. Three repeat interviews were conducted with government officials over the phone. In total 78 valid interviews were gathered; the structure of my interviewees is presented in the tables below (see appendix 5-5ii for expanded interviewees structure). Below I give information about the various categories of interviewee listed in the table.

**Table 3.1. general composition of interview and data sources**

S/N	Category -Official Respondent (OR)	Number of interview respondents
1	Officials	13
2	Tourists	19
3	Locals	24
4	Others	22
	Total	78

**Source: Author**

The official respondents included key decision makers from the ministry of culture and tourism. As far as culture and tourism activities are concerned, the ministry is the main organisation responsible for preserving, growing, and integrating the city's cultural and tourism footprints into the global tourism network. The ministry is also in charge of managing, coordinating, and utilising the enormous tourism and cultural potentials that the state's landscape is enriched with, directing the tourism aspiration of the government through policy setting and regulations (CRS Tourism Master Plan, 2006). The ministry's key responsibilities and duties are currently discharged by five departments, created either by law or executive (EXCO) resolutions and as such, function within the scope of the statuses or resolutions that created them. The Calabar Festival is a state initiative, and operates within the purview of the ministry which synchronises the operations of various departments within the culture and tourism initiative of the state government for its efficiency. These departments are jointly responsible for the workings of the Calabar Festival as a major culture and tourism brand.

Thus, official interview respondents were drawn across the various departments that make up the ministry. These include state culture and tourism regulatory bodies, conservation departments, marketing promotion, policy or planning. The five regulatory bodies and their key responsibilities are represented (in table 3.2) below.

**Table 3.2. Ministry of culture and tourism departments.**

S/N	MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM DEPARTMENTS	KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
1	<b>Tourism Development</b>	To formulate and develop policies and programmes for tourism development. Also, the department oversees the direction, coordination and supervision of tourism development in the state including the provision of infrastructure and expansion of the tourism content of the state.
2	<b>Tourism Bureau</b>	The promotion of tourism and tourists' facilities in the state. The provision of technical and support services to operators in the tourism space. Current focus is on marketing, standards, regulation and advisory to the government.
3	<b>Carnival Calabar Commission</b>	The broad role of the commission is to regulate and make carnival culture a viable tourist, cultural and commercial enterprise in the state. A key function of the commission is to identify, regulate, and promote all carnival activities and carnival-related industries in the state with a view to optimising the revenue-yielding potentials of the state economy
4	<b>Culture and Heritage</b>	To identify, preserve and promote the state's rich cultural heritage through the collation and exhibition of artefacts and events including cultural education and exchanges.
5	<b>Events Management</b>	Takes charge of all state government sponsored events including the Calabar Festival

**Source: Author**

Official interview participants were contacted through mobile phones, introducing myself as a doctoral researcher from Brunel university London. This was to create initial familiarity with participants and make room for reliability and collaboration. Thereafter, an official

interview invitation letters explaining the research aim were sent to some of the consenting participants electronically (see appendix), whereas for others, the letters were handed to them personally depending on the preference of participants. On some occasions, official interview participants altered schedules abruptly, therefore, I was flexible in rescheduling the interviews, but also sought interviewee substitutes when required, because of time constraints. As part of confidentiality measures, I confirmed to participants that all interview information would be coded with pseudonyms and alphanumeric codes (for instance, OR 4) in the study, and used solely for academic reasons. I also ascertained recording consent from interview participants before the interviews, which were conducted in a suitable environment. Except for one participant, who was interviewed in his private office (accompanied by the researcher's acquaintance), other interviews were conducted in public offices or in the field. These arrangements provided a suitable environment for both the respondents and myself.

Additionally, interviews were conducted in English language (periodically infused with some pidgin English by some locals) and each session typically lasted between forty-five minutes to one hour. Some key respondents were interviewed twice. Majority of interviews were recorded onto either a digital recorder or an iPhone in order to optimise the authenticity of the facts, prevent the danger of selective recall by the researcher (May, 2001) and provide support in the case of unforeseen circumstances. However, on three occasions, respondents did not agree to being recorded, and so with informed consent I made notes to serve as reminders for follow-up inquiries and to document any non-verbal message including hand and head gestures or any other body language (King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2018). I summarised their comments through fieldnotes almost immediately after the interviews. The expertise and knowledge of my respondents was essential in providing clear and enhanced representation of cultural tourism politics through the Calabar Festival. Although in some cases, interviewees found it challenging to divulge certain information, especially when the information involved finances

or would potentially expose certain lapses. One official only agreed to the interview on the condition of anonymity because he was unhappy with how the government conducted the office's affairs and did not want to be associated with the disclosure of some practises he considered corrupt. Another official did not want to take responsibility for divulging certain information that he considered confidential. For instance, when I asked OR 7 for details of the festival funding, he said, "that is too much information.... I am not allowed to speak on funds, you may ask my chairman for such information". Notwithstanding moments like this, the enquiries were shaped respectfully to enable participants feel relaxed and share their views. At the end of the interview sessions, I asked for each interviewee's email address so that I could send them a transcript of the session. Some of questions posed during the interview with officials include: Could you tell me a little about your organisation, and your organisation's role in the Calabar Festival? What is the nature of relationship your organisation has with other agencies, sectors and groups in planning the Calabar Festival? How much power do you/your organisation have over the activities of the Calabar Festival (are there influences)? Regarding tourism policy regulations and initiatives, to what extent are local communities, private sector businesses and tourists involved/carried along? How do you decide what is selected, produced and represented as culture in the Calabar Festival? Do you think that tourism practices are(re)shaping the social ordering of cultural knowledge and, by extension, how culture is understood and curated? At the end of every interview, I asked "are you happy to share these responses and the result for academic publications"? (full list of interview question is attached as appendix).

Regarding tourist respondents (Table 3 below), five interviews with international tourists were arranged. These were pre-booked before the interview as they were referrals from interviewed government officials. To avoid inconveniencing them during the festival, these five interviewees agreed to conduct interviews in their packaged accommodations, mostly late in

the morning, just before a day's event. It was not possible to identify tourists at the national level prior to attending the festival for fieldwork, because I study abroad. However, using Richards' (2001; 2018) typology, cultural tourists were recognised at the Calabar Festival site based on informal conversations revealing their experience of, and motivations regarding cultural tourism.

I loosely applied some selection criterion to help choose the interview respondents in the field and to contain the sample size within a focused number in consideration of time constraints. These criteria included (1) tourists who wanted a cultural experience by attending the Calabar Festival; (2) those whose utmost reason of attending the Calabar Festival was for cultural tourism; or (3) participants who were already at the event and favourably disposed to being interviewed. With informed consent, many tourist participants recruited at the festival arena were interviewed either inside a nearby shop or a vehicle, to reduce noise. To create a friendly atmosphere, discussions typically started with filter questions such as: Is this your first time here? Which nationality are you originally from? Is it the Calabar Festival that really attracted you to come? Are there specific things that drive you to attend the festival? However, in-depth interviews went on to focus attention on issues such as commodification, power relations, perceived impacts of tourism development on culture, and understandings of culture (see appendix for full list of interview question).

**Table 3.3. Category of tourist respondents (TR)**

S/N	Category	Composition
1	International tourists	Non-Nigerian tourists including other African countries, and a few who identify with other nationalities where they are born, but with parents of Nigerian descent.
2	National tourists	Nigerian tourists from states outside Cross River State.

**Source: Author**

### **3.3.2 Challenges encountered in interviewing tourists**

The process of recruiting tourist respondents for interviews in the field (festival arena) presented some challenges in achieving the planned sample size. I rejected a few potential interview participants who did not meet the selection criteria, and some also declined to be interviewed (see table below for example). Some tourists who had attended the festival were in the area for other primary reasons, including visiting friends/relatives or attending conferences. Many willingly volunteered to respond to my enquiries, but they came across as casual visitors who had no knowledge or information of what the festival was about, thus they were rejected. I concentrated on tourists who had attended the festival due to its perceived cultural dispositions. The rationale of this decision was because the research is case-specific, focused on the dynamic interaction between the city government officials, tourists and locals (stakeholders). Therefore, it was logical to collect data from informed tourists who constitute an accurate representation of the tourist category.



**Table 3.4. Respondents rejected by the researcher**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Explanations for rejecting the tourists interview volunteers</b>	<b>Number of tourists</b>
1	Visiting friends	2 (1 international tourist, 1 Nigerian visitor)
2	Doing business	2 (Nigerian visitors)
3	Reluctance in providing answers to the interview questions	1 (international tourist)
4	A minor	1 (international tourist)
5	Sum	6

**Source: Author**

Conversely, many respondents declined engaging with interviews for a number of explanations. Some individuals and tourists who came as a group reacted differently when they were sought to be interviewed. There are those, who understandably, wanted to make maximum use of every minute they had in Calabar for some fun experiences. Many of these tourists were enthusiastic about the Calabar Festival but declined to participate in the interview because they were either time-constrained or anxious to see every aspect of the festival performances. When I suggested a reschedule for after-event-hour interviews, they provided the defence of being engaged with other activities later. Also, some visitors declined the interview, perhaps because they did not trust me right away or simply because they did not want to be interviewed. However, to make up for the numbers who had rejected being interviewed, I had to target more respondents on subsequent days.

**Table 3.5. respondents who refused the researcher’s request for interview**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Explanations provide by tourists who declined interview participation</b>	<b>Number of tourists</b>
1	Simply not interested	2 (Nigerian tourists)
2	No trust	1 (international tourist)
3	Distraction from the festival experience and Time conscription	3 (1 Nigerian and 2 international tourists)
4	Sum	6

**Source: Author**

Additionally, while some locals were recruited and interviewed at the festival setting, others, especially the chiefs, were selected at the festival and then interviews were arranged for a later time in an alternative public place. The reasons for scheduling these interviews at an alternative time was fundamentally for convenience, as well as to ensure that a conducive and relaxed environment was fostered. In some cases, the researcher encountered the problem of fear, mistrust and curiosity among potential local interview respondents on-site (which occurred initially with all groups). However, this was effectively managed with the help of a tour guide, assigned by the personal assistant to an executive officer of the Carnival Calabar Commission, who was my main contact to all the government stakeholders involved, to assist with gaining interviews. The assignment of a tour guide served to enhance my access and safety, and to gain public trust on-site. Within this setup it was common to hear the tour guide make comments such as: “Do not worry, she’s one of us, but studying in Britain. She’s doing research on the Calabar Festival and she only wants to know your idea about how we use our culture...”. In these instances, speaking the Nigerian pidgin English and being open to answering any questions they threw at me were some of the strategies I used in gaining trust and minimising any potential misunderstandings about my role within the setting.

Progressively, as my presence came to be understood and expected, I relied less on the continuous mediation provided by the local tour guide.

**Table 3.6. composition of local respondents**

S/N	Category
1	The creatives including: performers, music artists, ‘food-prenuers’, art creators, hoteliers.
2	The cultural intermediaries including: traditional rulers, tour guides, local media.
3	Local community members as spectators.

**Source: Author**

The interviews carried out with all these categories of locals focused primarily on: (1) their roles in the festival development; (2) ideas about authentic cultural production over the years; (3) their nature of interaction with other tourism stakeholders; (4) the perceived socio-cultural consequences associated with the festival. As I mentioned earlier, I often started with some open questions asking about their understanding of culture, in relation to the Calabar Festival and then move to in-depth questions which could lead on from the data they had initiated or their recognisable concerns. This style was chosen to allow respondents to speak about the issue in terms of their own frames of reference (May, 1993), particularly those with perceived less access to power to express any potentially hidden or contentious undertones. As I had expected, the interviews provided specific information and unwrapped new possibilities for research, notably in the areas of cultural curation. For instance, some local respondents indicated that their conceptions of cultural curation had changed from the previously confined

museum-centric activities to the performances of lifestyle, demonstrating how economic and social conditions, cultural exchange, and globalisation come to shape attitudes toward cultural practises and dispositions. These were included into my analyses of tourism politics.

### **3.3.3 Participant observation**

This research employed the participant observation approach to complement the interview approach in order to correlate people's actions with interview responses and identify patterns. As a core ethnographic method, Honer & Hitzler (2015) note, that participant observation allows the researcher to examine people's behaviours in their natural environments and appreciate the world from the perspective of those being researched. For example, an observer who participates in the everyday life, customs and events of the people under study, is better equipped to understand the cultural environment, explore their patterns of social interaction and learn about the overt and covert aspects of people's culture. While participant observation is the primary approach employed for ethnography, it is also used for case study research (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014) and other qualitative research approaches. Although, it has been suggested that it may be challenging to maintain the balance between being an insider or an outsider as a participant observer. For example, if the researcher involves so much in the process, they face the possibility of losing sight of their study's objectives (Mays and Pope, 1995). Also, they might be negatively perceived as too disconnected, unemotional, and lacking in interpersonal skills (Collins and Cooper, 2014), by others working in the field. However, it has been asserted that observational techniques are most effective for tourism research (see for example, Pfadenhauer & Grenz, 2015), particularly in evaluating empowerment because they may uncover its various facets (Mason, 2005). This later point is significant to testing the validity of the neo-circuit of culture model, proposed in this study.

Specifically, participant observation offered a suitable approach to study the dynamics of interactions among cultural tourism stakeholders by providing the opportunity to fully immerse myself in the daily lives and experiences of the social actors under study, and to contextualise the data I collected from the interviews. It also provided me the chance to spend quality time with people being researched, to be a part of their group, to understand their viewpoints and individual actions, how they interacted with one another and with other people. Additionally, it helped me to acquire information about their dispositions towards the Calabar Festival activities, relations of power, and influences on cultural tourism processes and outcomes. As Dudovskiy (2016; 2018) observed, the meanings people attribute to events, the social systems and settings where the events occur, often influence people's disposition and encounters with those events, therefore, observation aided me to adopt a more insider's perspective and to look beyond what Fife (2005:72) called a 'merely cerebral relationship and develop a more intuitive or gut-level feeling', in engaging and negotiating with the research problem. Moreover, it aided me in gathering information around emerging issues concerning cultural curation, which were raised during interviews by observing and participating with the stakeholders for a significant time in the field. For example, the study's stakeholders were observed in their natural environments such as work places during formal and informal meetings, as well as within the festival arena. As I mentioned earlier, I also took part in some meetings, organised by government and private sectors, which helped me to build trust and positive ties with them. Consequently, it was possible to observe certain moments that shaped decisions regarding cultural production and consumption, the type of relationships among different stakeholders, body languages, gestures, cues that give meaning to words and context; or perceived factors that influenced people's knowledge of local values and sensual ways of experiencing.

Drawing from Dewalt & Dewalt (2011), I engaged in two types of researcher participation, namely passive and active participation. Dewalt & Dewalt describe that when an observer participates passively, they are there in the scene but try to minimise participation, possibly taking on the role of a shadower. Whereas, active participation involves a researcher actively involved in the activities and experience of those being observed, to learn a skill or sets of lifestyles linked to those people, in a bid to gain a deeper knowledge, first hand. On the one hand, I engaged passively in some occasions, for example, at the closed ticketed event, such as the Miss Africa beauty pageant, which did not require active participation by all attendees. Many international tourists attended the event, but being a closed setting with performances that are persons-specific, I took a passive approach. Although I was given an identification tag that clearly classifies me as an 'official' before the event, the tag was to help me gain unrestricted access to people, and the event's venue. However, because I was particularly interested in observing people's actions, body languages and meaningful cues from participants, including tourists, performers and organisers, as simply an observer, sometimes, I took a passive approach. Outside the closed event, I sometimes observed passively, though, positioning myself well enough to capture moments, settings and scenes as they occur. For example, during the events of some days, I was strategically positioned by sitting at the reserved spaces for invited tourists to observe how they experienced the festival performances and how tourism consumption activities such as buying souvenirs were done. Yet, on other days, I mingled within the crowd in the festival arena observing to identify cues that provide insight to locals' understandings, interaction, attitudes and dispositions to the festival experience. Similarly, I walked the streets earlier in the day before the start of the days' events to observe how much (or not) the local people anticipated and prepared for the daily events, and how everyday life and practices were impacted by cultural tourism events. The close

observation of people's behaviour and exchanges gave significant insights to aspects of cultural tourism politics.

On the other hand, I participated actively in some events and planning processes. Aside my involvement in stakeholders' meetings and planning discussed earlier, I also got involved in some performances. For example, after getting permission from a local band group, I joined their meetings on two separate occasions and observed their behaviour while practicing for their performances prior to the events. During the period, I engaged in casual conversations in order to observe people's interactions with each other in the group, the groups interaction with the festival organisers and to quickly record locals' opinions about the specific resources and phenomenon around cultural tourism. Consequently, on the 28th of December 2018, I joined one of the band groups in the parade, but dressed in a casual costume to get a first-hand experience of the nature of exchanges between groups (performers, policy makers, tourists) and the festivalscape. Significant data was produced from my practical co-participation in the social context whereby I tried to be like the people I was studying. Thus, while I looked through the lens of the tourist gaze, occasionally, I also allowed myself to become the object of the tourist gaze.

Similarly, I actively observed tourists at the Calabar Festival to understand the reaction of the consumers in relation to cultural resources, and the overt and covert relations of power. For example, I accessed a badge of access to the reserved podium for most international tourists from the Carnival Calabar Commission representative. That meant that I could access other tourists and observe how they experienced and reacted to the different displays at closer range, while also being a tourist observer myself. I was well situated to take photos and videos of the performers, discuss with audience members, and make notes during the observation. Moreover, at some point, I stayed in accommodation in the heart of the city, where many

international tourists clustered. The researcher had access to the dedicated state transport vehicle that conveyed some tourists to and from the festival arena, so it was easy to feel like a tourist and observe how tourist's interests were served; search for clues in relation to how they create an awareness of cultural values for policy makers, developers, professionals and the general public as well as how they potentially perform as cultural curators. Apart from the challenges associated with the extreme hot weather during the festival days, these observations formed an ethnographic record which provided rich information relevant to the research questions of this study.

In collecting my observation data, I used two important tools to record my data from participant observation. I took photographs as according to Dewalt and Dewalt (2011:23) 'an observation post'. I also made some fieldnote records of what I observed who the organisers were, how the events were coordinated and how the organisers related with themselves and other stakeholders. The researcher basically adhered to the recommendations provided by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) in order to develop appropriate field notes. Despite the argument that their recommendations are primarily for ethnographers, they stress that, regardless of methodological approach, they are useful for all researchers employing participant observation as a method. Although I communicated in pidgin English with several locals, the field notes were produced in English to make the analysis process for my study easier. In addition to field notes (for both the closed and open events), I kept track of my observations by capturing moments on videos and pictures through my iPhone in collecting data. Taking pictures was crucial in documenting situations on the ground and in capturing the interconnections between persons without prejudice (Barriage and Hicks, 2020). I took pictures of tourism products and festival designs, including costumes and tourist souvenirs, and I similarly made video recordings of cultural performances and people's activities at the festival site to understand the exchanges among producers and consumers. This method



assisted me in evaluating cultural tourism as involving a practice, human meaning and interactions, observed from the perception of an insider or member of a specific situation.

#### **3.3.4 Secondary data**

Additionally, specific documents were collected to complement participant observation and interviews. Within the context, the key purpose of document analysis was to advance the study context, through official Cross River State's cultural tourism, and state Calabar Festival documents (including those documents privately shared and those available in the public domain). For example, I collected different government policy and regulation documents relating to managing culture and accelerating tourism development. These included the 'Nigerian tourism master plan', 'the Cross River State tourism master plan', 'the Cross River State tourism and investment footprint', 'Destination Cross River: The Nation's Paradise', 'Calabar Festival: A report presented by the Research, statistics & Planning Department, Cross River State Tourism Bureau' (2013, 2016, 2017, 2018). I accessed most of these documents from government agencies and research institution interviewees. Moreover, the city's research and planning reports and a few official tourism guidelines were valuable as those were records not available to the public. I obtained the documents with the assurance of person confidentiality, that they would only be used for scholarly research and copies would strictly be kept out of the public domain.

Particularly, the research and planning reports provided greater insights to the nature of stakeholders' relationship involving collaboration between for example, the culture and tourism sectors in producing the Calabar Festival. This includes changes pertaining to overt legislative commitments, the resultant conflict of interests among groups and sectors pushing for development and cultural revival simultaneously, the perceived implication of such issues, and strategy recommendations for subsequent festival/tourism practices. Also, the reports

highlighted some key information of some ways through which consumption feeds back into production and how production can condition certain aspects of consumption. For example, it revealed certain aspects of cultural displays (including local decorations, traditional dance, drama, costumes and artefacts) that tourists mostly find interesting, thereby clarifying the geographies of inclusion and exclusion in selecting what should be conserved and reproduced, based on tourists' consumption patterns and preferences. The reports also provided the necessary statistics to sketch out the growth of the Calabar Festival. Although figures were not considered conclusive as their reliability and validity was not guaranteed, the statistical data allowed for the tracking of tourism development and the importance of the tourism sector to the city. The data covered tourist arrivals and receipts in Calabar during the festival period, from 2013 to 2018.

Substantial data about the Calabar Festival were also retrieved from brochures and manuals. A government-produced visual CD on the Calabar Festival, postcards, and guidebooks were among the resources collected for tourism marketing. A little information was also drawn from the official website of the various regulatory boards and agencies in charge of the Calabar Festival. Even though many of these websites are not up to date, tourists' testimonials substantiated how influential the website information was in shaping their decision to consume the Calabar Festival. Essentially, these resources provided significant information about the politics of cultural tourism, involving people, their involvement with culture and cultural processes, and the various power relations expressed in the Calabar Festival. Due to this kind of factors, documents have mainly been used to validate or counter evidence gathered by interviews and observations.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

Data analysis is a systematic process of structuring and explaining the vast amount of gathered research information, in which a range of analytic approaches can be used in its organisation, coding, and interpretation (Sutton and Austin, 2015). As I already indicated, my research data were derived from a variety of sources, including interviews, documents, fieldnotes and observations. Consequently, I was equipped with a substantial quantity of data to analyse and interpret, which is typical in qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2007). The process of collecting and analysing data was interactive, where the initial analysis of data commenced as the interviews were being conducted. Despite that the analysis was not exhaustive, it became crucial to listen to the interviews again and review the fieldwork observational notes, for the sake of identifying data saturation, and to modify interview questions where it became clear that certain aspects of the study's objectives were not being addressed. To understand the numerous data sources and discover correlations amongst distinct subjects that were 'descriptive, interpretative, or explanatory', I employed thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a useful approach to examining qualitative data, where I identified themes, commonalities and patterns to make sense of shared meanings and experiences.

The interviews were transcribed and the data analysed and categorised to create themes such as: stakeholders' relationships; power and influence among stakeholders, social and cultural change through tourism, the impact of tourism on local culture; influence of consumption on cultural production; tourists and cultural curation; and the role of tourism on conservation. These themes developed both from the data and the issues that were addressed in the literature review. Of particular relevance was awareness of tourists' curatorial competency and power performed by all stakeholder categories, subjects that have received little academic attention.

While critical discourse analysis (CDA) could be an alternative to helping us understand the significance, linguistic and other shared viewpoints, particularly concerning policy documents (Fairclough, 2013), it was not considered most appropriate for this particular research. Discourses are linguistic methods of conceptualising physical, social, or intellectual aspects of the universe, which are typically associated with various viewpoints held by various social actors (Fairclough, 2013). Semiosis and the links between semiotic and other social characteristics are the subject of critical discourse analysis, which helps the researcher appreciate the language, texts, and semiotics, that can be applied as a cultural practise (Janks, 1997). However, beyond the analysis of language, discourse or semiotics, the dynamic relationships involved in cultural tourism are assigned greater importance in this research. The interactions between diverse stakeholders, culture, and power relations are central to the multifaceted politics of cultural tourism. In addition to involving several components and interactions, their relationships are multifaceted because they occur in an ever-changing political, economic, and sociocultural setting. Consequently, rather than doing a systematic semiotic study of political policy texts, a thematic analysis linked to a range of data is employed.

Rather than using qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo, I manually analysed the data with the use of Microsoft Word. I used manual coding for both my undergraduate and graduate dissertations, so I was knowledgeable with the procedure and convinced that I would draw appropriate conclusions. I compiled all the interview data into a single document and segmented into themes and classifications as they appeared through data analysis. Subsequently, I would refer to excerpts from observations and my comments on my fieldnotes. This procedure was especially helpful for my reflective writing since it allowed me to remember moments and thoughts that I might not have recalled in greater depth if I had not preserved the notes.

Interviews were conducted using two languages that I am familiar with. These included English and the Nigerian pidgin English, which are both shared linguistic characteristics between the researcher and the respondents. This decision was to avoid losing to translation, important characters of the empirical evidence, such as the significance of expressions unique to the local setting, the tone of the languages, and other symbolically significant terms (Silverman, 1993). Also, for accuracy and correctness of the transcription, I carefully listened to the recordings several times. Data was then organised according to the broad areas of exploration taken forward from the literature review, as an initial exercise in order to become familiar with the content. By so doing, I gradually developed emerging themes from the data itself, beyond my initial themes drawn from the literature review. After the data had been categorised and analysed, the few interviews that were expressed in pidgin were translated into core English and the excerpts that supported the findings used in discussing the subsequent empirical chapters. Though quite challenging, every effort was taken to ensure that the Pidgin English translations were correct and that the words coded matched the English transcripts. Also, there was no need for an independent interpreter as I could transcribe the interviews myself. Even though it turned out to be an extensive and somewhat draining process, it had some benefits. One advantage is that the interview transcription allowed that I familiarise more closely with the data and to discover elements I may have earlier ignored during the fieldwork experience.

After transcribing the data, I performed a qualitative thematic analysis of the data, which entails making meaning of the themes that emerge from data collections (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Seale, 2004). The interview data was then arranged and coded using template analysis in accordance with themes that emerged from both the direct data and those highlighted in the literature review). According to King, Brooks and Tabari (2018), template analysis is a style of thematic analysis that combines a variety of epistemological positions and balances a relatively high degree of structure in the process of analysing textual data (for example, see

King, 2012). In this respect, template analysis entails developing categories or codes, then associating them with the data units (in the case of this study, these were interview quotes). I employed template analysis because broadly speaking, it is a more flexible approach with lesser specified procedures than for example, grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), which stipulates guidelines for data gathering and analysis that must be adhered. This allows researchers to modify it to meet their particular requirements, thus, as data are gathered and analysed, predefined codes might be modified or expanded. Here, to identify and understand themes, patterns, and relationships, data are coded and analysed. The initial phase of in-depth data analysis, which happened after the transcription of all interviews began with the preliminary categories created during the initial analysis undertaken in fieldwork. As a result of the preliminary analysis, some of the initial codes were updated, allowing the development of new categories from the data. Using the Table of Contents feature in Microsoft Word, a single document with categories and sub-themes was generated, and then data from interviews were copied and pasted under each category and sub-theme.

As with most coding methods, Coffey & Atkinson (1996) note that this approach has some limitations, including the potential of the data to be considered in isolation. The social context and narrative flow of respondents' opinions can be distorted if portions of interviews are taken out of the interview transcript. I was aware of this constraint and tried to reduce it by comparing the recognised patterns across a variety of sources (such as respondents) and approaches (field notes with personal thoughts and observations). Therefore, I always considered the social context as I wrote the chapter's findings by frequently consulting my fieldwork notes for respective interviews and observations. I wrote the data and developed more links to the literature when my data had been organised, analysed, and some preliminary findings were established. Hence, I was able to interpret the results, considering the underlying theories discussed in the literature review chapter with greater precision (Creswell, 2013).

### **3..4.1 Ethical considerations**

Throughout the process of the study, the researcher considered some ethical issues. Because some of the issues were predicted, they were addressed in the research design and monitored during the data collection and analysis process (Creswell, 2014). Creswell observed that the values of researchers and the community they are a part of influence the ethical decisions they make. While research ethics in this thesis significantly depend on my positionality during and after the fieldwork phase, privacy and confidentiality of participants, and ensuring that respondents were in no way adversely influenced by participation, were of great priority. Dooly, Moore and Vallejo (2017) explain how ethics entails being sensitive to other people's rights, where the research community has the responsibility to operate through appropriate conducts that do not harm participants. I essentially created a compromise between simultaneously being a curious researcher and not unnecessarily intruding into participants' private lives.

From the onset, I obtained ethical approval from Brunel University London's Ethics Committee (see appendix 4). Consent forms and participant information sheets were developed in English language (see appendix 3 and 2). Pertaining to interview-related issues across all stakeholder groups, through my informal conversations with participants, they were aware that I was undertaking a doctoral research, however, I always began by introducing myself and my position as a doctoral researcher. I then discussed ethical issues and assured participants of their confidentiality. Friendships were developed as the research went on, however I carefully engaged with everyone, rather than only the ones I connected with the most. Additionally, respondents were sufficiently informed that they could quit the interview at any time, demand that questions are repeated or reworded, and decline to respond to any questions if they chose not to. I followed the ethical guidelines provided by Wiles (2012) in doing qualitative research. This involves obtaining participants' permission to record the interview, while guaranteeing

them of privacy of information, and providing them with the required information for informed consent. Also, in accordance with the standards established by the Brunel University London's Research Ethics Committee, pseudonyms were employed to protect the respondents' identities and ensure they were happy with interviews being recorded.

Additionally, participant observation, which took place in the festival arena was likewise fraught with ethical concerns. Similar to the context of this research, it can be challenging to gain informed consent during participant observation in open spaces like streets. Because of the massive population of participants, such a setting is significantly complex socially and physically. Moreover, observation typically occurs over the course of different occasions, across several weeks, always with diverse group of participants (Ransome, 2013). Within such contexts, securing informed consent from every individual the researcher engages with or observes is typically challenging. Nevertheless, the researcher has a duty to abide by specific rules to guarantee that participants' privileges are maintained even when informed consent cannot be realistically attained from all participants (Given, 2008).

Primarily, it's crucial to ensure that data gathered while conducting observations in public places corresponds to the degree of public behaviour where privacy or relative privacy is not anticipated (Ransome, 2013). In this context, I solely gathered data on public behaviours, such as people's activities within the event venue, how various people actively engaged with cultural products, and interactions in general between locals, tourists and government officials. Also, my conduct as an observer, recorder, and interviewer during the data collection process were publicly disclosed in order to emphasise my role as a researcher. In addition to conducting participant interviews in open areas, I occasionally recorded notes in the course of observing. Even though such acts could have possibly contrived participants' behaviours and actions around me, however, by performing overt observation in this mode, it enabled the researcher



to fairly moderate unpleasant ethical concerns like dishonesty and the lack of informed permission.

### **3.4.2 Researcher positionality**

Positionality issues are closely related to the crisis of representation in the social sciences. Pacheco-Vega & Parizeau (2018) argue that positionality results from uncertainty concerning appropriate techniques of expressing social reality. It is an expression of our inability to assume and integrate emerging frameworks in order to highlight the diversity of socio-cultural realities present in modern cultures, which are undergoing rapid and significant change. Thus, whenever this inadequacy becomes the focal point of any theoretical discussion, challenges of description become issues of representation (Marcus and Fischer 1986). This politics of power/position encompasses our approaches to situating our knowledge and then positioning ourselves. As I already discussed vis-à-vis research participants, I blended with the people and the environment by living local and actively participating (as a volunteer staff) in certain official stakeholders' meetings (during the period of the annual festival for the 3year period in which I gathered my data). This enhanced the possibility that any observations made would be those of a naturally occurring condition. In order to manage complexities in relationships that inevitably occur during fieldwork, the relationship I consequently established with some government officials facilitated the development of relationships with a wider spectrum of people. However, specific participants at the official level occasionally found it uncomfortable to have me present or access certain restricted meetings, especially during negotiations involving financial and budgetary aspects of the Festival. As mentioned in describing the interview techniques adopted, given such circumstances it was necessary to disengage from such scenarios, which, even though not ideal, was crucial in sustaining relationships so that the research could proceed. Thus, I was both an insider and outsider in some contexts.

In addition to my roles as a volunteer staff and local, it is consistent that researchers should be conscious of how their own profile is an essential part of the research process (May, 2001). As a result, I acknowledge that my roles as volunteer staff, local, and researcher were tied to my own beliefs about the significance of culture and my own values, which are tied to issues of culture, power and interaction, similar to how these contextual circumstances were linked to any participant's values. King, Horrocks & Brooks further argue that researchers apply their personal unique values to the study process. The various experiences, occurrences, social and cultural settings that constitute our everyday lives form our value system, and this positionality was echoed throughout the research process, notably through the use of field records. Particularly, maintaining an analytical perspective was enabled by the frequent writing of fieldnotes, which in turn, provided the opportunity to maintain a critical perspective on the Calabar Festival dynamics, whose context I will introduce in the next section.

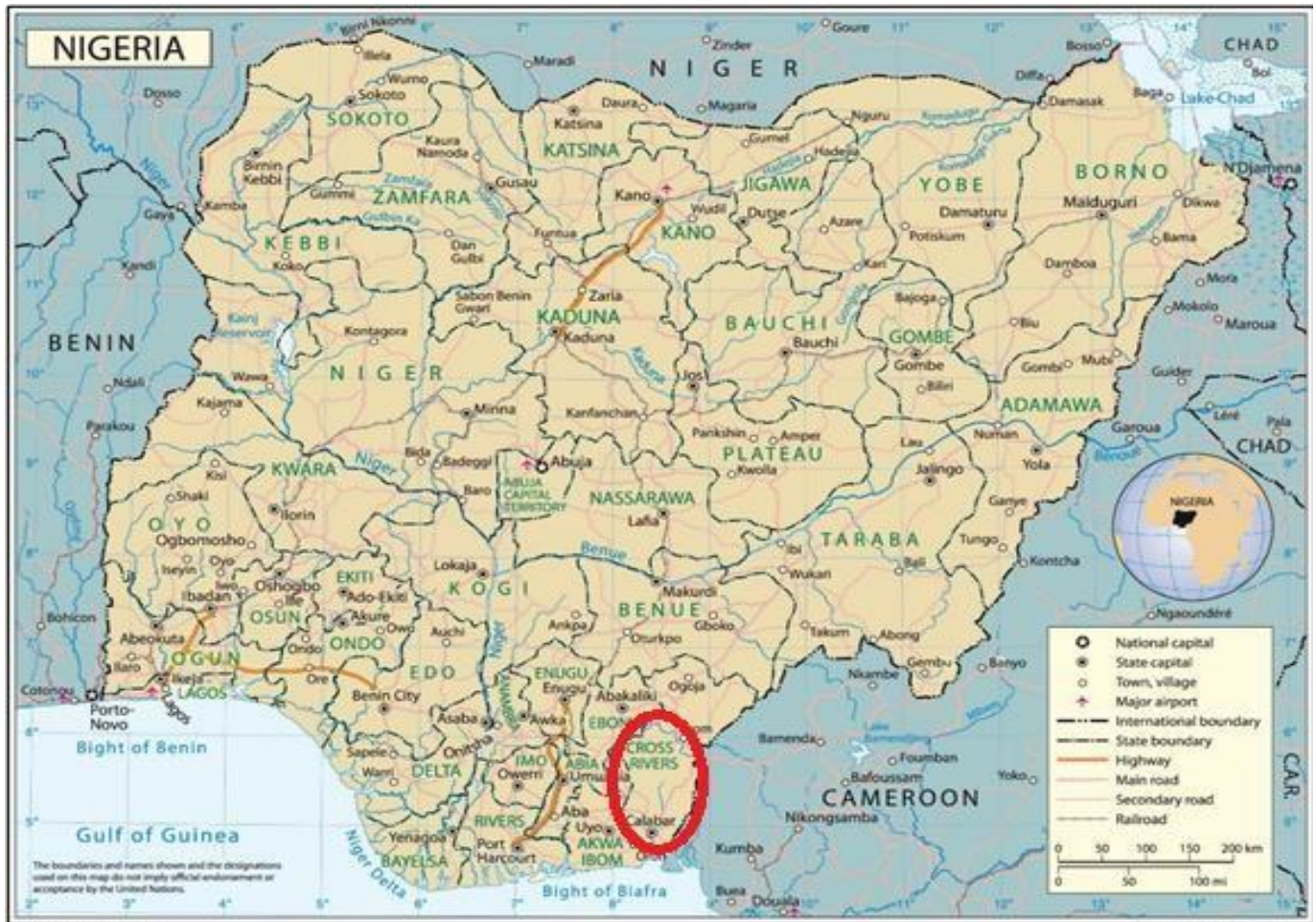
### **3.5 The annual Calabar Festival and the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria**

This section introduces the specific context of my research inquiry to justify analysis of the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria through the Calabar Festival. In doing so, I will consider the city's geo-historical, socio-political, and cultural contexts of the festival and its tourism development. Discussions will also highlight how the festival was developed as a response to geographical and resource disadvantages in the city. My empirical chapters will draw from the background information that I set out here to support evidence about the divergent power and cultural negotiations that play out between people on a global-national-local scale. These include the nature of stakeholders' relationship, their power relations and the dynamic forces that shape the cultural processes around the Calabar Festival.

### **3.5.1 The case study location**

While the Calabar Festival is the focus of this research, it is important to highlight the geographical positioning of its city to aid a more in-depth understanding of its development dynamics. Cross River is a Nigerian coastal state in the country's South-South geopolitical division. Cameroun borders the state to the east (see Figures 4 and 5 below), Benue State to the north, Abia and Ebonyi to the west, and Akwa-Ibom and the Atlantic Ocean to the south (Andem et al., 2013). Although the population is classified as a minority in the southern parts of Nigeria by the National Bureau of Statistics (2018), Ajibade and Obongha (2012) assert that the state epitomises the nation's cultural plurality because of the diversity of districts, languages and dialects, and the vast mineral resource potential in the city. The state is also diverse ecologically and geographically, with rainforest, mangrove wetlands, savannah, mountains and rich biodiversity. Ebingha Eni and Okpa (2019) maintain that the climate is semi-equatorial with regular heavy downpours. Also, typical tropical rainforest characterises the vegetation of the study area, with a closed canopy forest and layers of broadleaf evergreen tree species. Eja and Otu (2011) observed that, due to the nature of the forest, it is common to see wild animals and birds, woody climbing plants with thick stems (lianas), as well as epiphytes and other herbs. Achy, Opepe, cedar, and other tree species can be found in this area, as well as a vast selection of reptiles, such as crocodiles, alligators, snakes (pythons) and iguanas, bush fowls, and birds such as parrots, hawks and kites. The area also contains some forest food and fruits like bush mango, bitter kola and other medicinal trees and herbs. The Cross River State government believe that the geographic, vast natural and cultural resources constitute important components of sustainable cultural tourism development in the city (CRS Tourism Masterplan, 2006).

The tourism disposition of the state is captured in the acronym CALABAR within the state tourism master plan, meaning ‘Come And Live And Be At Rest’ (Cross River State Government, 2010). This acronym is premised on the notion that the city is shaped to offer tourists and everyone a secure and pleasant environment away from the hustle and bustle characteristic of Nigeria’s major cities. Today, successive governments in the state continue to sustain the city as the most peaceful in the country (Balogun, & Nkebem, 2022; Eneyo, et al., 2021), while exploiting its geographic, natural, and cultural resources to attract tourists and promote cultural events like the Calabar Festival (Okonkwo and Odey, 2017). For instance, visits to natural/cultural sites are often part of the package for tourists who visit through government agencies (Cross River State Government, 2010). However, while the Calabar Festival and its city are inarguably, prime tourism attractions in Nigeria, the gap my empirical analysis seeks to address is the dynamic interaction of diverse stakeholders, while producing and consuming culture in the Calabar Festival. This also includes the socio-cultural changes induced by tourism politics on culture and the Calabar Festival, as well as evolving cultural curation dynamics. The following section introduces the Calabar Festival specifically as a socio-political arena for cultural negotiations.



Map No. 4228 UNITED NATIONS  
October 2004

Department of Peacekeeping Operations  
Cartographic Section

**Figure 4: map of Nigeria, showing the location of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria**

Source: United Nations (2004)



**Figure 5: Map of Cross River state showing the 18 constituent communities.**

**Source:** <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308184570/figure/fig1/AS:407146974990336@1474082811232/Mapof-Cross-River-State-Nigeria-showing-local-government-areas.png>

### **3.5.2 The development of the Calabar Festival**

What is now known as the Calabar Festival originally started as a street parade full of local pomp and pageantry, aimed at rediscovering and promoting native cultural heritage (Eja and Otu, 2015). Initially, while the state always had tourism potentials, not much was done to formalise and organise this potential and present it to diverse international audiences (Andrew and Ekpeyong, 2012). However, as the state faced some successive serious economic and geographic challenges over the years, the government of Donald Duke (in office between 1999 and 2008) in 1999 prioritised tourism as an alternative income, leisure and job creation sector (Andrew and Ekpeyong, 2012). For example, following a longstanding inter-country dispute, in 2002, the international court of justice ceded Bakassi, an oil-rich part of Cross River State,

Nigeria, to Cameroun (Okonkwo and Odey, 2018), which left the city in recession. Additionally, with Cross River State as an oil-based economy, the reclaiming of 76 oil wells by the neighbouring Akwa Ibom state (Olusegun, Nwogwugwu and Ojo, 2012) had severe consequences on the economy of the state. Olusegun, Nwogwugwu, and Ojo details how a Supreme Court Judgment of June 12, 2012 transferred 76 oil wells to Akwa Ibom State following the ceding of its Bakassi Peninsula region to Cameroon which established Cross River State as a non- littoral state. The Supreme Court's final ruling of the case affirmed Cross River State as a non- littoral state and with no claim to any marine territory in July, 2012. Thus, as part of a new dynamic state tourism policy to sustain the local economy, in 2004, the government repackaged the existing state Christmas Festival as the Calabar Festival (Amalu and Ajake, 2012). The Calabar Festival is a priority in the state's tourism calendar for the month of December, when it takes place. The reason for this, according to the State Tourism Board masterplan is that:

Events have an important role to play in attracting large groups of tourists to a tourism destination and providing an economic booster into local economics. The state has not yet fully capitalised on the available opportunity provided by events, however ample opportunity exists, especially for the City of Calabar to position itself as a high-profile events destination for Nigeria through the Calabar festival...it is 'the aim of the state Government to use arts, culture and tourism for job creation as alternative sources of revenue for Cross River State and (b) Harness the enormous potentials that exist in arts, culture and tourism. (Tourism masterplan, 2006).

This assertion articulates the disposition of the state to instrumentalise culture in developing the Calabar Festival in order to meet the needs of tourists and modern society. As the master

plan suggests, bringing together the old cultural art forms with the modern for a sustainable tourism initiative was/is essential. In doing so, the specific objectives of the Cross River State tourism effort, as stipulated in the masterplan, include:

- To aggressively pursue a tourism development programme through the implementation of the Master Plan for Tourism.
- To establish tourism as a driver for the state's growth by fostering tourism development strategy in order to make Cross River State a preferred tourist destination with captivating environmentally sustainable tourism goods, dependable infrastructure, and services.
- To partner with investors, in order to develop and showcase Cross River State as a protected world class tourist destination.

To achieve these objectives, the Cross River State Tourism Bureau was established (by Law no.1 of 2004), seeking to promote tourism development and sustainability of the tourism sector. Through this initiative the government liberalised its economy to bring in investors to help develop the state's tourism potentials (Ofre, Bassey and Inyokwe, 2015), and the masterplan built on these ideas. The table below (Table 4.10) illustrates the proposed events calendar for Cross River in the 2006 Tourism masterplan, developed by the Cross River State Tourism Bureau.



**Table 3.7: Yearly Calendar for tourism activities in Cross River State**

DATE	EVENTS
January	Thanksgiving Service (1 <sup>st</sup> )
February	Valentine Steel Band show/Variety nights
March-April	Travel/Tradeshow with NCCI Arts and craft exhibition Easter Musical Festival
May	Dancing/Musical shows  Karaoke competitions
June	Drama  Steel Band Shows  Wrestling Competitions series
July	Drama  Steel Band Shows  Wrestling Competitions series
August	New Yam Festival
September	25 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> World Tourism Day
October	African Boat show –Calabar boat Club Food Festival Ogaia
November	Mountain Race (27 <sup>th</sup> )
December	The Calabar Festival Programmes  Christmas Lighting  Talent show  Steel Band and Cultural show at Airport

**Source: Cross River state tourism board masterplan (2006)**

The table above reveals how important the state considers tourism, as each month is occupied with tourism activities. However, this research is primarily concerned with the Calabar Festival, which occupies the whole month of December. The recommendations of the Tourism Board have largely been successful, but different government administrations have had their own predominant ideas. As Yta (2020) observed, succeeding administrations have lacked the same enthusiasm and vision for tourism as the Donald Duke administration. Even though such

positioning has impacted the expansion of the industry across the years in terms of funding and planning, the Calabar Festival has continued to attract large numbers of tourists and increasing economic growth. For instance, the Research and Statistics Department of the Cross River State Tourism Bureau (2018:8) records that in 2015, the festival attracted over 1.6 million visitors, in 2016 over 2 million visitors attended, and in 2017 the festival was attended by 3.2 million visitors. The departments' recommended that all barriers and politics be kept aside for the economic benefits. It further advised that communities in the state should be encouraged to keep packaging products that will attract even more tourists during the Festival as the economic benefits would then spread to other parts of the state. The tourist business requires the state to remain at the forefront.

Over the years, the Calabar Festival developed from its initial formation as a yearly folklorist event, into a hybridised cultural package involving street parade with pomp and pageantry. The festival is usually attended by all age groups with performances involving different groups from the Cross-River Regions, different national groups, international participation, group performance and revelling, represented by different cultural groups from Africa and across the world (Amalu and Ajake, 2012). Except the Miss Africa beauty pageantry which is ticketed, most events of the Calabar Festival are free. The event has gained international recognition, with many visitors making reservations for attendance in advance, as seen by the increased attendance over time, with spectators of all cultures and nations attending one or more of the festival's events (Andrew, Agibe and Eneh, 2014). The whole events attract strong media coverage by some local, national and international media outfits like GOGA Africa, National Television Authority (NTA) Calabar and DSTV/Multichoice. It is currently associated with many local and transnational cultural aesthetics as tourism products such as city walks, floats, dances, music and song, traditional masquerade performances, bikers' display, a carnival, and specific competitions that include beauty pageantry, cultural parades, children's carnival,

adult's carnival, international carnival (where foreign artists occupy the streets of Calabar), a boat regatta, and a carol night. As Nsima Udo (2022) notes, these dynamics set the Calabar Festival as the curatorial stage for the interplay between cultural authenticity and innovation, developing into an arena for sociocultural and political entanglement, a site for differentiated sociocultural contestations, politico-economic engagements, international cultural negotiation and different forms of visual and performative curatorial practices. Thus, A thorough scholarly research is required due to the festival's complexity, hybridity, transnational representations, shifting curatorial practises, strong governmental/capitalist predisposition attuned to cultural commodification and the consequent dynamic power relations.

Although it is still a 31-day event, the Calabar Festival now has four themed climactic days, that falls between the 26th and 31st of December each year (the 4 days' have sometimes been adjusted in some previous years). The first of the climactic days is the cultural day which has all the local communities of the Cross River State on public display performing indigenous rituals. Andrew and Ekpeyong (2012) believe that the Calabar Festival promotes the preservation of indigenous identity and culture through this particular day's event. The second day is a sports day, including exhibition from bikers and car racers called wonders on wheels. These programmes are part of the events that have shaped the Calabar Festival into a global brand due to its cosmopolitan appeal (Amaefula and Ezeorji, 2016). Professional bike and vintage sports car riders from all over the world frequently participate in displays during this day's festivities. However, it is generally believed that the bikers' parade was introduced because the state governor himself is a professional rider, prompting consideration of the different power relations in the festival's production and the resulting changes in the city's cultural spheres. The Calabar carnival, popularly known as Africa's Biggest Street Party, takes place on the third day. The organisation of this carnival is described by Carlson (2010) as a clone of the Trinidad & Tobago carnival. Six performing bands participate in the cultural and

artistic event: Bayside, Freedom, Master Blaster, Passion 4, Seagull, and the governor's band are among them. Each of these bands is led by a leader who sets a guiding idea for the organisations' activities in cooperation with other famous band leaders (Andrew and Ekpenyong, 2012). However, the broader State Carnival Commission, a government regulating body, oversees the operations of the bands. It is also important to note that almost all of the band's leaders are politicians or have political ties, and each band's membership is selected from the general public and is of indefinite size. Furthermore, the performances are fiercely competitive, with judges stationed at several adjudication units grading each band's performance. The ratings are premised on the best interpretation and representation of the yearly theme through costumes, music, dance, floats and displays. The event also includes, on the final day, an international carnival day, during which international artists and celebrities occupy the streets of Calabar.

In terms of funding, banks, airlines, telecoms and insurance firms are among the corporate sponsors who support the festival's numerous parts through their advertising initiatives. Though a state event, the festival is funded mainly by the private sector, and it would seem that they can exert certain levels of power and control over the production of the Calabar Festival. The commission finds sponsorship and technical partnerships, obtains marketing rights, promotes the carnival, provides logistics, develops themes, organises dry runs and other carnival-related activities. Understanding these dynamics will help uncover how these various interest groups interact in the production and consumption of the Calabar Festival, now considered the pride of Africa's legacy and, as Esu and Arrey (2009) suggest, Africa's number one tourism hub. The discussions about the Calabar Festival in this section offers an overview from which to begin unpacking the multifaceted components and interactions concerning cultural tourism within the city.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has described the methodological positioning and specific methods of this research, guided by critical theory as a study philosophy. This research is located in the broad field of cultural tourism politics and neo-circuit of cultural tourism analysis. However, the application of the proposed neo-circuit of cultural tourism theory is novel in the study of cultural tourism. By using specific methodological principles, this chapter has explained how this theory might be applied to empirical study. The production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival are characterised by a number of practices, negotiations, contestations. While recognising the bargaining, knowledge and economic forces of power among different stakeholders, this research also admits that these forms of power are contested and resisted among these different stakeholders. Tourism politics takes place as power is exercised and challenged. Therefore, the (re)presentation, production, consumption, curation, identity construction, regulation of culture is a product of negotiations between many forces at various scales, also symbolic of bargained equilibriums. The methodological framework in this research is designed to explore these tourism dynamics mentioned above to also explain the sociocultural changes induced by tourism politics on the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture. This study applied a qualitative approach to data collections, which included in-depth interviews, observations and analysis of secondary data from a range of documentary sources, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of interrelationships among key stakeholders. The qualitative approach was adopted to provide insights into the complex and dynamic interaction of people with culture/ resources, and power relations in the cultural process of the Calabar Festival. The qualitative methods used are both appropriate and crucial for research that seeks rich information and explanations from the participants/stakeholders' perspective towards relationships, cultural practices and relations of power. Arguably, tourism politics extends beyond the simple dualistic categorisation of powerful state and disempowered locals or

powerful tourists and disempowered locals (as many literatures suggest); it becomes more meaningful when we understand the nature of interaction between the disparate cultural tourism stakeholders, their relational dynamics and influences in the co-construction of cultural realities. Information on the organisation and structure of the Calabar Festival has hinted at how individuals negotiate power and culture through a complex collaborative circuit of interactions. Thus, the Calabar Festival is an excellent case study for an empirical analysis of cultural tourism politics because it serves a variety of social, political, and economic goals while incorporating a diverse range of goods, cultural practices, stakeholders, and interests on a global to local scale. Having described the methodology of this research, the next two chapters will systematically discuss the empirical materials gathered in the Calabar Festival context.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Producing the Calabar Festival: Cultural processes and stakeholders' interactions.**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter analysed the people, culture and power dynamics of the Calabar Festival by demonstrating how stakeholders interact with themselves, and how they exert different forms of power at different capacities in relation to the production of culture and cultural processes. As I mentioned in chapter one, the politics of cultural tourism offers a valuable setting to study the multifaceted interactions that occur within tourism stakeholders, process and practices, marked by continuous negotiation, contestations and influences (Crouch, 1999). In analysing these dynamics within the Calabar Festival, this chapter draws on a number of themes discussed in the preceding chapters. For example, in Chapter One, I suggested that studying the contemporary politics of cultural tourism extends beyond absolute state power to encompass a multi-level approach to cultural politics which empowers multiplicity of stakeholders and strategic alliances across local and transnational frontiers (McCann, 2002). Also, in Chapter Two, literature review showed how power is central to the performance of cultural processes among various stakeholders (including tourists) in tourism circuit of interaction. Specifically, I identified three key forms of power namely, knowledge, economic and bargaining powers. Building upon these contexts, this chapter analyses the dynamic interactions between the (Cross River state) government, tourists and local communities as they interact and challenge each other in producing culture in the Calabar Festival. These discussions revolve around the relational processes in the circuit of culture, particularly, demonstrating the significance of power and curation, proposed as significant components of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model. Additionally, it is important to bear in mind that

discussions around cultural curation are centred around three core ideas namely: production, conservation and sharing of cultural knowledge (O'Neil, 2013).

This chapter is structured into three sections, and empirical analyses are drawn from the key themes emerging from interviews, ethnographic observations, policy documents namely: the national and state tourism masterplans, and the festival's marketing materials of the state ministry of Culture and Tourism. The first section analyses the policy, planning and regulation networks, highlighting the interaction of both global and local stakeholders in Cross River State-based policies and practices. Three key practical strategies that demonstrate the nature of interaction between stakeholders and how they exercise different forms of power in the production of culture during the Calabar Festival are analysed. These include: the use of brands in the production of the Calabar Festival; 'the exoticisation of culture as a representational strategy to construct an ideal tourist attraction'; producing a hybridised festival space that converges various national and international cultural identities. The second section analyses the dynamics around cultural preservation, curation and commodification in the Calabar Festival, reinforcing discussions in chapter two which related cultural curation to three critical ideas through which power is performed namely: conservation, production and sharing of cultural knowledge (O'Neil, 2013). Drawing from these ideas, the section also illustrates how tourists are empowered as cultural curators by being positioned within traditional power hierarchies (Lin et al., 2021; O'Neil, 2013; Golding and Modest, 2013), through destination's policy and practice. In the third section, I discuss the interaction of locals in the production of culture, and their development of an entrepreneurial culture, fostered by the Calabar Festival. This chapter demonstrates how the Calabar Festival offers an arena where diverse networks collaborate to produce local knowledge, replicate global meanings, (re)negotiate people's identity, but often in the context of conflicting power relations and representations of otherness which sometimes blurs traditional boundaries (Salazar, 2010).



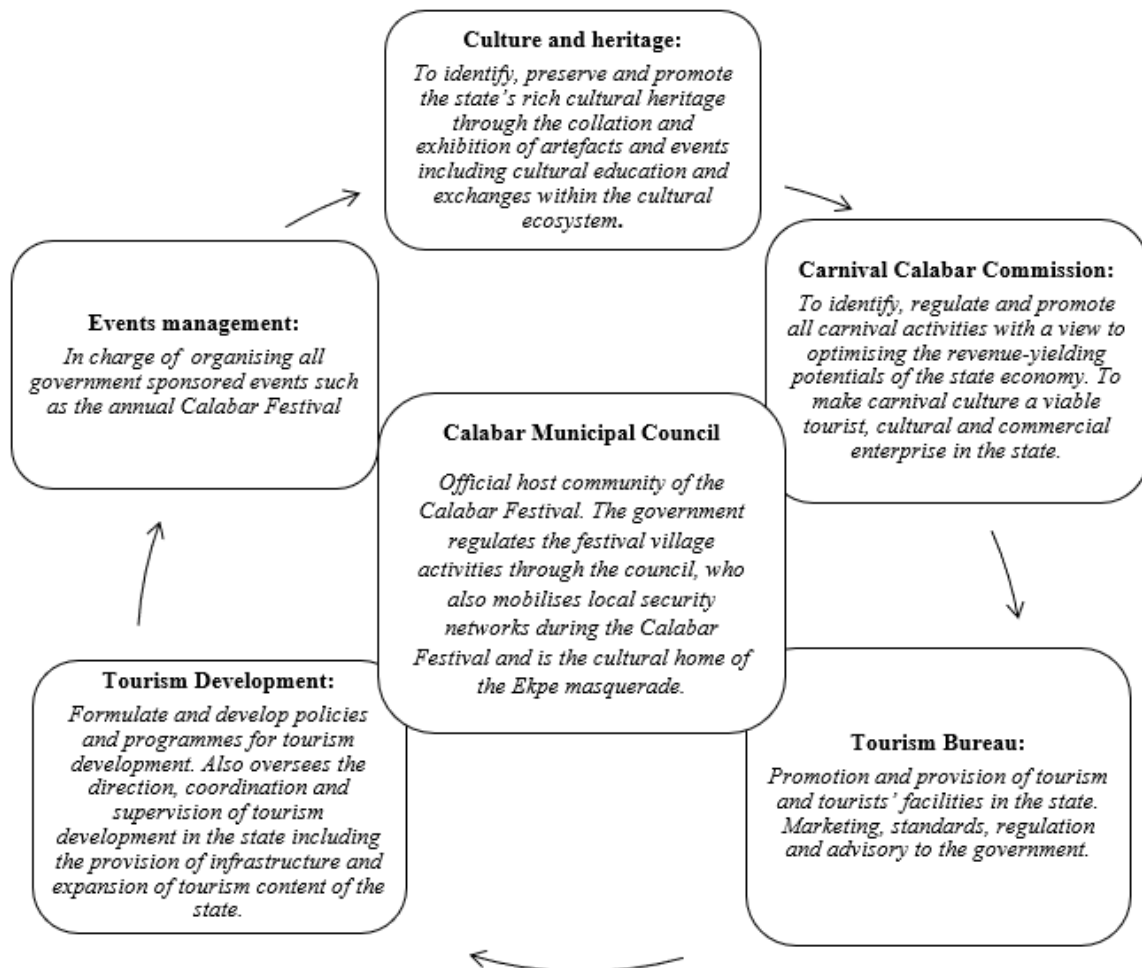
## **4.2. Producing the Calabar Festival: Policy regulations, planning and relationships in practice.**

This section analyses the diverse stakeholders involved in the Calabar Festival and their dynamic interactions in producing a cultural experience for tourism consumption. Particular to the context of this research, the key stakeholders are identified as the (Cross River) state government, local communities and tourists. Nevertheless, in general, as a state tourism initiative, the Calabar Festival is planned and regulated by a collaboration of state, cross-sector (culture and tourism, education and research institutions, and support and non-profit organisations) regulatory agencies and establishments, illustrated in Fig 6. below. Each of these has a unique function to play and several ways to influence outcomes. As I highlighted in the methodology chapter, some officials' interview excerpts are strictly represented with their assigned codes to ensure the confidentiality, which they sought.



**Source: Author, with information culled from interview with government officials, and Cross River State Government (2011).**

The ministry of culture and tourism is the main governmental body responsible for planning, implementing and regulating the state culture and tourism activities (Cross River State Tourism and Investment Footprint, 2016-2017), in which the Calabar Festival is situated as a key event. According to data provided by the Cross River State Tourism and Investment Footprint, the ministry is headed by a commissioner and a permanent secretary who are directly appointed by the state government. The primary function of the ministry is to sustain and expand the city's footprints in the tourism and culture industry and consolidate the city in the global tourism network. Also, Cross River State Government (2011) provides that the ministry has power and legitimate authority to manage and control tourism development through planning, policy regulations and tourism promotion (for example, protection of the environment, city planning and providing programmes and events that draw global, and domestic tourists to the city). The ministry also controls the budget, manage personnel engaged in tourism promotion, planning and development, engage in information provision, infrastructure improvement, and steering the development of the local community. However, as shown in fig 7 below, the ministry comprises several departments, with key responsibilities and duties currently discharged by five departments/agencies, all functioning within the municipal council as their host. Fig 7 below illustrates their key duties and responsibilities in relation to the cultural processes of production, regulation, curation, representation and identity construction, regarding the state in general, and the Calabar Festival in particular.



**Figure 7: Government departments as key stakeholders, their duties and responsibilities**

**Source: Data culled from Cross River State Tourism and Investment Footprint, 2016-2017.**

Aside the key departments graphically represented in fig. 7 above, there are diverse sub-departments and local agencies with varying forms of legitimate authority over culture and tourism production activities. Even though many of these departments (such as the Festival village, Calabar cultural Centre, Cross River state Council for Arts and Culture and others) operate almost as independent institutions, some have what I term “dependent legitimate

authority”, which means that they significantly influence cultural process, but in some cases, they might depend on the main ministry of culture and tourism’s funding to execute financial decisions. In line with this idea, evidence from interviews with an assistant to the governor on tourism (OR 5), and other officials revealed that these departments and agencies were created either by law or executive committee (EXCO) resolutions. Hence, even while they collaborate to organise culture and tourism-related activities for the Calabar Festival, they nonetheless operate within the purview and systems of the laws or resolutions that created them. According to OR 5:

“...the ministry intends to synchronise these statutes and streamline the operations of the various departments within the tourism initiative of the state government for efficiency and also, to produce an all-inclusive tourism experience” (OR 5, Jan. 3, 2020).

The reference made to synchronising and streamlining operations in the above comment, infers that the parent ministry (culture and tourism) works with other departments and sub-agencies who directly execute decisions in practice (represented in fig 6 above) towards a common goal. Particularly, the sub-agencies mostly provide the link between the local community members and the government because their key positions are typically occupied by local community members, intermediaries and creatives. But, they are accountable to their parent agencies who are in turn ultimately responsible to the central government (Cross River State Government, 2010). Overt in the statement above is the nature of power exercised by the central government. As I showed above, the ministry of culture and tourism (as a key ministry of the central government), has power and legitimate authority to manage and control tourism development through planning, policy regulations and budget control (Cross River State Government, 2011). For example, in terms of accommodation arrangements for tourists, it is a standard practice

that all commercial accommodations operating in the city are mandatorily registered with the ministry, who sets guidelines for operation. The aim is to ensure that tourists' accommodations are up to par and that they are decently treated while occupying the city's spaces, to ensure comfort and security, and attract a repeat visit.

Similarly, as I gathered during an interview with an administrative staff of Ministry of culture and tourism (OR 4. Sept. 19, 2019), "*all culture and tourism activities gets some kind of clearance from us... the ministry relies on the initiative and expertise of the various departments and agencies... in line with global tourism market trends*". A possible explanation to the statement is that with the collaborative support of the departments, agencies and other institutions, the ministry of culture and tourism demonstrates knowledge-power because they somewhat coordinate, regulate (though within neo-liberal tourism dispositions of the state) and shape cultural processes with the power to influence certain decisions.

The ongoing postulations reconnects to discussions of Mitchell et al. (1997) in chapter two, who applied the concepts of legitimacy and power as stakeholders' attributes. Using Mitchell et al.'s criteria, the most prominent stakeholders would have the power to impose their decisions, and be perceived as legitimate in exercising their power. For example, this appeared to be the case in relation to the ministry of culture and tourism, other sub-agencies and the Calabar Festival production. Although, as the comment (OR 4 above) shows, activities of the ministry are somewhat regulated by global tourism market trends, signalling, a negotiated power relation, however, by regulating the affairs of the varied agencies and statutory boards, there is an enactment of (economic and knowledge) power in translating cultural practices by the ministry, even though they work in collaboration. Whereas, what has also been demonstrated is the importance of studying aspects of power, as power can be performed by different forces in diverse ways. For instance, while the ministry of culture and tourism has

legitimacy over policy decisions, neoliberal market forces (such as tourism demands, consumers' choices and others), also help to shape decisions of the ministry through their bargaining and economic situations. Hence, this argument necessitates the relevance of situating power distinctly in the tourism interaction circuit which I proposed in the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model. The model suggests the intertwining of all stakeholders in cultural processes, within a continual negotiation of power (Pearce, 2013). As is shown so far, the performance of cultural processes rests upon the exercise of different aspects of power by different people/groups. Thus, it is essential to study the nature of power relations among stakeholders, in order to fully understand how they influence each other, in addition to cultural tourism practices and outcomes.

The rather contradictory inference from the findings is that, on institutional levels, while there are strong connections among these state cultural and tourism stakeholder groups enabling collaboration in planning, promotions and regulations, it also revealed imbalances in relational ties and exclusion of certain stakeholders because of unequal access to scarce resources. This, mostly included stakeholders who share different interests in relation to culture and tourism activities such as those in favour of commodifying culture for tourism enterprise and those seeking to conserve culture to maintain authenticity. These concerns were captured during interviews with government officials who work in the tourism industries and those in the cultural industries. For example, it was perceived that one of the executives of the state's Council of Arts and Culture (OR 2) felt financially disempowered when he expressed that the key funding concentration of the parent ministry was to develop tourism infrastructures and commodify cultural elements to generate revenue in comparison to efforts towards the local community's cultural sustainability and productivity:

“the ministry largely funds tourism associations that mobilise tourism activities but there is insufficient budget for us...compared to our contributions and the significant amount of revenue that we generate for the central government... it is very difficult for the council to resolve some difficulties.... Our allocations are not enough.... We cannot function properly without money” (OR 2, Jan. 3, 2019).

The workable inference from this statement is a perceived internal tension among the government official stakeholders because of unequal access to financial power. What was observed is that such disparity impacts on the sharing and exchange of information among stakeholders, and has the potential to diminish the quality of resource production, ideas and interests in tourism development; and consequently, reduce opportunities to develop sustainable cultural tourism. A good example is drawn from the statement above, where he emphasised that it is difficult for the council to resolve challenges because of lack of funds. It is then feasible that their capacity for a certain quality of cultural production might be limited thereof. Also, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Dec. 2019 while in the arena of the Cross River state Council for Arts and Culture, carrying out my observations, I was privileged to listen in to (they were fully aware of my presence and confirmed they had no issues with it) the conversation of some administrative officials. Clearly unhappy by their claim of improper funding (which has made it difficult for them to engage as much specialised cultural curators for special arts exhibitions, from across Nigerian cities as they envisaged), they suggest embarking on a strike if they are not properly funded to engage with the Calabar Festival by the next year 2020. These inferences lend credence to previous studies (for instance, Foris, et al., 2020; Byrd et al., 2009) discussed in chapter two, which reinforce the importance of diverse stakeholder collaboration, equal access to legitimate power, and involvement, so as to share knowledge and skills, experiences, and resources in order to solve problems and facilitate innovations and changes at all levels. Stakeholders’ perception and understanding assert power on tourism development and their



varying perceptions and interests can create conflict and power imbalances (Byrd et al., 2009), which might develop into damaging tensions if not effectively managed.

Contrary to the claims by the culture-centred institutions (such as the Calabar cultural Centre, Cross River state Council for Arts and Culture) of lesser access to economic resource but more knowledge capacity in cultural tourism activities, the more tourism-centred agencies (such as Cross River State Carnival commission, Events management and others) insist they have more capacity to generate economic returns through their rigorous practices, with enhanced skills and innovation for tourism development. One of the actions most apparently observed in relation to this claim was captured in the field. For example, they (a monitoring group of the Events management department) systematically gather data on the performance of the tourism market in general and the profile, needs and satisfaction of the Calabar Festival tourists in particular. As was expressed in the research and statistics department reports (2013-2018), the collection of these information equips them with the requisite knowledge and expertise for addressing consumer needs and preferences that sustain repeat visits (fig. 8 below shows staff collecting raw data in the field. They declined a request to capture their faces). Additionally, their knowledge power in engaging a wide-ranging networks and alliances with global corporations (for instance, media and garment factories) and key public-sector stakeholders enable them to effectively mobilise tourism activities such as marketing, promotion, regulation and representations, thereby influence tourism strategies, enhance industry growth and the economic capital of the state.



**Figure 8: Staff of the events Management Department, collecting data in the field**

**Source: Author.**

Another example of what is meant by collaboration is the alliance between the CRS Carnival Commission and some global bodies through whose involvement, the Calabar Festival attracts a more diverse tourism audience and accumulate capital. The executive Secretary, CCC, during an interview (2019), clearly expressed that the commission primarily interacts with a variety of organisations and groups whose involvements particularly attract tourism and boost economic growth. As he claimed, in the case of the Calabar Festival, these include the costume-making workshops of Trinidad and Tobago, which work in direct partnership to produce the Calabar Carnival costumes, and Diageo PLC and Red Bull energy drink which are the official drink suppliers for the festival. Cross River State Tourism and Investment Footprint (2016-2017) also show others in the media and advertising organisations like MTN telecommunications (official sponsors); Ben TV London, Multichoice, DSTV, BBC and CNN. Interview with the Head of Information (HOI), Cross River State Carnival Commission (CRSCC), and other state producers further revealed that together with the Carnival Council of

Trinidad and Tobago, these media organisations continue to play significant roles in attracting a global audience, investment, and income to the city, through the Calabar Festival. He asserts:

“Sponsors like the DSTV, we don’t pay them to cover the festival for one month. They come to do it as part of banter, banter in the sense that they take the content for free, they sell it to their consumers, they make money while we get visibility for what they do. So, we don’t need to pay you to get content that you’re not paying for.... These media outfits help to attract investors and more tourists who come to spend their money here”. (OR. 8, Sept. 18, 2020).

This comment and others like it clearly echo levels of bargaining power where production is sustained by a perceived win-win situation between the global actors (in this case, the media agencies) and producers at tourism destinations. As globally recognised brands, they contribute to the structuring of the image and positioning of the festival through their representation of the festival’s events as alluring and exotic. Additional conversations with the head of information CRSCC further revealed that in previous years, DSTV (the TV channel) garnered extraordinary levels of favourable feedback from the audience, following that, the television network replayed the event periodically due to massive requests especially by viewers in the United Kingdom and America. It seems possible that through different stakeholders’ collaborations, the festival continues to gain a foothold in the global tourism market as its reach and coverage continues to widen through media visibility. Therefore, as Foris et al advocated, improved interaction among different groups of tourism stakeholders is considered essential for effective collaborations in cultural processes.

So far, this section has identified the key stakeholders and destination planners of the Calabar Festival. It has been demonstrated that the Cross River state government, its department and local agencies have substantial influence on tourism activities and cultural processes of

production, consumption, representation, identity construction and curation (vis-à-vis conservation activities). This is derived through policy regulation and access to various resources. For example, some (such as the ministry of culture and tourism) are adjudged to have access to more economic power to regulate policies and influence the decisions of other stakeholders. Others (such as the department of culture and heritage, and council of arts and culture) seem equipped with expertise and knowledge power to navigate the wheels of cultural production and curation. Yet, some others have the bargaining power (such as the CRS Carnival Commission and their allied multinational corporations) through which they are able to represent the event as a preferred attraction, thereby, enhancing brands' visibility, host's tourism consumption and development. Though, simply having available resources provides no guarantee that power will be exercised (such as knowledge-power, as in the case of the council of arts and culture discussed previously). This assertion is consistent with Foucault (1980) who argued that resources become sources of power only when they are successfully exploited because resources are the media through which power is exercised. When resources are exploited and translated into power, it is conceivable to connect power sources to the ways in which power is exercised.

What is also evident in this research is that producers exercise varying degrees of power via some strategic practices, in which they construct and manipulate realities in the production of culture for tourism through the Calabar Festival. Three key strategies were identified, and as I will show, in some cases these strategies are validated and accepted by tourists and the locals, whereas in other cases they are contested. Nevertheless, these strategies are central to the practices of power around the Calabar Festival because they are powerful enough to construct certain cultural realities and influence consumers (tourists) and locals to accept such reality (Gotham, 2007). Informed by the principles of modernisation and internationalisation, these strategies include:

- The use of brands
- Exoticisation of culture as a representational strategy, and
- Creating a hybridised festival environment that serves as a melting pot of various national and international cultures.

In the following section, I will expand my analysis in relation to the dynamics of power around the use of brands to promote and produce the Calabar Festival. The analysis will demonstrate how stakeholders interact with each other, and influence various cultural processes.

#### **4.2.1 Power and the use of brands in promoting the Calabar Festival**

The current investigation finds that the Calabar Festival has developed into a strategic site of cultural, socio-political and economic negotiations, which allows varying degrees of power and influence by various stakeholders, including the multinational advertising corporations who promote them. As has been argued in the literature review, the image of a particular place, built by the influence of cultural festivals (both positive and negative, contemporary and historic), is a collaborative effort by various stakeholders; beyond destination's policy makers, it includes tourists, locals, reputable brands and investors searching for new locations (Govers and Go, 2009). Previous studies (such as Bohme, 1993; Nash, 1989, discussed in chapter two) that have evaluated the relationship between tourism, branding and power dynamics observed that brands frame experiences within social power, where a tourist's perception, emotion, and mental state are inadvertently influenced by the consumption settings the brands create. As I will demonstrate in this section, brands assist in building a brand image of an attraction, but they also attempt to exert significant levels of control over the events and their relationships often result in a clash of power and interests (Ooi, 2002). This section analyses the dynamic interaction of Calabar Festival planners with brands, in which forms of power are also exercised, in the context of cultural production, representation and regulation.

The Calabar Festival producers and planners have consistently engaged well known international brands, in promoting the event as an exotic cultural tourism attraction. To further corroborate this claim, an administrative staff of CRS Carnival Commission (OR 12. Sept. 18, 2020) expressed during an interview that these brands are employed to serve two major functions namely: first, sponsorship and (event) visibility (which I discussed in the previous section), and second, the incorporation of aesthetics to create an emotional connection between the tourist and the destination. In relation to the latter, the OR 12 further expressed that *“they add to our traditional approach to producing a cultural experience for tourists, which is improved by the aesthetic environment and products that they offer”*. This assertion connects to the argument of Stebbins (1996) which I discussed in chapter two. Stebbins argued that Cultural tourism is primarily about search for deep cultural experiences, especially through aesthetic, intellectual or emotional participation. Reinforced by responses of official interviewees from the Carnival Commission, (quoted above), the achievement of a strong emotional relationship between tourists and the Calabar Festival events is one of the commission’s most important aims of engaging brands.

While the officials discuss sponsorship, it appears that the brands engaged by the Calabar Festival planners recognise that providing exciting, unique and alluring experiences at the Cultural Festival can covertly compel consumers to retain their (brands’) memory, in ways that transcend more conventional advertising strategies. One would think that their primary reason for engagement is solely for profit. However, interview with representatives of these brands, revealed that for many of them, involvement was more about brand advertisement at the festival site than immediate profit. For instance, a representative of Ebonylife TV claimed: *“The Calabar Festival is an international festival... we have a presence in three continents of the world.... We want to be first to tell... and our goal is to extend our coverage to all the world continents....”* (OIR 23. Dec. 27, 2018). Clearly, the relationship between the corporate media

brand and the festival is one of undeniable mutual dependence, and as I discussed earlier, through bargaining the partners are able to offer visibility and wider coverage to each other. Thus, while the Festival is massively advertised by Ebonylife TV in the continents where they operate, their presence in the field and the festival contents also helps to advertise them (even through copyright licensing, as he suggested) for networks outside the continents where they operate.

Similarly, MTN telecommunications was another brand that almost all the interviewees identified as a very important brand, appealing to all through its strong visual identity and provision of seamless communication services. Interestingly, OR 5 discussed earlier further responded to the perceived influence of aesthetics which contributes to certain relations of power over production and consumption by suggesting:

“We are the only government with such a strong presence of fibre optic, through the adverts... they have been supporting us for the Calabar Carnival by taking us to the world and bringing the world to us... the marriage is great... Because MTN has a strong colour, everywhere they go, they make a difference... colours add to the aesthetic design of our city atmosphere during the festival, ... and somehow, make some of us develop a modern connection to life...” (OR 5- Jan, 3rd 2020).

What can be drawn from the interview responses is that apart from attracting global audiences and brand awareness, the Calabar Festival brands also advance immersive promotional strategies that create experiences for the consumer on individual and social levels. According to the findings, the brands use colours, spatial designs and free services to create some compelling visual and sensory connection between them and tourism consumers. Unsurprisingly, my observations revealed that the Calabar Festival was a highly conducive environment (see fig 9 below) that, due to its dynamic atmosphere, sparked positive

psychological brand associations. Many brand representatives claim that the festival experience place much importance on the environment as much as the events. Particularly, a representative of MTN telecommunication brand commented that:

“it is not about how many events lined up... It is about the sum of what you make out of the festival, the air, the smell, the colours and how they make you feel... the connection with others- the whole atmosphere...” (OIR 4-Jan.10, 2019).

A possible interpretation of this comment is that knowledge-power is also exercised by these brands. As I explained in the neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework in Chapter Two, power is relational, it can be performed in multiple ways, by all stakeholders involved in diverse cultural processes. Consistent with Foucault’s Knowledge-power conceptualisation, these results provide further support that the expertise possessed by persons or groups, such as how the knowledge obtained from tourist experiences by brands, might result in more power to dictate events and their outcomes. It is clear that these brands understand the target audience and are equipped with relevant insights into how the festival’s atmosphere affect people’s psyche, thus, they capitalise on that understanding to create experiences with their brands in ways that can influence perceptions. By creating a brand experience that is focused on the senses, one may establish a powerful brand connection and sensory-rich memories. As Truong (2020) observed, our senses of sight and smell seem to be the most powerful activator of memories, and these, coupled with taste and music provide a stage for an impactful brand experience.

But while the brands seem to control the atmospheric narratives, what was unexpectedly found is that the engagement of some brands, specifically, MTN communications, seemed like a source of concealed tension between government officials, and local intermediaries who lobby for the prioritisation of domestic brands such as GLO mobile (who is a strong competitor in



the Nigerian Telecommunication sector). A number of local intermediaries claimed that Glo being a Nigerian brand contributes more to domestic economy, whereas, MTN remits its economic proceeds to its parent country. By so doing, they believe that Nigeria in general is losing some form of revenue. This is illustrated by an interview excerpt from an Obong (a young king) from Yakurr as he claims *“I do not know why Glo is not given a preferential status.... We need to use our own to grow our own”* (LR 4 Jan. 2nd, 2020). While MTN provides quality products and services, it was important (for the local intermediaries) to continuously push the discourse and narrative of growing local (Nigerian) brands, partly to show more concern for local cultural preservation in production, and to sustain Nigeria’s domestic economy. However, the interpretation of his statement and the views of others like him point to the assumption that they were disconnected from the realities of how brands interact with the Calabar Festival. While my research finds that brands get involved either through partnership or sponsorship, it does not reveal the detailed terms and conditions of the collaboration as the information is strictly confidential for the ministry of culture and tourism, agencies and parastatals that engage them.



**Figure 9: MTN services centres at the festival arena**

**Source: Author**

The images above (Figure 9) depict the vibrant and conducive scenery created by MTN telecommunications in the Calabar Festival arena. Each of these scenes perform a specific function. As shown in the images, MTN functions not only as a brand, but also as a provider of important services including phone and sim card purchase and registration. This function also acts as a way to enhance civic compliance with the government’s security directive for the registration of all sim cards, with the aim of curbing crimes in the country. Anyone who needs any service related to mobile communications is easily attracted by the vibrant MTN yellow colour. Other services provided by MTN include promotional raffle draws and gift packages to entice consumers, as seen in image (5), customised picture frames, and a platform for various interviews, away from the rowdy and noisy background of a festival arena as image (1) shows. OR 5 rated the interview stand provided by MTN highly, due to the fact that the festival

atmosphere is usually noisy with many distractions, therefore, for media houses to conduct a clearer interview, they always need a good background and a quieter environment.

The relevance of using brands and their nature of interaction with producers is clearly supported by the current finding. The nature of interaction between brands and the Calabar Festival is often a negotiated collaboration, which can be sometimes, contested. Through the activities of brands, a strong relationship is demonstrated, one underpinning the perceived event quality, and informs the link between tourists' satisfaction and the regulatory influence of brands on tourists' consumption behaviour. In relation to the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, power is centralised at all relational processes and connects all stakeholders. I have also demonstrated how power (the overt and the latent) can be performed in diverse ways, through the exercise of knowledge, bargain and finance. In the case of these brands, aside their negotiation power and as co-producers, the aesthetic signs and symbols in the festival space are crucial means through which they exercise power and control (Urry, 1992) over consumers (even though consumers are also embedded with bargaining power that influences the brands to produce specific experiences for consumption). Equally, from my discussions with some tourists, especially domestic (Nigerian) tourists, it appears that it is the reflexive interpretation of these festival brands' products and services that is helping to reproduce the meanings that participants have of them. Ideas about what the brands stand for can work to the advantage of festival producers in terms of organising the festival, because the producers have the knowledge that the exchange value of culture and cultural production currently lies both in its consumption and its relation to the global world. Thus, they collaborate with renowned brands, whose representational markers they employ to produce an exotic festival arena. The following section analyses the Calabar Festival, in relation to cultural exoticisation and the interaction of stakeholders in framing the exotic tourists' space of consumption.

#### **4.2.2 Cultural exoticisation: A representational strategy to construct an ideal tourist attraction**

In this study, it was found that the Calabar Festival producers engage in the exoticisation of culture as a strategic mechanism for self-representation of difference; aimed at attracting more diverse tourists and to sustain destination's socio-economic development. As was argued in chapter Two, tourists are always the target audience of tourism representations (Santos and McKenna, 2015), even though earlier studies conceptualised cultural exoticisation as the imaginary representation of ethnic others by the West on the non-West, highlighting the inequality of power of the West over the subaltern regions (Said, 1979; 1985; 2003; 2004; Elmarsafy et al., 2003; Marcuse, 2004). However, more recent studies challenged such ideological underpinnings of "otherness" (Setiawan and Subaharianto, 2019; Ostrowska, 2018; Claire, 2018; Berghahn's, 2017). These later studies insist that the current geospatial dynamics of globalisation situates exoticism in the domain of modern ethical, political and aesthetic power dynamics. This could be seen in the context of neoliberal consumer culture under capitalism. In line with the later strand of argument, this section demonstrates that modern systems of cultural exoticisation characterise a strategy of aesthetic self-representation employed by destination producers, to achieve uniqueness and economic profits. This section analyses the exotic representations of the Calabar Festival spaces, and elements particularly, costumes, in ways that confer legitimacy and cultural flexibility, within intricate power-relations.

Discussions about the exotic representations of cultural elements during the Calabar Festival might begin with some of the descriptions of the alluring cultural environment (invented and natural), which I documented in my fieldnotes:

“... ‘themed Africanism’...I arrived at the central take-off point on the 28<sup>th</sup> December 2019, fascinated by the atmosphere of warmth in the environment, which managed to be home-like, neat and vibrant at the same time. A visual pleasure of vibrant colours, floats, iconic costumes like the loincloth, the Akasi (a beautifully crafted skirt made from cane, to attract attention to their waistline of dancers), the Ibuot Abang, raffias, and beads, that essentialise cultural identities. The streets look like a garden of well-groomed trees, even though there are bustling street markets. Landscape designs along the festival routes are beautifully designed with traditional raffia palms, interwoven with floral lights that sparkled at night (see the Marina round-about, image5 below). Security personnel are everywhere, conspicuous in their uniforms, making me feel secure. There are no vehicle obstructions so it feels genuinely safe to walk around without the fear of being knocked down by a car. By midday, the scorching sun typical to African region is rising, and at some point, I felt incredibly thirsty and could readily buy water from a street hawker because they were everywhere. Even though the weather was baking hot, the huge well-groomed umbrella trees swayed back and forth, the air felt like it was filled with jasmine, it gave a good feel of excitement and relaxation, while the rusty smell brought my senses back to the dry and dusty harmattan wind that is typical in west Africa, and which we fondly anticipated while growing up in Nigeria...the convergence point is just a stone throw away from the expansive botanical garden....” (fieldnotes, Dec. 28, 2019).



**Figure 10: the design of the Marian junction at night**

**Source: Author**

Stated above are extracts from my fieldnotes documents in which I tried to describe for the reader's imagination, the aesthetic perception of the Calabar Festival scenery. Decipherable in the description is the strategic vision of destination producers to create an exotic representation of the cultural space, in the context of exploiting the natural beauty of the place in combination with primitive tradition and modern aesthetics. Unsurprisingly, interview responses by policy makers and policy documents, including the Cross River state Tourism Masterplan, supports such vision. Two good illustrations that aptly captures the positioning are from first, an interview with an executive officer of Tourism Bureau and second, an excerpt from the State tourism Masterplan:

“... since the Calabar Festival inception, the government has developed cultural and tourism policies that combines the richness of local cultures and natural beauty to

produce an exotic space of consumption, in response to developments in the global tourism market... Although innovation is essential to the tourism industries, the primitive is one of the main charms for today's tourists which we must fully take advantage of..." (OR 1. 28, Sept. 2020).

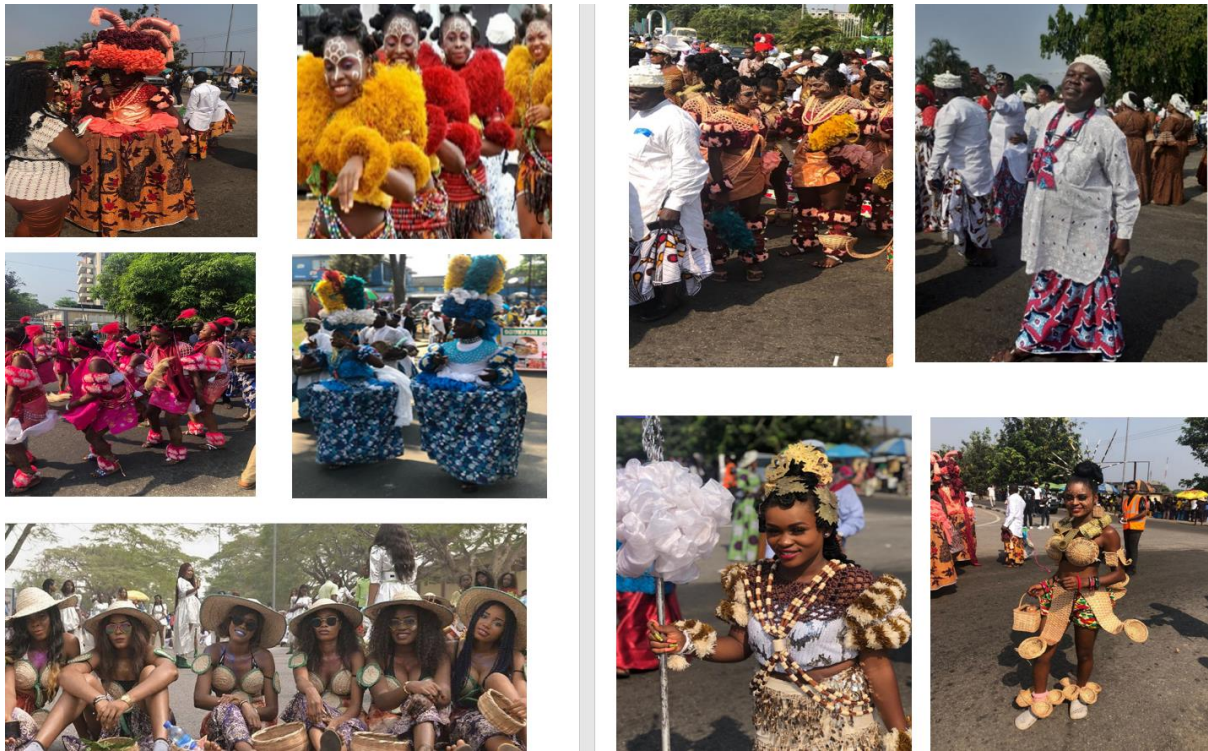
"Africanness, locality and uniqueness are central to producing a concentrated Calabar Festival experience but with modern aesthetics to accommodate new events that would appeal to the emerging consumer culture of the 21st century" (State tourism Masterplan 2006:22).

These accounts both depict the appreciation of a unique native identity which is believed to somehow appear distinct to the tourists by virtue of its localism. The inference drawn from OR 1 is that primitive cultures have an opposing relationship to modernity, therefore, combining both creates some form of unique appeal for tourists who constantly seek difference and the authentic (Richards, 2018). Thus, as people with symbolic levels of power, the government and planners use a combination of modern, historic, and heritage frames as a pragmatic strategy for the aesthetic representation of cultural elements, to entice a more diverse tourist taste. These arguments are consistent with the ideas of Ryan and Picken (2017) discussed in chapter two, who maintain that exoticism is a legitimate practice by a dynamic network of people who construct the uniqueness and perceived realities of people in cultural and tourism exchanges. For Ryan and Picken, exoticism is to be celebrated in that cultural elements considered primitive are only appreciated in relation to, and as stimulus for modern tourism practices. Similarly, Urry (1992), argued that for host destinations, a range of attractions and sights may be exploited and exoticised, whereas their meanings are negotiated according to the dictates of tourist consumption. Thus, it is not a novel idea to claim that the representation of the primitive played a crucial role in shaping the production of exotic culture in the Calabar Festival, or that

destination planners jointly share such values based on economic opportunities. However, what is remarkable is that exoticising culture for the Calabar Festival tended to mask asymmetric power relations in ideological constructions as there are diverse perceptions among government officials, cultural workers, tourists and locals regarding the underlying aesthetic values it imposes on cultural resources particularly, costumes and artwork souvenirs.

On the one hand, costumes are found to be one of the obviously exoticised cultural relics, used to convey a certain degree of legitimate self-representations of the Calabar culture. During an interview with OR 12, he expressed that “*for people to see us in a particular light, we have to re-image ourselves to reflect the beautiful way we want them to see us*” (OR 12, Sept. 18, 2020). The re-imagining in his assertion allows for the construction of preferred identities, which they believe will entice tourist consumers. The assertion also reflects the tone of policy (Cross River State Tourism Bureau, 2010:7) in favour of cultural exoticisation suggesting self-representations by constructing the Calabar Festival as ‘*a tourist paradisiacal event that combines unchanged ancient tradition, though with modern aesthetics*’ (for example, see fig.11 below). Thus, it seems apparent that the practice is accepted in policy and practiced by the planners of the Calabar Festival. As I discussed in chapter three, this strategy was embodied when the (Cross River) state government (in 2005) sponsored some delegates to Trinidad and Tobago to learn about the Trinidadian carnival culture, particularly, the fusion of tradition and modernity, and the use of costumes. What is observed today, is that planners have consistently replicated such fusion in the production of culture for the Calabar Festival, where global costume practices influence and transform the local everyday into the exotic for tourists’ consumption (Carlson, 2010).





**Figure 11: A pic mix of some communities’ cultural troupes in their traditional costumes creatively designed with vibrant colours.**

**Source: Author**

Images (Figure 11 above) show some of the costumes observed on the Cultural Day event of the Calabar Festival, which I argue, linked tradition to modern creativity to give a sense of the exotic. Different Cross River state communities have cultural groups with unique cultural attires. As seen in the pictures, one striking feature is that they were dressed in ceremonial native “styled” attires for which their local communities are generally identified with, thereby, conveying a symbolic interpretation of aspects of their culture and identity. But while some costumes and their materials are consistent with the Calabar traditional offerings (such as glittering ornaments and animal spike hair-pins worn by the ladies, beads, hats, cowries, Ankara-made attires for both men and women, traditionally crafted hand fan and horse tail that represents a status symbol), others added extra vibrance and creativity (such as in colour, and design of Raffia crafted bras, and masquerade-like costumes) which blended in some fanciful

ways with traditional and carnivalesque costumes. It is understood by the planners that the combination of tradition and modern aesthetics produces the exotic, with a sense of identity, real or constructed.

On the other hand, this study also found that the exoticisation and representations of cultural elements for the tourist gaze are fraught with contesting power relations. Specifically, the finding illustrates a contradiction to the seemingly general approval for exoticising culture. The opposing relations are between the official structures of value creation that are strongly associated with the global tourism market and profit (such as the department of tourism development, Carnival commission, events management and others), and the local frameworks advocating cultural preservation (such as the Ministry of Culture and Heritage). In some cases, the group with perceived less access to economic power, can influence cultural decisions through knowledge or bargaining powers (in this case, locals). As a significant illustration, many locals cited the government's transformation of the cultural village into an exotic tourist space. This was however, resisted in the previous year by the locals, who felt disempowered and lack of ownership, given the touristic value placed on cultural space and its products. For example, a local craftsman who exhibits artworks in the cultural village (LR22), and a worker in the festival village (LR23), expressed during interviews that:

“we used to decide how we produce ... but the government want mass production. They have power because they control capital so they ignored us... But we made them realise that they cannot do much without our input, ... they have no choice but to listen to our demands” (LR23. Sept. 2, 2020).

“... the essence of the cultural village should be to teach, imprint and transfer our core traditional values to the younger generation through arts.... it is us, for us, no

infiltration... of tourism values... but the government made it a commercial tourism space.... Thankfully, we now have some level of control...” (LR22. Sept. 2, 2020).

These comments reflect the nature of interaction and power dynamics between locals and government authorities. It is important to highlight that according to the accounts by the interview respondents above, the cultural village is an important shared space through which locals teach and learn about their ancestral cultures through art expressions. However, as LR 22 expressed, the government officials exert control and, they transformed the cultural space to a festival village for tourism activities. The perspective also supports the claim of LR23, who insisted that the power of capital legitimised the government’s control. But LR23 continued that having realised the critical stake of the locals who “*threatened to shut down any form of activity if not adequately empowered... the government gave some form of regulatory flexibility*”. The stakeholders’ negotiation dynamics demonstrate the significant knowledge and bargaining power of locals with the government in cultural production and reflects study by Goldberg-Miller (2015) discussed in chapter Two. Goldberg-Miller argued that communities do not just submit to government-imposed tourism ideologies, rather, they can negotiate, adjust, and challenge institutionalised legitimacy, especially when it does not offer opportunities to represent the community’s cultural authenticity and uniqueness. However, the variation is that while Goldberg-Miller’s analysis focused on the transformation of the entire city of Toronto into an innovation hub, the cultural village presents a small space within Calabar city, which locals seek to protect from vulnerability to (re)interpretation and newness through the tourism encounter. Notwithstanding, we can acknowledge that cultural exoticisation provides a medium to state legitimised representation, identity construction and regulation of cultural events and products; however, they also engender a set of priorities that reinforce and challenge complex relationships as locals compete for self-control. Thus, power interactions are complex and involve negotiation processes as justified by existing literature.

In the next section, I move on to analysing the people, culture and power dynamics involved in producing a hybridised festival space.

#### **4.2.3 Converging hybrid identities in a locality: The negotiated space of cultural production**

One interesting finding of this study is that the Calabar Festival offers a hybrid space of production, where multi-national cultural identities and expressions are converged in a localised setting, to offer a unique tourism experience. As I argued in the literature chapter, the convergence of globalisation and localisation, production and consumption have opened spaces for the innovation of new negotiated cultural identities through a tourism circuit of interaction (Ostrowska, 2018; Bhabha, 1994). In negotiating identities in the production of culture, Bhabha's (1996) notion of hybridity which refers to the mixing and modification of elements from different social groups in ways that threaten pre-existing power structures becomes significant. Thus far in this chapter, I have demonstrated that production is a contested space, involving endless negotiations by different stakeholders with different power relations. Despite the contestation by diverse groups, they share two common goals namely, to revive and showcase local culture, and to fully develop the Calabar Festival as an innovative, unique, globally competitive tourist experience, reinforced by positive cultural transformation and economic gains. Thus, this section analyses the interaction of stakeholders, to demonstrate how cultures are converged to achieve these shared goals simultaneously in the Calabar Festival context.

The evidence from my fieldwork observations and interviews show that the Calabar Festival is strategically constructed as a melting pot of various multinational cultures. By so doing, producers and planners hope that people can have diverse cultural experiences that reflect a blend of global and local, primitive and modern, aesthetics and entertainment. It could be

argued that it is for this reason that the events of the festival aim to accommodate more diverse cultural performances. For example, a look at the programme of events for the year 2018 (see fig. 12 below), which is consistent with 2017 and 2019, distinctly highlight days for local, national, and international cultural and entertainment performances.



**Figure 12: Programme of events for year 2018, featuring the Calabar Festival’s climatic days**

Aside from the hybridisation of culture elements, a hybrid structure of global-local events is also sustained through the events. According to the image above, the 26<sup>th</sup> of December marks the display of all Nigerian cultural dance and rhythms, 27<sup>th</sup> hosts the newly introduced Bikers’ Carnival, a cosmopolitan event where professional bikers from across the world engage in displays with vintage cars, convertibles and power bikes. Also, the 28<sup>th</sup> features the Carnival Calabar which showcases displays from the bands, a competitive theatrical parade with

flamboyant costumes, and music. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of December, is the international carnival that features the parade of international cultural groups and famous carnival troupes from across the world, while the 30<sup>th</sup> hosts the street party, which is popularly known as Africa's biggest street party (see chapter 3 for details). The combination of these events in a particular festival and the ideological underpinning of its production is consistent with the position of Bennett, Taylor, and Woodward (2014), and Quinn (2000), who (in chapter two) analysed festivals as arenas for the performance and critique of lifestyle, identity, and cultural politics; as tools for converging and solidifying local and international communities; and as spatiotemporal events that influence people's lives.

Meanwhile, within the years mentioned, I observed countries including Chile, France, Guinea, Senegal, and Nigeria collaboratively engaging in performing arts during the international carnival event. The performance was not dominated by any of the cultures mentioned above but was a blend of co-constructed acts that has now formed a conventional artistic performance in the Calabar Festival. In the literature review chapter, I argued for the concept of cultural co-coloniality to demonstrate how cultural knowledge can be jointly formed within a particular tourism setting. This collaborative practice observed in the Calabar Festival supports the cultural co-coloniality concept because, it has become a creative source of knowledge formation. In demonstrating less consideration to the place of origin of such knowledge, the now conventional practice thereby challenges the established structures of race, power, capitalism, and euro-centric modernity and become arenas where diverse networks co-produce local knowledge, global meanings are replicated in a localised setting, and the history, heritage and identity of people and places are (re)negotiated. This argument also draws a reference frame from interview responses of many officials across the various tourism departments for instance, executive members of Cross River State Tourism Bureau (OR 3), the Carnival commission (OR 6), and Tourism development (OR 7) variously assert that:

“... the Calabar Festival brings the world closer so that we all can understand ourselves for peaceful co-existence.... You can see the world and learn about different cultures through the Calabar Festival because all continents of the world are duly represented” (OR 7 Jan. 10, 2021).

“We create an all-round cultural and entertainment event that takes your mind completely off the stress of daily routines.... you are so engulfed that if you are not just admiring your own culture, you are experiencing and trying to figure out other peoples’...” (OR 6. Jan. 10, 2021).

“...what you see in those world city festivals like London, Brazil, Spain, Trinidad, and Tobago, Venice, New Orleans, and so many others, is what we have combined and fixed into our local festival....” (OR 3- Sept. 19, 2020).

These assertions significantly point to a disposition towards internationalisation and collaborative cross-cultural interaction among stakeholders at all levels. As the statements convey, there is a conscious effort to converge different cultures within the Calabar Festival so that tourists would have a wider selection of experiences and consumption choices. OR 7 particularly claims that hosting people of different races and countries within the Calabar Festival enhances global unity. OR 6 lays claim to a total tourism package that takes one away from the hassles of everyday living. Similarly, consistent with Carlson (2010), OR 3 reiterates how they have superimposed globally recognised festival patterns into the local Calabar Festival setting. The significance (though masking the regular contentions among stakeholders) is that converging diverse cultures in the festival setting become a powerful socio-political instrument for intercultural and racial cooperation. Many (particularly the youths and the planners) believe that it is a positive response to both changes in consumer demands and

increased level of competition for tourists' attractions. This finding supports the idea that incorporating various global and local cultures within the Calabar Festival predisposes it to interracial, and trans-cultural influence and transformation, thereby, enhancing the cultural co-coloniality concept. This argument also accords with the assertion of the head of information, Carnival Commission that "...the Calabar Festival ... is a race-free zone because racial identities are made fluid and people interact not as different, but as humans...a good example of a less racial sensitive arena" (OR 8, Dec, 22, 2019). His comment endorses the careful attempt by the Calabar Festival producers to promote cultural hybridisation as a strategy to create a sense of belonging and of a shared human identity for all, rather than emphasising the 'dominant' and 'dominated', or 'us' and 'them' dichotomies which earlier postcolonial theorists like Said (1978) emphasised.

In contrast to the previous explanation, however, there is a growing concern among some local cultural conservatives (mostly the elderly) that the convergence of cultures in the Calabar Festival setting and the consequent forms of cultural representation is a subtle way of disfiguring, de-emphasising, or aiding the erosion of what they understand as authentic local cultures. This line of thought connects with discussions in Chapter Two about the effects of globalisation by Teo and Lim (2003), who argued that the forces of globalisation are powerful enough to standardise societies and prompt a globalised economy without borders. Similar views were expressed in interviews with local community elders, who argued that westernisation, disguised as modernisation and exoticisation of culture, has gradually supplanted the festival's original conservative touch. For instance, a retired traditional chief (who hosted me for two days and nights in 2018) asserted his discontent with a series of rhetorical questions:



“Why call it cultural if you must select only the fanciful features of culture and impose it on us and our visitors? Why show what you can still see at other world festivals? Why not revive those traits and see whether people get enchanted or not? You dispose of our ancient traditions because you think that tourists will not like it ... honestly, they are allowing the destruction of our uniqueness...”  
(LR 2, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018).

The tone of the questions conveyed a sense of defiance to misrepresentation through his disgust for what he considered a disregard of raw tradition for more commonly experienced global performances. While the Chief expressed general culture misrepresentation concerns, others directed their criticisms towards what they perceived as a negative shift in perception, and the objectification and shrewd support for nudity among females in particular. Another traditional chief (retired civil servant, LR 3) claimed that, “*our young ladies now see nudity as normal and fashionable....*”. He then proceeded to show me some popular internet pictures from his mobile phone (see image below) and continued, “... *If this continues, they will see our native wears as ‘local’* (a term commonly used as uncivilised or primitive in Nigeria)”. This view was re-echoed by a student from Calabar Municipal claiming:

“my younger sister... after she joined one of the parade groups in 2014... All her regular clothes are now as skimpy as the ones they wear during the parades.... For her, people who wear our native Ankara-made clothes are now local...” (LR11. Dec. 29, 2020).



**Figure 13: images show some of the claims of nudity, while D is perceived by the locals as authentically Calabar.**

**Source: Author.**

Clearly, these comments and similar ones show displeasure with a part of the hybrid approach that the festival producers adopted, especially in dressing and costumes. It is important to note that there might be possible bias (or so) in these responses as the chiefs are traditional titleholders who are traditionally supposed to be the custodians of culture in many Nigerian societies. Therefore, it is not surprising that they have reservations about mixing cultures in their local festivities. But what is curious about these comments is that their undertone subtly accuses planners as reinforcing Said's (1978) constructions of the 'Other' in tourists' gazes. In chapter two, Said offered a binary epistemology through which to understand the Orient's culture and relationship to the West, where the 'Orient' is an object of fantasy for the West. Following these comments, it seemed that they perceive that the hybridisation and exoticisation of culture in the Calabar Festival works to create idealised fantasies of the other for the tourists'

gaze. Also, as expressed by LR 11, hybridity adds the demonstration effect, where locals imitate tourists' behaviour as part of daily life while regarding their native cultures (for instance, dressing) as "local". Based on these sociocultural markers, some locals see tourism as a serious threat to local cultural values, a contributing factor to the disconnect between the local population and cultural traditions, and a tension with planners.

Arguably, both views discussed above involving those disposed to internationalisation and collaborative cross-cultural interaction, and the dissenting voices (such as LR2 AND LR11) seem to strengthen the idea of tourists as modern cultural curators. In the literature chapter, the curators were conceptualised as those who mediate culture and arts (O'Neil, 2007), and set the contexts for social interaction and new relational frameworks that influence cultural processes (Karen, 2011). Deducible from the responses is that, despite the opposing perspectives (in relation to positive-negative outcome), both groups seem to recognise that tourists' (either through consumption tastes or demands) are making them appreciate their traditional culture more, directly and indirectly (both on economic and value terms), thereby, setting relational frameworks that influence what is being produced as cultural offerings in the Calabar Festival. Thus, these dynamisms open up spaces for further analysing the power of social interaction and exchange over the commodification and conservation of culture through the Calabar context. Particularly, as O'Neil (2012) identified, three core elements through which power is performed and, which constitute curation namely, the conservation, co-production and sharing of cultural knowledge. Moreover, evidences so far have linked tourists to these three core processes. Thus, it is relevant to delve into analysis of the social relations that constitute how culture comes to be curated, and the significance of curation in modern tourism circuit of interaction. The section that follows moves on to consider the commodification and conservation dynamics.

### **4.3 Cultural Conservation, Commodification and the politics of co-creation**

The enduring debate over cultural conservation and commodification has often revolved around the question of whether tourism, as an economic tool, may contribute to cultural preservation, or if it endangers cultural value through commoditisation. As tourism is a cultural process as much as a form of economic development, it enables market activity to respond to tourists/consumer needs and to meet financial goals (Richards, 2018). However, as destinations are increasingly attempting to respond to the preferences and demands of their diverse tourists/consumers through commodification, Kreps (2008) argued in chapter two that they have become more inclusive of varied viewpoints, reciprocal relationships, networks of exchanges, and sensitive of people's rights to participate in determining how their cultures are represented and curated. This section analyses stakeholder's (including tourists) interaction in seeking to simultaneously preserve and commodify culture aspects while producing the Calabar Festival. The section demonstrates how the reciprocal relationships provide opportunities for co-creating cultures and decentralising power structures. Based on evidence from policy, interview responses, and observed practises, the discussions will highlight the positioning and influence of tourists in cultural curation. It will also delve into the development of entrepreneurial culture among locals, as sociocultural issues emanating from such dynamics, in relation to the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture.

#### **4.3.1 Stakeholders in cultural commodification and conservation: Policy and power**

The preservation, and commodification of culture are two important motives in producing the Calabar Festival. It is important to bear in mind that according to information from the Cross River State Tourism masterplan (CRS government, 2006), conservation efforts in the city were previously focused around nature and structural protection, but quite often, the focus was on designated places than on the realities of the locals. As was quite observed, the city of Calabar houses several ancient architectural spaces (some, now romanticised). However, the

prioritisation of development in the city encouraged the development of tourism-driven commercial events aimed at showcasing intangible culture. Efforts towards the preservation of immaterial aspects of culture started in 2007 with the establishment of the Department of Culture and Heritage (CRS tourism and investment footprint 2016-2017). Motivated to run the ancient city of Calabar for profitable revenues, officials and several tourism planners deliberately exploited the Calabar Festival to showcase the well-conserved immaterial cultural aspects to attract tourists (CRS government, 2010).

As a policy document, the State tourism masterplan (2006) stipulates some very important conditions in favour of preserving culture and heritage resources in Calabar. For example, the masterplan encouraged the collaboration of diverse sectors in safeguarding both the intangible (festivals, arts, folklore, customs, beliefs, traditions, knowledge, language and others) and the tangible (monuments, historic buildings and others) cultural resources. The masterplan (2006:23) emphasised the “... *need to work in alliance with groups and organisations; public and private sectors, cultural and creative institutions... important to protect our heritage and culture ... also promote innovative tourism experience...*”.

Apparently, the assertion demonstrates a concerted policy initiative to preserve valuable cultural resources along with creativity in producing tourism activities, through collaborations among sectors. This policy is also being translated to practice by the various culture, creative and tourism ministries and departments (which I discussed earlier). For example, an administrative staff of culture and heritage department, recognises that though “*tourism is a driver of urban and rural renewal, it is also now considered a means of conservation ...likewise, we draft action plans around cultural preservation.... which the tourism sector capitalises upon*” (OR 13. Jan. 3, 2020). This statement reinforces the enduring argument in this thesis that various tourism regulatory bodies work closely with the culture and heritage

department whose duty is to identify, preserve and promote the state's rich cultural heritage through the collation and exhibition of artefacts and events, including cultural education and exchanges within the cultural sector. Some of the identified cultural aspects include the Ekpe masquerade, and the Nsibidi (artistic symbols, used to record antiquity, teach morals, strengthen interaction, consider crucial matters, and settle disagreements), important cultural resources believed to be unaltered by modernity (CRS government, 2010).

While the argument about stakeholders' collaboration persists, however, my data showed that in the process of the careful selection and exoticisation of these well-preserved intangible resources offered for tourists' consumption, they are then given a commodity value either through ticketing, souvenir purchase and others. Arguably, current attempts at cultural conservation reflects a neoliberal growth strategy supported by policy, to create difference and stimulate tourism economic growth. OR 13 above also reflects a consistency with Boyer (1994) who argued that cultural production is intensely rooted in a careful selection of local culture and tradition to create an ideal rationalised space for tourists' consumption. Over time the idealisation and commodity value on the cultural aspects, have the tendency to reduce their core values. For instance, the Ekpe masquerade used to be a once-in-a-season cultural element as it stood as a powerful symbol of religious, legal, social, and cultural authority. OR 1 quoted earlier also alluded that in the precolonial era, the '*Ekpe masquerade acted as the state's top justice system for all social issues*' (fig 14 below). It is important to note that the Ekpe masquerade is a secret cultural cult that symbolises the indigenous spiritual soul and socio-cultural philosophy of the Efik people (CRS Tourism and investment footprint 2016-2017), it was hardly seen in public spaces.



**Figure 14: The Ekpe masquerade at different locations and its Ekombi dancers in performance, as spectacle**

**Source: Author**

The Ekpe attire, for instance, includes the sacred ‘Oboti’ leaves which symbolise spiritual power to heal sickness and infirmities according to Efik tradition (LR 2 earlier cited). The Ekpe masquerade and its Ekombi dance were used in revered ceremonies and worship in the Efik tradition. However, this has been modified for the aesthetics of stage performances in the Calabar Festival. In Figure 14 above, while the masquerade is seen performing for spectators, the Ekombi dancing practices are now abridged to allow the dancers perform in front of tourists at multiple areas of the parade sites. While tourists particularly, perceive the Ekpe performances as authentic, officials believe in the power of aesthetic commodification. Whereas, many locals claim that even though it still commands a high level of respect, it is evident that its traditional authenticity has diminished since it became a regular aesthetic commodity for events like the Calabar Festival. It was gathered that through commodification of events, products and elements, their cultural meanings become adapted to suit tourists’ consumer taste. This is where the tensions involving cultural curation, the Calabar Festival and culture begin to spark heated debates, as commodification is believed to introduce reciprocal relationships, networks of exchanges, and sensitivity to people’s rights which allows others to participate in determining how local cultures come to be represented and curated (Karen, 2011).

An example of these reciprocal forms of exchange can be represented through the interview excerpts asserted by the head of information, Calabar Carnival Commission (OR 8), and an official of the department of Media, Communication and cultural studies (OR 11):

“What we do as a government is to consolidate the needs of tourists and demands of our local communities to put the festival together.... The unique thing ... is that we all come together to agree.... we let the people choose how they want to perform their locality... as commercial tourism product.... But we mix the traditional and the modern



to achieve contemporary aesthetics.... We do not take the domineering power of our local communities for granted... always disputing many decisions when they feel it is not in their interest but... tourists somehow, influence the type of cultural experiences we offer...when they (tourists) come, they give us the challenge for our local people to understand that ... people are actually taking their cultures very important, so we see that expression of value in terms of what they bring and how they protect it... from being devalued... it makes us cherish our own...even when we try to modernise it, make it loose to modern aesthetics.... that has a way of influencing...each other in some ways” (OR 8, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

“Today tourists are changing and they are helping us change, teaching us so many things about our culture that we took for granted... we have always known them but perhaps we did not give them the desired prominence or possibly the accurate worth. Tourists have luckily forced all of us to re-evaluate traditions and customs that were disappearing.” (OR 11-Dec. 22, 2018).

These comments, and similar ones, are embedded with numerous meanings that will help us understand the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model better. During my interviews with state policy makers, it seemed like these kinds of statements were rehearsed answers to my tourism enquiries for all of them. On the one hand, the comment (reinforced by policy documents earlier discussed) support that tourists are the key propellers for destinations to restore and preserve local culture in order to maintain difference for tourists’ consumption. whether it is through challenging them to reinvent lost traditions or to appreciate the extant culture, tourists occupy a central place. Also, OR 8 asserts a certain level of bargaining power inherent among all stakeholders- tourists, policy makers, and the indigenous community members, by claiming that they all influence each other in diverse ways, thus creating a reciprocal balance of power;

OR 11 seemed to assign a strong level of knowledge power on the tourists by acknowledging that tourists have become the teachers and reminders of people's own local culture. On the other hand, the comments also both depict that cultural conservation is largely contingent on the tourism industry who aims to attract more tourists to drive growth and expansion. For example, as captured in the comments above, the festival allows the people to select the traditional stories they choose to tell visitors, and translate these stories into a cultural practice in collaboration, while making good profits off the storytelling. Some local entrepreneurs also corroborated how they were encouraged to promote local culture because it could yield profits. The comments clearly express that for both the policy makers and some local entrepreneurs, satisfying the tourists' taste and interests are primary to cultural production.

Thus, the above argument is useful to explain the significance of curation in the neo-circuit of culture model, which I proposed in Chapter Two. Rather than the conventional duality of state-tourists, or state- local power interactions captured in literatures, the model recognises the active ability of diverse stakeholders to construct, modify and challenge cultural meanings through a dynamic circuit of exchange. It also identifies tourists, as key players in the construction of situated cultural meanings. From the comments above, it is apparent that tourists are compelling the planners and locals to appreciate and protect their local cultures (through which they offer difference), challenging them to better understand, and protect their cultures against losing its value, while also influencing how they produce. Although it might be argued that tourists' influence does not entirely trivialise established curation actors at destination because they translate processes to practice, however, in doing the above stated, tourists operate as co-actors in "producing cultural resources, preserving cultural meanings, and sharing cultural knowledge". Thus, while the argument lends credence to O'Neil (2007) who associated those three attributes as the core of curation, it also demonstrates how tourists

are situated within the discourse as modern curators, by setting the contexts for new relational frameworks that influence cultural processes (Karen, 2011).

#### **4.4. Local community members and the entrepreneurial culture**

Another significant finding from the results reported so far is the claim by many that the Calabar Festival enhanced the development of an entrepreneurial culture, which was formerly unsophisticated among the Calabar people and thereby serving as a launchpad for local artist's professions. Previously, Thomasson (2015) have highlighted how festivalisation in cities can deepen social and territorial disparities in favour of the prosperity of certain elite groups with economic, social, and cultural capital, and political power through entrepreneurial development. Alternatively, Hall and Rasher (2004) and Quinn (2005) argued for how festivals have now assumed new signification in place promotion, interpreted as entrepreneurial displays, with the ability to draw large flows of mobile capital, people, and services, supporting tourism market objectives with urban planning as well as provides jobs for the urban populace. In relation to the Calabar Festival, the latter argument subsists. Government officials and local entrepreneurs confidently refer to the development of the Calabar Festival as marking the point at which the (one-time passive to entrepreneurial activities) locals began to develop the culture of the creative economy and motivated entrepreneurialism. Officials from Tourism Bureau (OR 1), and the Ministry of Culture and tourism (OR 4) expressed that:

“Our people previously gave more attention to fishing.... But when we initiated the Calabar Festival, we selected some people with official delegates and sent them to Trinidad and Tobago to learn ... to develop a business mind....” (OR 1- Sept, 28, 2020).

“.... When we saw their interest, the government threw a strong support with several state-sponsored initiatives like the Cross River Garment Factory,

University of Calabar Entrepreneurial Development Centre and Eyo Ita House Entrepreneurial Development Centre... to give grants, encourage skills, learning... that can improve the local's social positioning ... today, many locals own businesses in accommodation, hotel, restaurant..." (OR 4, sept. 19, 2019).

Clearly, the comments and their observed tones both express that the local people started developing a sophisticated interest in entrepreneurial activities with the emergence of the Calabar Festival. The account given by OR 1, revealed that the city of Calabar was predominantly populated with government workers. He further expressed how the "*Igbos are known for trade in Nigeria, so you can expect that they dominated the businesses here*" implying that people from other regions in Nigeria, particularly the "Igbo" largely owned businesses operating in the city because locals showed no much interest prior. However, OR 4 went further to claim that the development of the Calabar Festival motivated locals towards the need to engage in their own businesses, while the government introduced some initiatives perceived to help equip them with the necessary skills, and today, local businesses have continued to expand with the government's support. Yet, he reinforces the collaboration of a complex network including the government through state-sponsored skills development initiatives, public and private businesses rooted in entrepreneurship and the transfer of skill and knowledge.

However, it is somewhat surprising that despite the locals themselves corroborating the accounts given by officials, claiming that the introduction of the Calabar Festival offered them opportunities to develop the entrepreneurial culture, there seemed to be an enduring power negotiation between the formal sector and the local community members. Particular to Calabar Festival, primary data analysis also revealed that the support of the government seemed to have offered local community members empowerment options based on dependence. As a narrative

illustration, the cultural village (which I highlighted in an earlier section) is a cultural project that came into existence out of the new entrepreneurial spirit of the Calabar people, with the introduction of the Calabar Festival. According to an art shop owner (LR 22 earlier cited), the cultural village was developed out of the local's need to innovate cultural realities in order to *“self-manage, safeguard, and promote authentic cultural products that represents real local identity”*. According to his claims, he was part of the delegation sent to Trinidad and Tobago to learn about the carnival culture. When they returned, his experiences (though positive) with the carnival created an awareness of cultural differentiation in him. In the events that followed, he suggested to the Calabar youth council (of which he is a representative) the need to establish the cultural village in a bid to ensure the protection of culture through arts and exhibitions. Thus, they submitted a proposal to the government for funding, it was approved and established mostly through government funding. Initially, the place was expected to be for skills training in the production of ancient art, a communal space for the display of artefact, theatre and all forms of locality, accessible to community members. It was operated under the supervision of the traditional rulers of Calabar municipal and members of the youth council. Also, because funding was in the form of grants from the government, it was not solely a commercial space, and there was artistic freedom.

However, in a later year, LR 23 claimed that the government saw that the place was booming culturally and sought to exert its control through regulations. Initially it was with the consent of the locals who saw opportunities for greater expansion and cultural reinvigoration. Eventually, the cultural village became a commercial tourism space renamed the festival village. What became particularly problematic is that government control meant that activities were regulated by the government, and cultural products were mass produced, contrary to the initial standard of cultural production. What followed according to L3 was a tension among locals, who felt disempowered from managing their own narratives, and government, who felt

the need for control. Therefore, after some negotiations, a compromise was reached by both parties on the condition that the space has to be a source of revenue for the city. The state government still allocates spaces for locals' entrepreneurial activities during the Calabar Festival, but without a strict or absolute control. Today, the cultural village has remained a space for local cultural activities, but also, a venue for some tourism activities of the Calabar Festival such as the traditional food and fashion Expos, but with more regulatory freedom and flexibility from the government.

The findings reported here demonstrate that locals are not passive participants in the cultural tourism interaction circuit. Locals also play critical roles in preserving their representational spaces and, in some cases, mediate culturally powerful forces concerning the extent to which tourism development is accepted, particularly when tourism activities begin to inflict harm on the city and culture (Aitchison, 2001; Ateljevic, 2000; Teo and Lim, 2003). This finding is consistent with study by Boissevain (1996) who argued that local community members are not to be seen as passive subjects of the cultural changes brought about by tourism; rather, they are active partners in those processes, in which they can influence, negotiate, (re)interpret and contest tourism processes and outcome on both a social and personal level. As in the case of the Calabar Festival, Data gathered from my interview and observation suggest that like officials, the practices of locals are today, informed by neoliberal development ideals. As such, the financial objectives laid by other organisations, like the international enterprises and state officials, frequently might try to moderate their interests, however, they oppose certain processes and decisions particularly when they feel it is not in their interest. Yet, they appreciate the value of tourism and attempt to moderate its intrusions and negative impacts while also seeking to maintain a competitive tourism advantage in the wider social system.

## 4.5 Conclusions

This chapter has analysed the interaction of the Calabar Festival producers and planners with culture, and the dynamic power relations among them. The chapter has demonstrated that different stakeholders exert different forms of power in relation to the production of culture and in cultural processes. By so doing, it advances the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model demonstrating how actors are not passive recipients of tourism influences, but rather they renegotiate, and contest meanings at both social and individual levels to adapt to changing cultural realities. Different stakeholders can exert different forms of power, drawn from Foucault (1980) and grounded on this study's evidences, they are namely: bargaining, economic and knowledge power. In line with the views of Mitchell et al. (1997) legitimacy and power are core attributes of stakeholders, where the most prominent stakeholders would have the power to impose their decisions, and be perceived as legitimate in exercising their power. In terms of regulation in the Calabar Festival context, the ministry of culture and tourism was found to be the main governmental body responsible for planning, implementing and regulating all state culture and tourism activities (Cross River State Tourism and Investment Footprint, 2016-2017), of which the Calabar Festival occupies a priority status. However, to produce an all-inclusive tourism experience and sustain the attraction's footprint in global tourism space, the ministry functions through a negotiated power relation with various departments and agencies, international organisations, and local cultural agencies, where they all influence each other in an interaction circuit, while also being regulated by global tourism market trends.

The negotiated power relations are evidenced to play out in certain self-representational strategies through which the Calabar Festival is produced as an ideal tourist attraction. They are: the use of brands in promoting the Calabar Festival, exoticisation of culture, and converging hybrid identities. Although these strategies are appreciated in view of their economic, and intended cultural value for the destination, the processes tended to mask

asymmetric power relations among government officials, cultural workers, tourists and locals regarding the underlying aesthetic values it imposes on cultural resources (Bohme, 1993; Nash, 1989). This is particularly in relation to the more tourism-based stakeholders who commodify culture to earn tourism profit, and those who seek to preserve cultural elements. But despite the opposing perspectives (in relation to positive-negative outcome), interview data revealed that both groups seem to recognise that tourists' (tastes and demands) are making them appreciate their traditional culture better, both on economic and value terms. Thus, while it was established that the more culture-centred frameworks collaborate with the tourism frameworks to produce the festivals in ways that appeal to tourists' taste, the exchanges create rooms for inclusivity of varied viewpoints and reciprocal relationships that empower many, including tourists, to participate in determining how their cultures are represented and curated (Kreps, 2008). This argument and this study evidences have highlighted the relevance of situating curation within the modern cultural tourism circuit of interaction as it is significantly setting relational frameworks that shape cultural process (O'Neil, 2013). As the chapter has demonstrated, the argument is also supported by evidence from policy documents, interviews and observation which place tourists' needs at the centre of conservation initiatives, production, and circulation of cultural knowledge, it can then be argued that tourists are modern curators of culture. In the next chapter, I will analyse these dynamics in the context of consumption with greater focus on tourists.



## Chapter five

### **Negotiating cultural processes: Tourists, curation and power dynamics**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this second empirical chapter, I analysed the interaction of tourists with culture and other stakeholders, their consumption practices, participation and influence on cultural processes. Throughout this chapter, I demonstrated the influence of tourists in cultural curation centred around three key processes including production, conservation and sharing of cultural knowledge. By so doing, I highlighted the relevance of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model within the Calabar Festival, and the location of tourists as modern cultural curators in the circuit. This positioning and the inherent power dynamics are discussed with empirical evidence gathered through policy, interview and observation processes in cultural production. As was argued in chapters Two and Four, cultural processes are interconnected within a circuit that links production and consumption in the co-creation of situated cultural knowledge (Du Gay et al, 1997). Moreover, as Kulusjarvi (2020) posited, the internationalisation of tourism, and its commitment to market logic, shows that cultural production and local tourism politics increasingly favours the preferences and tastes of tourists. What emerges is that the convergence of production and consumption, and the market logic of prioritisation the tourists' taste, opens up frameworks of inclusivity and exchanges that changes the local power dynamics and at the same time, empowering others to participate in determining how local cultures are regulated, represented and curated (Kreps, 2008). Thus, it raises the possibility that tourists become positioned in traditional hierarchies of power with the ability to influence cultural conservation, production, and sharing of cultural knowledge.

This chapter is discussed under six sections, beginning with analyses of the various perceptions of culture among tourists. In the second section, I discussed the mediated space of consumption, considering consumption through the senses, and the social relations of power. In the third section, I analysed the reproduction of consumption spaces through situated performances. The fourth section analysed the dynamics of authentic cultural consumption, while the fifth section took on the contested experiences and practices among tourists. Finally, I analysed the convergence of production and consumption and its relation to cultural curation. This chapter argues that tourists' taste and their actual consumption practices intersect at the site of consumption and become central to the construction of meanings and knowledge in culture production. The findings of this study show that generally, tourists not only attend festivals, but they also influence cultural processes at the destination through their various activities and demands. These include gazing, purchasing tourism products, participating in situated performances and the construction of cultural meanings; taking photography through which they share cultural knowledge; sightseeing, and other site-specific activities through which they build their own and others' identity. By these forms of experiencing, tourists exerted significant levels of power where they either validated or challenged dominant patterns that determine cultural processes and tourism outcomes.

### **5.1.1 Understandings of culture among cultural tourism consumers**

The interactions of people, culture, and power are core to this thesis. Thus, rather than depending on more generic definitions of culture, it is critical to understand the dimensions and meanings of culture within the specific context of the Calabar Festival. As I highlighted in chapter Two, tourists as used in this research refers to consumers across two distinct categories, namely; the international, and domestic consumers (Although in some cases, a local might double as a tourist, for example, when the tourist is born to Calabar Parents but identifies as a

citizen of another country). In defining cultural tourism in the literature chapter, I drew from Stebbins (1996) whose interpretation was based on individual values that involves the quest for and participation in new and deep cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological. I also drew from Richards (2018) who focused on the more social aspects where the essential motivation of the tourists is to experience the intangible (historically specific, socially constructed and transmitted norms, values, beliefs, traditions and symbolic expressions such as rituals and festivals) and tangible ways of a society represented in its arts, heritage sites, crafts and cultural products.

These definitions put cultural consumption within an inclusive field of individual and collective meaning-making process. In the meantime, the study has established how culture is strategically reconstructed by those involved in planning the Calabar Festival at the destination through various representational mechanisms. If, as I have argued throughout, the target audience of tourism representations are tourists, and culture is considered desirable to tourism consumers, then it was important to understand exactly what is significant to them, the cultural environments and society where they consume it. The following results address these points drawing excerpts from interview responses with tourists within the Calabar Festival.

### **5.1.2. The perceptions of culture: The constructions of cultural identity**

There have been much academic literature discussing the notion of culture. While these scholarly debates are essential, it is also critical to examine how consumers of place-events interpret culture and to apply this to scholarship on culture and tourism. In Chapter One, I highlighted that in tourism research, culture should not be exclusively analysed as a product for purely commercial activities, but instead, as Urry (1997:2) suggests, subjects ‘of taste, fashion, and identity’ must be addressed. The complexity of perceptions of culture, along with

its dynamism, is apparent in the diverse meanings that tourist respondents provided in this research. Generally, all classes of tourists described culture premised on three aspects: first, culture is a social construct; second, culture is personal; and third, culture is art that is connected to the ancient traditions of a place. The different perceptions of respondents highlighted slight variations in their understandings of culture, but which sometimes cut across each other. For example, international tourists had a looser notion of culture. A senior citizen of Columbia believed:

“culture can be anything like walking a dog in the fields or having a steak and mashed potatoes for lunch... everyone’s version will be different ... I believe it is how you express yourself as an individual or the common values that identify you as member of a larger society.” (ITR 3. Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019)

This definition typifies how many international tourists understood culture, as both personal and a socially constructed phenomenon. This was echoed in diverse descriptions such as: contemporary creative expressions, a way of life, shared experiences, individual mind-set, social identities, values, belief systems, and language. These suggest an understanding of culture that is about individuals and society. Thus, international tourists unanimously suggested that culture does not have a single definition, and it is not bound to a particular time frame, but what constitutes culture depends on individuals and societies. The definitions of culture given by the international Tourists challenged certain understandings expressed by domestic tourists, who expressed that while different interpretations were feasible, their own perceptions of culture were the most meaningful to them. For many domestic tourists, culture is a social construct because it involves a collection of certain beliefs mutually shared by a group of people and importantly, reflected in ancient traditions of arts, customs, architecture, sculpture, dance, heritage and festival events. For these tourists, culture was described in a narrower sense

and referred to the distinctive traits of a group of people that were derived from ancient traditions. Excerpts from two domestic tourists, one, a civil servant from Imo state (NTR 1) and the other, a Culture and travel blogger (NTR 4) from Kaduna state (both cities in Nigeria) explains culture as:

“People’s behaviours, traits and heritages which were passed down by their forefathers and indeed, unique remnants of the past that unites people as a community or nation.... But it's also a people’s current way of life.” (NTR 4, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018).

“the ancient traditions of our land... communal heritage ... our language, food, dressing, arts...” (NTR 1, Dec. 27, 2019).

The comments above demonstrate some apparent dichotomies in the perception of culture. On the one hand, NTR 1 had a more rigid approach to what culture means by relegating it to the past traditions that are now transferred through generations. On the other hand, NTR 4 took a more liberal view by suggesting that culture is simultaneously, the past and present combined. According to the latter, and many other domestic tourists, the fact that culture is associated with tradition and the past does not always imply that it is fixed. Rather, they believed that culture relates to the inherited primitive characteristics of a people which combines with other borrowed traits from other cultures to shape current social reality, and transferred through everyday practices and events. These assertions align with Baumann’s (2000) notion of the liquidity of modernity, whereby increasing mobility, social exchange, and globalised economy in contemporary societies, influence the ways people rationalise present conditions to generate meaning in their daily lives. As well as concentrating on how culture is unique, respondents also mentioned how it can be a socially unifying force. They used the concept of community, as seen in the comment above, to identify culture as a unifying force that brings individuals together through a feeling of collective belonging to a place. And yet, as I have highlighted

throughout this thesis, it can also be a tool for otherness. This emphasises the dual nature of culture, as something that creates differences, but is also based on shared attributes.

These later assertions further corroborate Williams' (1958) conceptualisation of culture as a common meaning resource, in which all aspects of life are entwined in a network of conventions and associations, which inform the meanings that are shared in wider social life. Thus, there is a mutual relationship between people, their beliefs, and their social environment, which helps construct common identities. The argument is also consistent with MacCannell (1999) and Meethan (2000) who submit that culture is not a static entity, thus, thinking of cultures rather than merely culture is more appropriate. While the opinions expressed by many international tourists have shown that culture is subjectively constructed and defined, the understanding of culture as an individual mind-set was what Williams was accused of disregarding. Drawing from my data, I argue that it is the collection of abstract individuals' ideas (subjects) that materialise as social practices and conventions (objects) which, as emphasised by Williams, produce culture. Thus, I reiterate my argument that culture in both its conservative and radical forms is the extant reality of our constantly evolving societies, concretised by both abstraction and social practices. The combination of ideas about culture and relationships between the elements of culture, produces shared identities through an endless (re)selection of patterns that form new realities where local, national and global meanings intersect through tourism.

So far in this chapter I have analysed tourists' understandings of culture in order to establish a baseline from which to understand how tourists consume culture and its expressions as well as how cultural consumption can be understood as a contested space, which also influence production at cultural tourism destinations. According to my study data, culture is understood as first, a socially constructed phenomenon, reflected in contemporary creative expressions, a

way of life, shared experiences, social identities, values, belief systems, and language. Second, culture is a personal construct reflected in the individual mind-set, which consequently materialises in the social practices that form the patterns of behaviour. Third, culture is a set of distinctive traits of a group of people derived from ancient traditions and reflected in arts, customs, architecture, sculpture, dance, heritage and festival events. However, it is important to clarify how these perceptions are played out in the Calabar Festival. My research has demonstrated that for some, like the domestic tourists discussed above, spaces of consumption were expected to be where tradition was showcased, while for others spaces of consumption were expected to be naturalised spaces for diverse encounters, including to challenge conventions. The differing ways that tourists consumed the Calabar Festival, and the power relations involved, will be analysed in the next section.

## **5.2. Mediated sphere of consumption: The senses and the social relations of power in tourists' gaze.**

This section analyses how tourists consume through the senses, focusing on the mediated space of gazing and touching, and the inherent power relations around such practices. As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, festivals can be interpreted as socially and temporally regulated settings where narratives of culture and otherness are mediated and re-produced, with production and representations often aimed for the tourists' gaze (Santos and McKenna, 2017). In line with this argument, if otherness is understood to be a constructed reality that can be gazed upon, then the relationship between the gazer and the gazed upon impacts on the complex ways in which existing cultures are challenged and negotiated. While some scholars (Adorno, 1975; Max Horkheimer, 1947; and Hebert Marcuse, 1964) described consumers as passive robots who accept constructed meanings as they were projected by its creators, this study finds that beyond being a mere outcome of (re)production, consumption empowers people with the ability to assess the representational and dominant system and to influence the processes by

which producers generate meanings. Thus, in exploring the politics of cultural tourism events, it is necessary to explore more fully, the practices through which meanings are generated, consumed and circulated.

This study findings show that consuming through the senses, including gazing, shopping and photography, are essential elements that define the tourist experience and in turn, influence cultural production. They are an ‘exercise in ubiquity’, as de Certeau (1984:173) puts it, meaning that they are practices through which tourists constitute a secret sense that helps them produce, miniaturise and order the world. Sightseeing for the tourists that I interviewed involved gazing at the cultural arena, arts and performances, and while the activities produced by the Calabar Festival provided the gaze, various media frameworks including official websites, tourism brochures, pamphlets, handbooks, news networks and other channels read by tourists, also framed narratives that appealed to their imaginations and gaze. For example, the website of the Cross River State ministry of culture and Tourism describes the Calabar Festival as ‘*a tourist’s paradisiacal event that combines unchanged ancient tradition, though with modern aesthetics*’. As was further elaborated upon by the ministry’s chairman, such narratives are targeted at stimulating the imagination of tourists who look forward to experiencing some sort of authentic, and new forms of cultural consumption. Interview with tourists also affirmed that such media narratives matched their expectations and were substantiated at the actual events:

“There is no better way to experience this event than getting a clear view of the events as they happen...You make meanings out of the whole thing...and compare the information you already have” (ITR 5. Dec. 23rd, 2019).



“Oh, this is my fiancé’s birth place...When I saw the event on DSTV, I told him I wanted to identify with his people...to see for myself...I am amazed” (ITR 10. Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

These interview responses demonstrate the interaction between tourists, the destination planners and the Calabar Festival event through media constructions (by destination producers) that affirm tourists’ imaginations as they constantly seek authentic cultural consumption. Reference to an existing information by ITR 5 and DSTV by ITR 10 both convey a sense that the media is consciously constructed to circulate certain cultural narratives that are thought to be of interest to tourists. For example, the description portrayed of the Calabar Festival on the website of the ministry of culture and tourism (stated above) supports the idea that tourists seek to consume the unchanged, as well as the aesthetic. Meanwhile, at the site of consumption, tourists connect cultural elements (such as artefacts, performances, costumes, and pictography) to their existing imagined perceptions, which then permits them to assign meanings and further meditate cultural production. This form of interaction gives a sense that the inherent power of the tourist gaze on host producers and local events fits Foucault’s disciplining power of surveillance, which places the tourist as the key force in tourism-mediated interactions. This positioning of tourists was also reaffirmed by the head of information Cross River State Carnival Commissions (which I partly quoted in chapter four) who claimed: “.... *for long... tourists influence the type of cultural experiences we offer...*” drawing reference from these arguments, what emerges is that when people and their cultural elements are subjected to the surveillance of tourists, an inherent and potentially disruptive power relationship develops. This result also reflects those of Urry (1990) who theorises that the tourist gazes are significantly powerful in the organisation and portrayal of destinations, the meanings assigned to local culture, and the production and consumption of the tourist experience. This justification revolves around the claim that tourists and the tourism industry carefully categorise and mark

people and events in the host destination through a variety of media (for instance visits to specific events, tourist photographs, destination marketing), deeming some activities and behaviours remarkable or permitted, while disregarding others or relegating them as insignificant (Urry, 1990).

Similarly, this accords to my argument concerning tourists as modern cultural curators in the neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework. As has been argued in chapter 4, and further analysed here, destination planners often premise production on satisfying the tourist's taste, including the gaze. What then emerges from this argument is that a variety of scenes, sights and contexts become exploited and exoticised, and their meanings critiqued or reshaped to satisfy the expectations and requirements of the dominant tourist market. Also, while the representation of Calabar's culture and its events become constructed and commercialised to satisfy the demands of tourist, the power of tourists is argued to influence the Calabar Festival and culture by endorsing certain aspects of production and collaborating with tourism producers to construct staged events based on their own imaginations. In doing so, tourists feed their imaginations into the production of culture; the costumes, parades, dance, and other aestheticised performances, are sociocultural outcomes of negotiations between tourists who gaze, and planners who form and preserve these settings for profit. It can be argued that tourists are powerful actors in the production and sharing of culture and cultural knowledge of the people and its events, through actions and tourist imaginings, thus, assuming the role of curators.

On the question of photography, it was found that tourists consume, represent and curate cultures through photography. While gazing offered a way for tourists to live out their ideas and imaginations, photography allowed them to capture, own and reproduce cultural meanings from events of the Calabar Festival through imagery. Some academics have claimed that

photography and tourists' experiences are inextricably linked. In chapter Two, I described how tourist photography constitutes an active signifying practice in which knowledge and power are relevant features (Urry, 1990). From Urry's standpoint, while tourist photographer's power mediates and commercialise local cultures and foster the development of new identities among the people being photographed, it is also a technique to recode and reframe experiences. For the Calabar Festival, the latter was also shown to be a critical aspect of consumption by many of the tourists across categories. A French tourist (media consultant) asserted:

“... the beautiful places, the friendly people, the rustic atmosphere, the communal lifestyle, the arts...reminds me stories of ancient France...I mean, you get to experience a bit of everything, pop today complements the Africanness of other performances...you experience the familiar and the unfamiliar, enjoying the best of both worlds...I am glad I can capture these beautiful moments with my camera. I can always go back to them and reminiscence...” (ITR 9. Dec. 19th, 2019).

The above comment is an example of how tourists placed value on culture and the Calabar Festival as an event through which cross-cultural comparisons are made, rather than as a specific traditional place-based event. Capturing events and memories through photography was, for this, and many tourists, a vital way to remember the events and objects they encountered and to enable them to compare these to other historical destinations. Undeniably, as a space of encounter, the festival becomes a medium for awakening strong emotions and sustaining culture-oriented interpretations. As Crang (1998) aptly argued in the literature chapter, the images tourists (such as ITR 9 above) capture reflect the visualisation of an event, embodying spaces, capturing the moment within a space. Significantly, they are also communicating to an audience or observer in another place and time. For example, one of the organisers of the Calabar Festival sent me a picture that one of the international tourists had sent to him, asking me to establish contact with him as he had enjoyed our conversations during

my fieldwork. On the message he commented: *“I captured some fantastic images from the events...here is the one with you...I enjoyed every bit of the experience.”* For him, the pictures built a connection between him and the festival, and likely also strengthened the social connection between himself and me. In this case, photography can serve to represent what MacCannell (1992) referred to as ideological framing of history, self-identity, and values, which has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs. Thus, it can be argued that, photography in the case of the Calabar Festival tourists is an essential method for displaying their tastes, and demonstrating their expertise in capturing their gaze’s object. It also represents a sense of identity that is shaped through memory and obligation.

Similarly, tourists’ photographs have significant roles in shaping culture, particularly, images around the Calabar Festival arena into exotic representations of nostalgia (traditional performances and costumes), nature (waterfalls, mountains and resorts, drill ranches, monoliths, trees and gardens, which are often added as a tourist package), and the exotic (Nigerian ethnic groups). This connection can be attributed to how tourists imagined the Calabar Festival before their arrival (earlier discussed), and it also shape how Calabar’s sociocultural settings can be gazed upon. Therefore, taking pictures serve to connect the tourists’ imaginations of events and their production of the exact imageries by photographs in reality. Equipped with imageries on websites and social media for instance, tourists consciously take part in particular events during their visit, documenting these events and the places they visit with their cameras. Their image capturing practices then feed back into the construction of culture and events. My observations in the field also reinforce Santos and McKenna (2015) who argued that tourists curate culture through photography and it entails positioning oneself into certain relations to the world, which feels like knowledge and, by extension, like power. With links to the power of the tourist gaze as a set of expectations that tourist’s taste place on cultures, it was easy to see that the organisers of the Calabar Festival

respond to these demands by altering their own traditions and natural environment to mirror the tourists' gaze. These were seen in flamboyant costumes of all types, which have become the “*common focus of the tourists' photographic lens*” (OR 6. Jan, 10, 2021), and aestheticised designs along the main parade routes and adjacent stalls, with specific spots marked for taking photos. I also observed different tourists taking photos of themselves and of this aestheticised performance attires (see image below). The multinational corporations like MTN (discussed earlier), by their display of visual pleasures of colourful materials and services captured by tourists' cameras, are implicated in this process.



**Figure 15: Some of the tourists seen capturing the moments, while enjoying the performances.**

**Source: Author**

The inherent power dynamics in these processes is that as cultures continue to adapt, to conform to tourist's expectation by altering their identities, overtime, they may gradually lose their local sense of identity and become a homogenous space of tourism consumption, substituted by censored representations of Calabar culture. Moreover, cultural aestheticisation could mean

that the commission/planners mask the authenticity of cultures in ways that conflict with tourist's imagination. For example, although many tourists acknowledged the beauty of the scenery, international tourists had different opinions about the designs compared to the domestic tourists. The international tourists complimented the aesthetics for engaging positively with the senses and that the designs gave them something to constantly look at outside of the organised performances. Whereas, domestic tourists were concerned that the designs they expected to see, such as *places adorned with raffia, ancient arts and other traditional settings, were only situated in specific places like the cultural village* (NTR 4, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018), where they were displayed by craftsmen and volunteers from the Carnival Commission. These divergent views reinforce Bohme (1993) who argued that tourism and its broader institutional networks impose uneven power relations on local places, as touristic aesthetics impose underlying values on the selection and interpretation of cultural resources.

Thus, while tourism revolutionises the social realities and traditional traits of people, Bohme insists that it also strengthens the construction of a contrived space of consumption. As a component of global consumption and reproduction of tourist images, photographing in Calabar Festival strengthens powerful relationships in the economy of signs. These pictures are posted and shared by multinational corporations like MTN, DSTV, recognised tourism agencies who have the support of the government with their relentless attempt to promote the Calabar Festival because of the potential financial rewards. By echoing their acceptance of these fantasies, tourist consumers contribute to the continuation of the powerful narrative of how Calabar culture is produced. What then emerges is that as long as photography continues to set expectations, and express reality, the influence of the "tourist gaze" will preserve cultures, their traditions and identity.

Another significant, and perhaps the most prevalent, way that consumption occurs through the

senses is touching items through shopping. Many tourists patronised the shops in the town for purchasing artefacts and souvenirs. The key products, according to a local arts shop owner, that both international and domestic tourists purchased included traditionally *crafted key holders and artworks, simple cloths made with local skin-friendly fabrics, raffia hand fans, hand knitted beaded hats, jewellery, costumes and ornaments* (LR22. Sept. 2, 2020). This was also confirmed by my observations during the festival. As seen by the following remarks, tourists bought these souvenirs for themselves for various reasons that gave them a sense of connection to the place of consumption, including to memorise their Calabar Festival experiences or as gifts for friends and relatives. Tourists, American realtor (ITR 1) and a Canadian housewife (ITR 2) claim:

“I have got a few beautiful artworks, will probably give out a couple to my dad back home. It will be strange for my dad if I don’t buy him these stuffs because he is a collector...He will pretty much appreciate them.” (ITR1 Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019)

“...Moreover, I get more value for money because when I exchange a small amount of Canadian dollars, it becomes greater Nigerian Naira. So, I afford more value and experience than I would in Canada...the beaded costumes, I purchase a lot for my friends and I because they are original and unique.” (ITR 2 Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

The inclusion of shopping in their consumption practices by these international tourists results in a socio-cultural circuit of relations. As the comment by ITR1 above suggests, the cultural products that were purchased will serve as a link between themselves, the brokers and locals in Calabar, their networks and family. To begin with, tourists may engage with locals in a number of ways while shopping. Through shopping, they can discover the hosts’ local culture, meet the people and learn about the local business and cultural environment. As such, shopping provides tourists with the opportunity to gather intimate knowledge about the destination and

its culture. Further to this, the souvenirs they purchased during the Calabar Festival act as reminders of a distant place from their normal residences which will be memorable experience once they are home. Tourists go home with the souvenirs and, gazing at these products, they can memorise their experiences at the festival and imaginatively use their memories of Calabar as a simulated temporary escape. Thus, tourists desire souvenirs that are distinctive and convey strong 'local' meanings (As ITR2 quoted above, suggested).

However, the inherent identity tension is that local people themselves do not necessarily consider many of these souvenirs to be representative of their authentic culture as ITR2 claimed, because they are mass produced to accommodate tourism demands. Many locals, and even some cultural intermediaries, believe that because of the commodification tendencies and the uniformity of cultural products produced for the tourists' consumption, the souvenir manufacture network tends to standardise tourists' products. For example, not all the clothes that tourists purchase are locally produced. While some are produced locally, fabrics and products, like the crafted shoes and key holders, are produced in neighbouring states like Abia, others like the *"flamboyant carnival costumes are co-produced with Brazil"* (interview with OR1, Dec. 22 2019). This reconnects to my discussion of the Mardi Gras festival in Chapter Two, where I noted that culturally symbolic goods like beads are produced through a mobile global chain starting in China, to then be imported back to New Orleans and then offered to the tourists as a local festival product. In the Calabar Festival context, a local trader claims that *"this just reminds me of the Rio festival with their exaggerated form of costume and make up"* (LR 6. Dec. 29, 2019). This illustrates the perception of some (especially locals) who claim that the souvenirs represent a romanticised version of a globalised culture, or an illusory representation of an ancient artefact.

What these differing understandings of culture (between the international and domestic



tourists) highlights is a disconnect between what is indeed culture and what then becomes cultural because, for tourists, shopping the souvenirs is not just a business contract with sellers. Rather, it is a social activity centred on Hall's (1997) value exchange in meaning making. They also contribute to the cultural capital of tourists who share them with other, thereby notifying them about the possibilities of broadening their limits. For example, as attending the Calabar Festival has become a trend in Nigeria and Africa (Andrew and Ekpeyong, 2012), many tourists claimed that they are compelled to purchase souvenirs in order to demonstrate to others that they are members of the contemporary consumer society. Yet, either way, tourists tend to be at the centre of discourse and practice in consumption, production, and sharing of cultural value. Thus, as interviews in Chapter Five corroborates, tourists can be argued as modern curators of culture.

With regards to the nature of interaction, both national and international tourists regard their interactions with the local Calabar people as a significant aspect of their tourism encounter during the Calabar Festival. When I asked "what is the nature of interaction between you and the locals?" to understand how they engage with locals, many of the tourist respondents suggested that they really engage well during the events as well as in their accommodation at night, when they were enjoying the night scenery and breeze. Although these tourists could not differentiate between residents and indigenous people, the personal encounters were meaningful as social exchanges with local people enhanced their improved understanding of Calabar culture. For tourists, Hall (1997) further alludes that the experience of establishing networks across boundaries of time, place, and social class is tremendously powerful for collective meaning-making. It was therefore typical to hear tourists make assertions like the one by a British health practitioner:

"...in my opinion, [the Calabar Festival] well represents Nigeria's...diversity. I don't know how much other regions appreciate this..., but for someone like me

from a multicultural society, I can tell from experience that the organisation of this festival can unconsciously encourage a sense of national unity in diversity.... I relate so well....” (ITR 6, Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

“... they are lovely people... hospitable, I feel so welcome and at home....”  
(ITR 5. Dec. 23rd, 2019).

For tourists like the ITR 6 above, the Calabar Festival is not only a uniting factor for multi-ethnic societies, it also allows people to connect with difference and manage diversity. To further strengthen this argument, it was observed that language barrier was not a problem as locals and foreigners demonstrated skilfulness in unspoken communication exchanges. For instance, I observed interview respondents ITR 1 and 2 above engaging with some ‘local’ performers from Northern Nigeria, who performed almost unclothed. The foreigners asked permission to take photos from these performers, even though they did not speak the same language, I observed how friendly gestures like a laugh, handshakes and the sight of a camera communicated their intentions and permission. Both sets of participants seemed delighted, despite the barrier of language. In this sense, the relationship between the international and domestic tourists, and locals are marked by mutual openness with the cultural other. Consistent with the argument of Santos and McKenna (2015) which understand photography and gesture as representational means of communication, the case of participants in the Calabar also took a representational form by which tourists attributed meanings to their encounters with host destination and the locals. Another possible explanation is also drawn from Du Gay et al (1997) which suggests that cultural meanings are communicated through a process of representation, regulation, identity, production and consumption. In this sense, we can understand the Calabar Festival arena as a space where cultural practices, products and imageries are constantly generated, interpreted and communicated by individuals (whether tourists or locals) to give

meanings and sense of their own personal and cultural identities. In the next section, I analyse tourists' interaction with culture, through situated performances and the inherent power dynamics.

### **5.3 (Re)producing the arenas of cultural consumption through situated roles and performances**

Tourists have been found to (re)produce their arenas of consumption by acting out various meanings about symbolic settings and dramatising their connection to specific events and practises. Urry (1990) points out that tourists can constitute the object of the gaze as much as they can be the subject that gazes upon others, thereby being implicated in the process of co-creation and self-re-creation. Urry's postulation helps us to demonstrate how consumers of the Calabar Festival are dynamic, and their practices offer a site where issues of power negotiate and shape one another. Although earlier theorists (such as Adorno, 1975; Horkheimer, 1947; and Marcuse, 1964), which I discussed in Chapter Two, interpreted culture as the deprived by-products of the culture industry. For these scholars, consumers(tourists) are passive victims of a powerful and elitist culture industry that accepts constructed meanings as projected by constructors. However, far from the above description by earlier theorists, this section demonstrates that tourists actively negotiate situated cultural meanings through identity-oriented performances. In this sense, the Calabar Festival is analysed as an arena where people dramatise, share and performatively re-produce specific cultural identities. Moreover, as a space where local, national and global meanings intersect through tourism, analysing the tourists' performances and the dynamic interactions among groups will create enhanced insights into how Calabar culture and identity are negotiated or contested; and how tourist encounters may influence the production and consumption of contemporary cultural tourism practices. Thus, the analysis allows me to extend further the argument concerning the cultural curatorial competencies of the tourists framed in Chapter Two.

For the tourists I interviewed, Performances were vehicles through which they can co-create cultural knowledge, while also exerting some levels of influence on identity construction. Their behaviours are distinguished based on a variety of characteristics, such as knowledge, creativity, how much control they have or are regulated, and whether they perform in groups or alone. In any of the cases, it was evident that tourists are not passive consumers. Rather, they embody and perform roles through which they subject cultural meanings to constant (re)negotiation and contestation through interactions with other stakeholders. Thus, Identity was discussed in two ways by tourist respondents. First, they spoke about identity in terms of particular activities they did, for example see Figures 16 and 17 below.



**Figure 16: Domestic tourists who assumed the role of performers**

Source: Author



**Figure 17: Some international tourists who are also performers**

**Source: Author**

In their interactions with the festival, tourists linked these behaviours to various roles they identified themselves with. For example, some respondents described themselves simply as performers, visitors or cultural tourists, thus, conceptions of these notions as comprising controlled identities were frequently questioned. Occasionally, these tourists assumed more than one role concurrently and at other times, the different identities they performed were

related to distinctive experiences or parts of experiences, and therefore they adopted different identities at different times. The other approach through which the respondents performed roles of identity is connected to their relationship with the festival and the city, how they themselves understood this relationship and how much they could relate to it on a personal level. For example, some respondents associated with certain parts of culture more than others, such as costumes and music. Respondents also demonstrated that their roles were not fixed. My observation and interaction with some tourists revealed that they alternated between being a performer, tour guide, resident, or even the worker. For instance, the images above (Figures 1 and 2) demonstrate how tourists took on different roles. Many of the performers were at the festival primarily as tourists, however, they engaged in events for a fixed amount of time, after which they switched roles back to being tourist observers.

Another example of these differentiated roles was between a visitor and a cultural tourist. Many interview respondents did not consider the roles to be the same and the disparity was explained in line with their differing practices by the following respondent who had lived in Calabar at some point. The respondent, a British health practitioner who was born in Calabar to British parents and had spent a significant part of her childhood in Calabar before the family relocated to Britain when she was in her early teens, stated:

“I have been here for several events since I relocated but not as a tourist...we have got friends and people we can call family here ... then we opted to be actual tourists and lodge at a hotel. ...to have that deep connection as cultural tourists... although I enjoyed the carnival for a few years...as an invited guest, so I get driven to the venue, sit at a dedicated space, enjoy the performances for few hours and head back...I used to admire the Masquerade performances as much as I did growing up here...not certain if it's the same...But I have never really been consciously involved as a tourist...not with my husband too...now we are very much doing the tourist thing...”(ITR 6- Dec. 26<sup>st</sup>, 2019)

Two important things can be gleaned from this comment above. First, this respondent signalled that even though she has strong links with the city in ways that she considers herself a member of the local community, she had never considered herself a cultural tourist on any of her visits. However, her comment proved that through a self-aware disposition, it is possible to choose to be a cultural tourist. Thus, the tourists' identities are sometimes self-defined and epitomises a subjective experience as Stebbins (1996) was argued in chapter Two. Both conscious and subconscious activities influence performance in which consumers define their identities (for instance as cultural tourists, visitors or locals). Consumers identify themselves according to these roles by participating in selected activities. An example can be gleaned from the comments above. It suggests that external characteristics, such as the distance travelled across borders, do not define the cultural tourists' identity, it is defined by the person's cultural motivation and therefore such an identity is not externally imposed. Thus, tourists may either or not, decide to be cultural tourists by their participatory performances. Similarly, locals may also be cultural tourists by vacationing in their own city. A person's self-awareness characterises her as cultural tourists or otherwise, demonstrating that within the festival space, a tourist plays an active part in creating his or her own identity that shapes others'.

The second point to glean from the self-defined tourist introduced above is that by engaging in performances, she demonstrated the complex nature of consumption. She was a tourist, revisiting the place she called home and reliving it as a tourist. Her explanation indicates how, as a tourist, she experienced an event she used to attend as a guest but this time, differently. She distinguishes between her actual lived experiences as a visitor and the representational performances that she consumed as a cultural tourist. This proposes that while different tourists experience the same spaces of attraction, the value of their consumption are often distinguished by the meanings they give to their practices. According to my observations however, this respondent also performed the role of a tour guide, showing her husband places and describing



symbols as they walked the parade routes. She claimed that her husband had only been to Calabar once and it was a perfect opportunity to show him around. She continues:

“over the weekend, I will take him to the museum and a couple other places while we are here...” (ITR 6- Dec. 26st, 2019)

What is observed here is the embodied performance of the cultural tourist role, paralleled with a more self-guided insider’s tour of the city. Through such a positioning, the respondent asserted her knowledge-power by challenging the institutionalised structures of tour guiding at the destination. Having formerly been resident, her positioning allowed her to redefine self-knowledge power. Thus, knowledge as expertise is essential to distinguishing a visitor and a cultural tourist. Additionally, the respondent’s claim to be an intentional cultural tourist shows that she strove to be a cultural tourist through a concerted attempt to consume the festival and its city, experiencing diverse tourist places and participating in events. However, not all tourists will have exact experiences, it was her mindfulness to partake as a cultural tourist alongside her already formed knowledge of the city that differentiated her experiences from others’. Hence, though the temporality of situated performances is acknowledged in academic works on tourism (such as Urry, 1990), the tourist has been conceptualised as consuming differently, through assuming separate identities and roles. Yet, clearly from the discussions above these roles can be combined and performed simultaneously.

In another vein, some locals identified as tourists with the justification that they attend the Calabar Festival to learn about their local culture, which they do not have opportunities to study because of work and other engagements. With reference to my interview with such locals, while respondents essentially described themselves as indigenes, sometimes they related their experiencing of the Calabar Festival to that of foreigners in performing roles. Like the international tourists, locals engaged to varying degrees. For instance, two locals who were

normally resident in Calabar explained how they assumed the role of cultural tourists in their own city:

“I like the street parades a lot and I never miss any. I always attend with my group of friends from day one to finish. We learn other people’s culture from the exhibitions...I do not travel for overseas vacations or such stuffs, hence I consider the festival as my vacation ...it would fit into the cultural tourism thing...” (LR4- Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020)

“...the Calabar Festival, you only get a minor taste of what culture is. I normally just attend the events...I never really poke for anything besides what it offers... although... assuming my pals were to visit for an experience the festival, certainly, I will take them somewhere they can see real cultural display.” (LR 16. Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019)

The comment by LR 4 seems to further demonstrate that people can construct identities to suit their individual needs. While such practice blurs the lines between being a local or a tourist, it also shows how cultural knowledge can be co-created and shared. In chapter Two, I proposed the concept of cultural co-coloniality which refers to perceptions and practices which allow a mutuality. This finding seems consistent with the idea of the cultural co-coloniality concept. Not going on foreign holidays yet able to learn about other cultures with her circle of friends through the Calabar Festival meant that knowledge was jointly created within the setting. Thus, encounters with cultural differences became a reciprocal process that destabilised long-established hierarchies of us and them. The latter respondent however, implied the inauthenticity of the tourist’s experience in the Calabar Festival. He engaged in touristic practices but distinguished himself from cultural tourists based on the knowledge of the festival he had acquired as a local tourist. With his knowledge, he doubted that the festival was authentic enough for a cultural tourist, hence, stating that he would take his friends to places he perceived to be rich in culture. These comments go to reinforce that the tourist performance,

whether intentional or not, draws on the consumer's knowledge, in accordance with Foucault (1980) which was argued in chapter Two.

For Foucault, knowledge is power, and the practise of power constantly creates knowledge, which in turn, influences the properties of power, meaning that power and knowledge are inextricably linked. Knowledge as power is produced by a network of relations amongst social actors and cultural consumers form their interpretations in relation to their knowledge. Although the local communities are traditionally understood to be the custodians of cultural knowledge, as has been demonstrated, tourists, armed with local knowledge, have also taken on such roles, for example acting as tour guides and co-producers of situated meanings. This seems to reinforce how the global movement of peoples is challenging the established forms of interactions among tourists and locals' understanding and sense of culture. As such, tourists might have attained cultural capital from past experiences of an event and its place, the media, and exchanges with locals. Also, locals who have not lived in the city for a long time may lack in-depth understanding of the place event, and different locals have varying levels of local knowledge. Thus, public's connections with events and places are shifting because of the worldwide dissemination of information and knowledge.

So far, I have demonstrated how the tourist's experience of the event is personal. Yet, it is important to highlight that some individuals' experiences suggested that the cultural tourist does not inevitably partake only in relaxation, but can also be a worker. The comment below provides an example from a movie actor:

“we were rehearsing for a movie in Nollywood and I got to hear about it from my colleague...Being a cultural explorer...I couldn't miss the opportunity to experience it... I have been here before but not this time of the year. But I love it, I haven't seen anything like it in Nigeria.” (OIR 13- Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020).

The respondent defined her role as work, yet, she concurrently assumed the role of a cultural tourist by her gaze and interaction with the Calabar Festival environments. She was present to act for an audience while at the same time, assuming the identity of a cultural tourist herself. The performing character of the tourist experience has been variously studied by scholars such as Crang (1998) however, these comparisons are yet to be connected with the experience of the urban cultural tourist particularly. Possibly, this explains why the concurrence of specific consumption in terms of assuming roles have gone unnoticed as many studies positioned the tourist in a relaxation character. The worker is usually an indigenous member whereas the tourist consumes as a spectator, while the tourist engages in the performances in some way, the findings of this study indicate that the tourist can also occupy a working role. This highlights how conventional meanings of culture, the boundaries between the production and consumption of culture, as well as the ordinary and the innovative, are being questioned.

While this section has demonstrated that people consume through adopting performative roles, data shows that through consumption, tourists enact personal identities according to taste, fashion and need. This reinforces Urry (1997) that tourism research should not only be considered as an aggregate of mere commercial activities, but subjects 'of taste, fashion, and identity. Accordingly, my research data, aptly demonstrated the argument and revealed how the consumption of the Calabar Festival provided a medium, not for cultural difference, but as a need and identification. For some, gender identification was at the heart of their tourism experience with friends. In this situation, cultural tourism served as a gateway to perform gendered roles as females and friends. For instance, on one hand, an international tourist commented on how the Calabar Festival offered herself and friends (as cultural explorers), the opportunity to express gender through 'a girls' trip' (ITR 8- Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019). On the other hand, a British Nigerian tourist showed a strong sense of family and affinity to cultural roots by regularly consuming the Calabar Festival with her two British children so that according to

her, they can ‘identify with their parents’ roots’ (IT/NTR 2- Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019). Yet, another respondent expressed how, as a former museum curator’, the Calabar Festival presents an opportunity for him to express his professionalism and he was happy coordinating a different state’s cultural group (OIR 10-Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

Each of these claims show that the tourist experience is unique to the individual. People irrespective of being cultural tourists or simply fun-seeking tourists, participate and construct meanings in connection to their own social and cultural qualities including gender, ethnicity, social standing, and others, as well as via their own personal preferences. If we apply Bourdieu’s (1984) perspective, we may claim that societal factors, like class, shape these personal choices. It is also possible to argue that specific cultural practises are used as representational symbolisms of this social situation, like OIR 10 above. Thus, I align with Getz’s (2008) suggestion that in consuming practices, we can see how people forge commonalities as well as enabling forms of distinction. Similarly, in taking part in situated performances, tourists can reconstruct their knowledge of a cultural place. For example, the comment below demonstrates how embodied performances provided them with skills to navigate the event and initiate the renegotiation of its meanings and values:

“This is a way to go...sometimes it is neither just about primitivism nor fun, but about driving home a message. The huge diversity communicates a deracialised arena for global unity, a signal that the world can coexist peacefully despite race and colour... I’m in for next year.” (ITR 7 Dec. 22, 2019).

The comment reconnects with the argument of Urry (1992) suggesting that people use consumption to read and interpret a diverse array of signs and images. For the respondent, and others like her, the Calabar Festival can promote global unity because it accommodates all races and cultures, allowing them all to perform within its particular tourism setting.

Specifically, the respondent stated that she and her friends “*were allowed to perform in the parade with a local cultural group, and that changed my worldviews about intercultural differences.*” This construction also emphasises my concept of cultural co-coloniality in tourism practices. For these tourists, just by participating in the Calabar Festival, a new knowledge about how people should interact has been formed. She specifically revealed that she was planning to register with a local cultural group before she left the city, so that she could experience more through performance. For her, the gesture signalled the genuine ability of people to co-exist and depend on each other for a better life, and it was a vision that became embodied for her by partaking in a performance. When asked her reasons for attending the Calabar Festival, like many domestic and international respondents she noted the event’s hybrid (traditional and modern) disposition as its main attraction, where the authentic and unfamiliar is consumed in a familiar setting.

So far, I have established that tourists can take part in situated performances to varying degrees. Such performances allow them to negotiate the consumption of the Calabar Festival, and knowledge of the social world. Aligning with Urry, we can observe that performativity is concerned with the practices through which individuals learn about the world even without knowing it; the everyday multisensorial activities and experiences, or the skills and knowledge that people gain through embodied practices. I found that the performative roles of each type of tourist is frequently a self-defined construction generated in the individual’s psyche. However, some practices remain subconsciously shared, or deliberately assumed to generate identities. Hence, in many cases, festival consumers become the creators of their personal experiences. Additionally, it is possible to assume numerous characters concurrently. Tourists assume diverse characters, outside their tourism profile (domestic or international), and because of their social and cultural qualities. Yet, it was found that tourist’s performative spaces are particular arenas where the arrangement and interpretation of culture offers a

framework within which locals and tourists attribute and contest meanings of authenticity. The next section analyses the dynamics of authenticity in cultural consumption.

#### **5.4 The contradictions of authentic cultural consumption**

The ongoing analysis that consumption is a signifier of taste and personal preference reveals that tourists seek to consume the authentic, however, authenticity is subjective among cultural consumers. As Stebbins (1997) cited in chapter Two argued, cultural tourism is subjective, a tourist would typically overlay his or her subjective standards of consumption onto the attractions they consume. It means that people consume based on their understandings, and their relationships to the objects of consumption. Drawing from the ideas of Richards (2018) cited in the literature chapter, we can argue that the Calabar Festival as a communicative vehicle and spectacle of diversity has been acknowledged by many tourists (domestic and international), as communicating significant levels of otherness and authenticity about the destination culture. However, for many tourists, their consumption of the authentic depends on the presence of some familiarity. According to the findings of this thesis, those from Western countries especially, seek to consume cultural elements that they can relate to on a personal level, such as costumes, ornaments, food, accommodation, transportation and performances. Alternatively, domestic tourists focus on certain cultural elements that are traditionally associated with place. Two interview responses can be used to demonstrate this, the first from an architect who is originally from Calabar but works in Lagos and the second an American human relations manager:

“You cannot but marvel at primitive culture, you have more time to enjoy loads of local culture, especially the food...but to get a clearer picture of everything going on, you

need to have a reserved place on the podium. You know you have to pay 40k (forty thousand naira)<sup>1</sup> to be up there.” (LR 10. Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

“I love it here, it’s spectacular, unique, enticing... I think it is strategically organised to celebrate tradition and modernity... so on one hand, I am seeing my favourite leisure activity - biking...and I see people dance around naked, which I didn’t even know still existed in this part of the world...” (ITR 7. Dec- 22, 2019).

These comments demonstrate that the idea of authenticity is not some form of incongruous consumption, rather, it is replete with individual or group subjectivities. Yet, they also reveal the contradictions frequently experienced by tourists. Tourists want to enjoy modern tourism offers however they similarly yearn for events that are distinctive from everyday routine (characterised in the above quotes). As a Columbian tourist (ITR3) said, “*we are tourists driven by the desire to consume culture. At the same time, we need comfortable accommodations and transport*”. These requirements have implications in that the tourist’s desires must be met at destinations. The state destination officials and tourism promoters used such input from tourists as rationale to push for changes in the Calabar Festival, such as the introduction of more luxury hotels, deforestation of some parts of the surrounding lush vegetation to provide motorways, and an aesthetic city atmosphere that met global quality. Thus, being significant stakeholders in the Calabar Festival and cultural production, tourists have inadvertently contributed to the powerful discourse that faster changes are required of the festival itself and the city.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Central Bank of Nigeria website, forty thousand Nigerian Naira as at the 02/03/22 is valued at £71.90. (<https://www.cbn.gov.ng/rates/exchratedbycurrency.asp>)



At the same time as modernisation being demanded, there is the pursuit of uniqueness and authenticity among tourism consumers. Tourists want to experience ‘authentic culture’ through the Calabar Festival, and as the Cross River State tourism master plan (2006) provides, it is in the interest of state officials authorities to provide such yearnings for their own economic and social benefit. The justification is that if tourists are pleased, they will reproduce meanings and attract more people to the Calabar Festival. Therefore, the Calabar Festival is constantly developed firstly, to shape Calabar into a modern location, and secondly, as a deliberate display of cultural and visual uniqueness. Consequently, a part of the captivating characteristics of the Calabar Festival (and perhaps numerous global tourist attractions) is that it somehow communicates a sense of homogeneity and heterogeneity at the same time.

Whilst the producers of Calabar Festival need to pay attention to the choice of events and standards of services that the festival provides, culture remains a central reason for tourists visiting the Calabar Festival. Although my interviews revealed that the authenticity of the ancient town was becoming more contentious, few international tourists thought that the forces of modernisation and internationalisation at the festival were concealing the authentic everyday life of the local culture. As an Italian tourist, engineer by profession noted:

“It is incredibly impossible to find real local people to interact with. I mean people dressed like the group that had only a piece of cloth around their loins while performing, you saw them, right? All I see in my resort when I retire is the familiar, people just like where I come from” (ITR 11. Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019).

For this tourist, those unclad (primitive) performers reflect the everyday life of the host culture (which was in fact a past culture) and the disjuncture between reality and imagined authenticity is a source of tension for him. He had imagined that he would see people unclad, but in reality, he had mainly seen people dress and speak just like him, and for him that did not communicate

authenticity. Similarly, local people, especially the elderly, resisted some of the events. They argued that government and tourism officials had turned the event into a set of economically viable social activities in a quest to attract economic returns. Although they acknowledged that certain aspects of the festival were promoted as a celebration of life and culture, for many it was conceived of as a costume parade. For example, a retired civil servant commented:

“So many aspects of the festival and its activities do not really represent us in an authentic way, unlike the Leboku festival. I would say the activities are borrowed. But I can’t deny that such help to sell our place as a good tourism destination...I see how many foreigners enjoy the place and performances when they are here, and I guess that’s why they always come every year, so it is a good thing.” (LR 5, Jan. 8th, 2019).

The Leboku Festival (mentioned by local respondent 5 above) is another significant cultural festival that the people of Cross River State consider to be unchanged by modernity. Therefore, it is not surprising that their critiques of the Calabar Festival express their discontent at the influence of modernisation and the commodification of Calabar culture in an aspect, and emphasise the appeal to separate themselves from this emergent dominating cultures, in another aspect. Tourists from within Nigeria, especially bigger metropolises greatly believed that Calabar generally offers a relaxing speed to modern living. Their expectations reconnect with the acronym CALABAR, meaning Come and Live and Be at Rest (Cross River State Government, 2010), which was developed in the tourism policy and practice of Cross River State to promote the relatively un-industrialised and un-spoilt cultural and natural resources of the city, its simplicity and strong traditions. Within the tourism masterplan of the state, the acronym does not only apply to the city of Calabar, but to the entire Cross River State with an outlook to provide tourists with a secure and comfortable environment outside the chaos and

intensity of Nigeria's major cities. It is no wonder that Calabar is generally known as the most peaceful city in Nigeria to date. Some of the comments that advance this argument include:

“I have been attending this festival for four years now. As a Nigerian and one who knows the terrain very well, I can tell you that Calabar people are very peaceful and hospitable, and that is very important for tourism. When I am here, I feel I'm home because they treat you so...” (NTR 6. -Jan. 1st, 2019).

“These activities keep us sane with a bit of escape from our daily year to year hassles. Thankfully, it is now part of our culture celebrated every Christmas here, we need to encourage it. The world has gone global and we need to develop ourselves with changing times.” (LR 8- Jan.4<sup>th</sup> 2020)

These tourists hoped that for the period of their stay, immersed in the Calabar Festival, they could experience a level of escape from the significant pollution, contamination, strain, and apathy they often endure in the major towns. Indeed, many international tourists revealed that they went to the Calabar Festival for an escape from harsh western weather, from chaotic urban life, busy schedules and daily struggles of life, and for relaxation. While national tourists also emphasised that they hoped the peaceful nature of the city of Calabar, even though only temporarily, could lessen their routine everyday pressures according to NTR 6 above. Their argument signals that tourism can be a response to, and a temporary escape by tourists from the routine, the mundanity and the boredom of their everyday lives. National tourist consumers at the Calabar Festival engage in exotic pursuits where otherness represents difference, and a place which has remained unchanged. According to my interview results, a combination of the festival events, the cultural environment of the city, its rich heritage, and modest way of life constitute the tourists' reasons for attending the Calabar Festival. Tourists, also show their displeasure and dissatisfaction when their expectations are not met. Tourists increasingly

strive to build their identities by expressing consumption choices and lifestyle activities that represent their taste and place in society. When these are not met, this interpretation may produce varying degrees of power dynamics between for example, the producers and consumers, or the cultural and tourism sectors. As Ateljevic (2000) observed, the politics of cultural tourism involves diverse power relations and endless negotiations among people, who exploit cultural values, aesthetic and economic fundamentals to influence the outcomes of relationships with others. The following part delves more into some of these conflicts and their consequences.

### **5.5 Contested experiences and practices among Festival consumers**

Throughout the chapters of this thesis, I have used the term tourists to include domestic and international consumers. However, as I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, some locals identified as tourists on the justification that first, they are originally Calabar, but neither raised nor resident in Calabar. Second, the nature of their work alienates them from everyday reality, such that the Calabar Festival becomes a necessary event through which they learn about the Calabar culture. The researcher has distinguished different kinds of tourist to demonstrate that consumption itself, is a contested space involving power relations, on both the individual and social levels. Certeau (1984) argued that people can use consumption to interpret the meanings and values implanted in products to evaluate or evade official conventions and, consumption is an important component of resistance strategies. In this section, I discuss the tensions between different tourists to demonstrate how they interact, how their actions influence other consumers' consumption habits and challenge existing power and meaning configurations. As the groups consume differently, certain priorities, backed by economic privileges, the powerful discourse about the Calabar Festival shifts to consider these variations as their consumption feeds back into cultural production.

This study finds that, to many domestic tourists, who identify as elite and mainly attend in groups, their experience of the Calabar Festival is one of conspicuous consumption as they excessively expend on activities and products to flaunt their affluence or to satiate their need for luxury. Typically, they are made up of movie and music actors, higher earning bankers, media personalities, and their acquaintances. I refer to them as ‘social media/influencer’ tourists. I argue here that their spending might not necessarily reflect their affluence, but is used to show-off on their social media handles or as people connected to the high-powered decision makers of society, and they therefore seek to project a (sometimes illusionary) sense of living the expensive and fulfilled life style, the “baby girl for life and big boys” clique, as they commonly refer to themselves. During the festival, I observed many of these domestic tourists ordering pricey food and beverages, particularly in establishments such as bars and restaurants as well as in their highly rated accommodation (some of them once invited by an official, are sponsored by either the state government or the official, depending on their function and the reason for their invite). They were also given access to the very few selected events that were ticketed, like the beauty pageant and the gala night events.

What emerges is that tourism consumption arenas become an artificial setting in which people may impersonate affluence. Even though the tourist is not a member of the wealthy elites, such individuals might exploit consumption to reframe self-identification, advocate specific morals, and strive to replicate predominant meanings in varying degrees, even when simply temporary (Smith, 1993). This political positioning of these tourists also connects to Lefebvre’s argument that tourism spaces are representational, fluid and dynamic. Such political positioning and interaction link these social media/influencer tourists to the relations of production. As Lefebvre (1991:32, 71) argued, in production, humans mobilise spatial elements, including

resources (material and immaterial) and tools in a rational manner so that they organise ‘a sequence of actions with a certain “objective” in view’. It is thus arguable that the social relations and use-values circulated by these groups of tourists eventually produce social space, since they are embedded with several levels of power and control (through consumption). They thus, can control production and the subsequent representation of the city as exotic, classy and sophisticated. Yet, representations such as this may be a form of silencing, or of impressing the views and ideologies of the elites on those who are represented. Many aspects of the Calabar Festival demonstrated these non-discursive elements that tended to dramatise the politics of power relationships in a subtle but powerful way.

Conversely, the domestic tourists who were purposeful in their consumption practices differentiated themselves from the social media/influencer tourism consumers. When I enquired about his consumption style and preferences which could serve as markers of his connection with the event, a domestic consumer who is also an entrepreneur explained:

“.... I have no interest in experiencing this Calabar Festival with guided assistance or even lodging in a five-star accommodation, even if I can afford it. I just want to learn about the local people here, who knows, I might relocate to Calabar for my business because I heard they are so peaceful and hospitable.” (OIR 11- Dec. 21<sup>ST</sup> 2019)

The comment demonstrated how some middle-class domestic tourists were not concerned about luxurious consumption and banality, rather they sought to explore the culture of the people and the liveability of the city. For such tourists, consumption reflects Richards’ (2018) description of cultural tourism referring to where the tourist’s central motivation is to experience, uncover, learn and even consume the tangible and intangible aspects of culture. what emerges is that, they consume, primarily for cultural motivations. Whereas, for those tourists looking for ostentatious consumption, the festival became a seamless space as it offered

an escape for such exotic consumption. Yet, it must be noted that groups that interact at tourism consumption sites are not always in equal positions and do not have equal access to the means of production (as per Santos and McKenna, 2015, quoted in Chapter Two). I observed that domestic cultural tourists were not favourably catered for by the tourism market compared to the international tourists. For instance, when I took up my role as an observer on the cultural day celebrations, I was regarded as a foreigner for two reasons: first, I am not originally from Cross River State; and second, even though I am Nigerian, I live abroad and they felt a responsibility to ensure my safety and comfort. Therefore, I was provided with a reserved seat at the podium since I was under the care of the organisers. However, many local people complained about the high cost of the reservations and the fact that they had to pay a fee to sit around those reserved spaces. They complained that *'many people from Calabar or ordinary people from elsewhere in Nigeria feel relegated'* (LR3-Dec. 18th 2019) from the seating arrangements. The situation thus, creates an inherent tension among consumers that arise from differing social class positions. His articulation of 'ordinary people' signalled that the rich are prioritised more than less economically mobile people. Thus, the comments from LR3, and locals like him, demonstrate that he was not happy that the Calabar Festival arrangements permitted banal consumption, as such practices weaken the authenticity of the natural simple life and further promote the commercialisation of culture.

To put it simply, the many consumption demands of tourists result in a variety of societal effects. Self-defining cultural tourists differentiated selves from the social media/influencer tourists, who stayed in the modern hotels and had access to the reserved events. As an instance, a domestic businessperson who attended the Calabar Festival whom I interrogated expressed the reason she did not regret not being able to secure a ticket for the gala night event:

“there is nothing greater than seeing cultural events in a less controlled environment like the parade, than worrying over a beauty pageant that is not even local. Here you see everything as they happen and you are free to experience it the way you want, but assuming it is inside that hall for the beauty pageantry, you are conscripted and not even allowed to laugh out loud or so...” (NTR 5- Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

Therefore, she is articulating that without the convivial and unrestricted nature of the event, her experience of the Calabar Festival would not be complete. Unlike the regulated environment of the beauty pageant, she embodied the festival as an arena for personal reflection which helped her in escaping power struggles. Yet, the divisions between the highly regulated and the unrestricted experiences were beyond figurative, the experiences were genuine and significant to her. Several international tourists also welcomed the structuring of Calabar traditions as a Canadian travel blogger expressed: *“Yes, it is commercialised, the city has got to make money too, everybody knows... and we got a peek of the traditional lifestyle here...”*. (ITR 4- Dec. 22, 2019). For tourists similar to ITR 4, their experience of the Calabar Festival was not a way of gaining authentic experiences of Cross River State/ Nigerian culture in its entirety; but of attaining economic, social and personal gratification. Such consumers cared less concerning the distinction between the genuine and the contrived. They expressed that the real consumption experiences of the Calabar Festival were discovering and enjoying uniqueness. Therefore, consumption of the festival for them, was purely self-indulgent. The differences in the inclinations of tourists also influence the ways of consumption in the Calabar Festival. While the foreign tourists mostly dominated the ticketed events and premium recreational spaces like accommodation, the domestic tourists constitute the largest consumers of Calabar’s tourism market and therefore, predictably occupy many of the festival’s free events.



Regarding accommodation, the inflow international tourists have also introduced some dramatic changes and tensions in spaces of consumption. First, before becoming an international tourist attraction, the socially mobile elites happily occupied hotels in the city (as several locals and staff of the Carnival Calabar Commission all confirmed to me). A lot fitted dormitory standards because they also served as private living quarters. Specifically, interview with OR 7 revealed that in recent years, “*many guesthouse operators have changed their lodges from residence halls and cottages to hotel-style standard rooms*”. The aim is simply to comfortably accommodate more tourists and earn a fee. Different from some domestic tourists that choose shared residences or dormitories for budgetary reasons, many international tourists favour these hotel-like standard rooms. Specifically, those who booked their trip through a government tourism agency, stated safety and security as the reason for this. The express outcome involves a situation where low-income domestic tourists encounter challenges in accessing cheaper hotel rooms for the whole period of the festival in the ancient city. It was also found that many private home owners convert their rooms into tourist accommodations and let them out for a fee, thereby reshaping the traditional family home-living arrangements that Calabar people are known for. This demonstrates a sociocultural impact of consumption, and was revealed by many locals in comments such as:

“Every Christmas I move into my sister’s house with my little daughter, and my son moves in with my brother...because I rent my whole house to people coming for their holidays...to make some extra money...But only for the Christmas period...” (OIR 22-Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020)

“...my cab business does not make much money during Christmas...I have to feed my family...So I put two rooms for rent.” (OIR 16-Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

“My three children share one room because I don’t get help from anybody...They don’t complain because that is how I raise money to pay their school fees...We don’t do our night devotions when someone occupies our room...” (LR 19- Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019).

These comments show how tourism activities combined with economic dispositions can reshape the traditional family living arrangements. As demonstrated by the comments above, equipped with the knowledge that many (low-class and middle-income earning) tourists look for more affordable accommodation, locals exploit the opportunity for extra income by putting up rooms in their houses to be rented by tourists. We can see how family life was destabilised during the festival period where, for LR 19, routine was put on hold in order not to inconvenience the visitor. For OIR 22, the family became separated from each other, although only temporarily. However, away from economic motivations, what these comments subtly reveal is the hospitality that the Calabar people are known for. Andrew and Ekpeyong (2012) discussed in chapter Three, have highlighted how the Calabar Festival serves as a platform for showcasing the state’s traditional hospitality, demonstrated by these family dynamics and warmth to visitors. Specifically, my interviews with LR 19 and OIR 16 revealed that they charge less than the amount of a hotel room, and some visitors are entertained during their stay with food, drinks, and outdoor recreation and entertainment without any extra charges. This attitude of openness to visitors no doubt supports tourism, however, the family reorganisation might put a strain on family and traditional values, where it becomes perpetual. What has emerged is a tension between domestic and international tourists where consumption is not uniform. Because the groups occasionally move in opposing routes based on their tastes, objectives, and financial resources, power relations within the Calabar Festival have to shift to

incorporate these variations. Therefore, to understand the politics of contemporary cultural tourism is to consider the convergence of production and consumption, where the various stakeholders namely the (Cross River) state government, tourists and locals, intersect in a dynamic circuit of interaction. As I argued in the literature chapter and demonstrated in chapter Four, the convergence of globalisation and localisation, production and consumption (Du Gay et al, 1997), have opened spaces for new forms of relational and negotiated patterns of cultural exchanges (Ostrowska, 2018; Bhabha, 1994). These new systems of exchanges are seen to be decentralising established centres of power and blurring the boundaries of established forms of cultural agency, particularly in cultural curation. This is further analysed in relation to the tourists' dynamics of interaction, in the section that follows.

## **5.6 The convergence of production and consumption: Tourists and Cultural curation:**

It is important to highlight that according to discussions in chapter Two, curation is situated within three critical ideas through which power is performed namely; conservation, production and sharing of cultural knowledge (O'Neil, 2013). While I have demonstrated the role of tourists in the production and sharing of cultural knowledge in the previous chapter, I will focus attention on the conservation aspects through policy, and practice of tourists in this section. Cultural curation has particularly been considered in the context of intermediaries at museums, and of artwork and exhibition spaces (for instance Arnold, 2013; Kreps, 2008, 2013; Golding and Modest, 2013; Good, 2017; Richards, 2021), but rarely in cultural tourism relations. Job, Becken, & Lane (2017) have argued that by default, tourism has become the guardian of place's heritage and culture by playing an important role in shaping the conservation of culture. Also, increased global mobility and commercialised relationships (Ostrowska, 2018; Bhabha, 1994), have converged producers and consumers in a circuit of interaction (Du Gay et al., 1997). What emerges as Kreps (2008) argued in chapter two, is that because modern destinations

increasingly attempt to respond to the preferences and demands of their diverse tourists/consumers through commodification, they have become susceptible to varied viewpoints and reciprocal relationships that empower others to participate in determining how their cultures are represented and curated. Thus, it is important that in analysing cultural tourism production and consumption, tourists as key stakeholders are then identified in the power structures of curation. Du Gay's relational model which interconnects cultural processes within a circuit of interaction (see fig. 1) is helpful for an enhanced understanding.

Evidence from this study supports that tourists are actively involved in modern cultural curation processes. At various points in the previous chapter, I demonstrated how Calabar's policy and promotional documents (such as Cross River state tourism masterplan, 2006) as well as interview responses by officials (such as OR 11 and OR 8 and others) demonstrated how tourists occupy a central place in the production of culture, represented in the Calabar Festival and beyond. Though, often, they claim such positioning is for the economic profits of tourism, a closer observation of the development of the Calabar Festival over time reveals how some activities have been promoted and produced more than others. A member of the Research and Statistics Department of the Calabar Carnival Commission alludes to this by saying, "what is profitable and sustainable is what is produced" (OR 10- Jan. 10th, 2020). This simply implies that determining sustainability and profitability is premised on tourists' consumption and validation of the festival events and products. Thus, through consumption practices and the meanings they assign to particular attractions, tourists are influential in determining what is produced and represented.

With regards to conservation, this study finds that tourists are compelling destinations (locals and official planners) towards appreciating and reinventing their earlier tradition lost to modernity, by their interests in traditional arts, crafts and performances. In this way, certain

aspects of culture are preserved and transferred to generations. In chapter Four, I quoted the Cross River state tourism masterplan (2006:23) which emphasised the need to *ally “... with public and private sectors... important to protect ... heritage and culture ... also promote innovative tourism experience”*. This greatly alludes to Du Gay et al (1997) perspective, which interconnects production and consumption in a dynamic circuit. Du Gay’s relational model interconnects cultural processes of production, consumption, regulation, representation and identity construction within a circuit of interaction (see fig. 1). Du Gay et al argue that these processes are related because it is important to consider how every cultural product is represented, what identities are linked with it, how it is produced and consumed, and the systems that regulate its practicality and sharing (Du Gay et al., 1997). Similar to the CRS masterplan, linking sectors could be claimed as a form of regulation, where they jointly engage with the conservation and production of culture, aimed towards creating an experience for tourists. Therefore, it could be argued that tourists assert significant levels of power in policy around conservation.

Apart from policy, locals also recognise that tourists have a certain degree of influence in cultural conservation. This claim is corroborated through interview with many tourists. An illustration is that of the traditional ruler of Calabar municipal (LR 1). When I sought his perspective about the connections of tourists with cultural conservation, he recounted that:

“.... Under the colonial era, European colonisers that were anxious to Christianise and civilise us practically cleared our art forms and other distinctive traits. But with our tourism economy and the development of the Calabar Festival, it seems we are beginning to reinvent traditional arts and crafts” (LR 5 Jan. 8th, 2019).

A possible explanation of the statement is a clear appreciation of the role of tourism in cultural revival. Although he mentioned the negatively induced loss of cultural arts during colonisation, his statement suggests that tourism offers economic inducement, and cultural reinvention for the city as a means of attracting tourists. Through the Calabar Festival, he claims that local culture and traits are reinvented, preserved and subsequently produced as the difference which tourists seek. The head of information Cross River State Carnival Commissions also corroborated that “*for long... tourists influence the type of cultural experiences we offer*”. Evidently, these suggest the justification of the Calabar Festival planners to mix primitivity (for difference) and modernity (for aesthetics). It was possible to see certain unique food, music and rituals of the several Cross River state communities and the Nigerian ethnic groups represented in the Calabar Festival arena. For example, the ancient Ekpe masquerade ritual, the cultural village, and the Ekombi dance (which I earlier discussed) presented as part of such historical rituals.

Also, with regard to the tourists, I also asked them to evaluate the nature and extent of cultural conservation of particular festival attributes. Both domestic and international tourists believed that the state had succeeded in preserving traditional values when it came to the preservation of the material landscape. The respondents, on the other hand, were less enthusiastic about the preservation of immaterial culture. The domestic tourists were more suspicious than international tourists with reference to the officials’ claims of balancing tourism development with the protection of native Cross River State culture. In my interviews with domestic tourists, only a few felt strongly that the government had succeeded in the conservation of immaterial culture, whereas many strongly differed. The dissociation of tangible and intangible culture also triggered many criticisms, as a local traditional ruler asserted: “this city’s culture has already been infiltrated and soon to be totally destroyed, whatever remains will be entirely created by and for tourists” (LR 1, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019). Noteworthy is that domestic tourists

expressed their discontentment at the narrative that the Calabar Festival is a decent representation of cultural conservation and tourism expansion. The government's claim that the Calabar Festival has achieved a good balance between preservation and growth is hence opposed. Many tourists felt that, although some of Calabar's environment had been well preserved, many of the products and events of the festival have been altered or threatened by tourism development. Thus, reaffirming that the re-appropriation of tradition has become a commercial approach towards profit-making rather than producing authenticity.

Notwithstanding, sufficient data from the study have demonstrated that policy makers, locals and even tourists themselves, recognise that tourists are involved in the curation of culture through their roles in the production, conservation and dissemination of cultural knowledge. This is the result of the convergence of production and consumption. In chapter Two, I argued for the inclusion of the concept of curation to revise the Du Gay et al (1997) relational model. Since (rightly so) all cultural processes are interconnected in a circuit where they influence each other, what then emerges is that the reciprocal relationships, networks of exchanges, create a form of openness that empowers others with the rights to participate in determining how local cultures come to be represented and curated (Karen, 2011). This has been demonstrated throughout chapter Four and the current chapter. This study results suggest that because cultural knowledge becomes co-created through the convergence of production, consumption and other cultural processes, roles structures formerly confined to local curators become decentralised. In that instance, tourists as contextualisers (O'Neil, 2013) assumes positions in hierarchies of situated power structures. With these findings and the relevance of Du Gay et al model in the analysis of cultural processes, my research proposes a revision of Du Gay et al's model to include these two relational points namely; power and curation. This, I will present in the next chapter.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has primarily analysed the interaction of tourists with culture, and cultural processes of the Calabar Festival. Based on the arguments discussed throughout, the chapter has demonstrated that the convergence of production and consumption as Du Gay et al (1997) posited, has opened up spaces that empower tourists to participate in situated power frameworks that determine how local cultures are regulated, represented and curated (Kreps, 2008). The interactions of people with culture, and power are central to this thesis and it was important to understand what culture meant to both the domestic and international tourists. Thus, consistent with the ideas of Richard (2018) and Stebbins (1996) drawn from chapter Two, culture was understood as both a personal and social resource, through which people make meanings of their own and other people's reality.

The discussions also highlighted that the tourist's gaze can be an instrument of power in that, while the activities constructed in the Calabar Festival provided the gaze, various media frameworks also framed narratives that appealed to the tourists' imaginations and gaze. The framing allowed that tourists' imaginations continue to feed back into the production of culture, through which cultural knowledge is shared. Although there were concerns that as cultures continue to adapt and conform to tourist's expectation by altering local identities to suit the tourist's gaze, overtime, local sense of identity may be replaced by a homogenous space of consumption, substituted by censored representations of Calabar culture. Yet, as the object of the gaze, tourists were also, subjects that gazed upon others, through situated performances. In such instance, performances were avenues through which they co-created cultural knowledge, enacting personal identities (Urry, 1997) while also exerting some levels of influence on the identity of others. As Foucault, was argued for, knowledge is power, and the practise of power constantly creates knowledge, which in turn, influences the properties of power.



On the questions of cultural authenticity, by their consumption preferences, tourists can produce contradictions. Their desire for modern aesthetics has resulted in the production of aspects of the Calabar Festival in ways similar to known global events like that of Trinidad and Tobago. Yet, their quest for the authentic has led to the reinvention of lost cultures and the preservation of culture in so many ways. The Calabar Festival is produced for a tourism audience who seek to experience authentic culture, and as the Cross River State tourism master plan (2006) provides, it is in the interest of government officials to provide such yearnings based on their own economic and social benefits. Also, aside the issue of authenticity, different tourists were shown to consume differently and their consumption patterns altogether, formed new relationships that challenge established global and local patterns (Ostrowska, 2018; Bhabha, 1994). Thus, in line with Du Gay et al.'s model which interconnects production and consumption in a circuit of interaction, the chapter demonstrated that these intersections have empowered tourists with the rights to participate in shaping the representation and curation of local cultures. Evidence provided that tourists are active in the production and conservation of culture, and the sharing of cultural knowledge, which are core elements of cultural curation. It was then argued that because cultural knowledge is co-created through the convergence of production, consumption and other cultural processes, local power structures are decentralised, where tourists as contextualisers (O'Neil, 2013) assume positions in hierarchies of situated power structures. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will revise the Du Gay et al (1997) model to include these two relational points namely; power and curation, backed with study's evidences.

## Chapter six

### Conclusion

#### **6.1 Contemporary politics of cultural tourism: The Calabar Festival and application of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model.**

##### **6.1.1 Introduction**

In this thesis, I have investigated the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria concerning people, power and culture in the Calabar Festival. Specifically, the study has analysed the dynamic interactions between the (Cross River State) government, tourists and local community members as they interact and challenge each other in the production and consumption of culture during the Calabar Festival. I have analysed these dynamics in relation to Du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture model, which usefully explains the interaction of people with the cultural processes of production, consumption, representation, regulation and identity construction within an integrated circuit. While Du Gay et al. interconnects these processes, what emerged from my empirical study is that the convergence of production and consumption opens up frameworks of inclusivity and exchanges that empower tourists to participate in determining how local cultures are represented and curated. As Kulusjarvi (2020) observed, the internationalisation of tourism, and its commitment to the market logic, have shown that local tourism politics increasingly favours tourists' preferences, thereby changing the local power dynamics. More so, O'Neil (2012) situates curation within three critical ideas that command power: conservation, production, and sharing of cultural knowledge. As the findings raise the possibility that tourists become positioned in traditional hierarchies of power as modern cultural curators, I found it significant to revise Du Gay et al.'s model to include the empirically emerging issues of power and curation. The revised model named 'neo-circuit of cultural tourism' demonstrates that all stakeholders actively exert different forms of power on cultural

processes through a connected circuit of relationships. In this context, the new model offers a case-specific analysis of these relational dynamics while framing tourists as modern cultural curators.

Drawing on qualitative methodologies such as ethnographic observation, interviews with key stakeholders, and information from policy documents and promotion brochures, throughout this thesis, I demonstrated that the politics of cultural tourism is a dynamic process involving complex power negotiations among all stakeholders and influenced by access to economic, bargaining and knowledge positioning. Examining the various power dynamics between the key stakeholders allows for an enhanced analysis of how they interact with culture and influence cultural processes, and how such interactions affect local power dynamics. This study offers new insights to understanding emergent cultural realities of a globally connected world, such as the linking of globalisation and localisation, the decentralisation of cultural curatorial roles and the interplay of production and consumption. The enquiry was guided by three research questions:

- 1) What is the nature of the power relations between the (Cross River State) government, tourists and local communities in the production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival?
- 2) How do tourists perform as modern cultural curators within contemporary tourism circuits of interaction?
- 3) What sociocultural changes are induced by tourism politics on the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture?

In this concluding chapter, I present an overview of the study in three sections. In the first section, I summarise the thesis chapters and then discuss my key empirical findings in connection with the theoretical implications and study contributions. In the second section, I discuss the value of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model both as a theoretical construct and through its practical application. The third section then reflects on the study's limitations and research suggestions for the future.

## **6.2 Thesis summary**

*In chapter one*, I highlighted that the cultural tourism phenomenon has remained under-researched in African countries, despite its growing relevance in broader socio-economic growth and political concerns. Particularly, Nigeria has traditionally embraced various forms of cultural tourism including heritage, arts, festivals and other cultural activities, as strategies for cultural revival and economic development (Christie et al., 2013). As Ezenagu (2020) observed, festivals are deeply embedded in the social, political and cultural life of the Nigerian people. Significantly, among the plethora of festivals in Nigeria, the Calabar Festival currently distinguishes as the country's strongest tourism brand as it offers 'the biggest and longest multi-dimensional, multi-faceted tourism ... event in West Africa' (CRSTB, 2018:14), which made it a rich case study for my research. Furthermore, the Calabar Festival was developed to revive local culture, yet, it engages in the commodification of culture to enhance tourism as an income development strategy (Eja and Otu, 2015; Andrew and Ekpeyong, 2012). This tension has implications for the cultural remit and the cultural practices informing the festival, for example quests to preserve culture and the politicisation of tourism often evoke contradictory relationships that might change local power dynamics since the festival engages different groups of people with varying degrees of power and influence. The inherent power dynamics necessitated the rethinking of politics from a cultural perspective to understand the various power forces that might be at play in tourism development. Hence, I considered the politics of

cultural tourism from two critical dimensions. First is analyses not solely focused on policy concerns and the political-economy of tourism, but allowing for mediation between different actors (across geographies) in ways that shape how cultural tourism is developed and performed. Second, I developed a focus outside the simple binary involving for example, powerful tourists and disempowered locals (Smith, 1989), dominant and the dominated (Gibson et al., 2006), gazers and the gazed upon (Urry, 1992), which have dominated sociological studies to an inclusion of key stakeholders. This is significant because my empirical research has demonstrated how the stakeholders exert power over cultural processes. For example, interview excerpt from the head of information, Cross River State Carnival Commission quoted in chapter 4 emphasised that *“tourists influence the type of cultural experiences we offer... We do not take the domineering power of our local communities for granted... always disputing many decisions when they feel it is not in their interest ...”* (OR 8 Dec. 22, 2018). Thus, the convergence of globalisation and localisation in tourism has highlighted the fluidity of boundaries. While policy officials can influence tourism processes and outcomes through economic dispositions, locals can challenge authority based on knowledge and creative expertise, and tourists can influence production through their consumption preferences and patterns.

*In chapter two*, I examined key debates on cultural tourism dynamics, providing insights into people, culture and power relations. Cultural tourism encompasses a diverse set of cultural resources and practices, and the interaction of different social groups across geographies. The complexities often involve conflicting motives, ideologies and power relations and result in different sociocultural outcomes. Particularly, festivals are discussed as interactive sites for understanding these broad socio-political and cultural complexities which serve as sites of cultural negotiation and power exchanges. These dynamics are studied in relation to Du Gay et al.’s (1997) five relational circuits of culture model (regulation, production, consumption,

representation and identity), which concludes that cultural meanings are produced and consumed in a dynamic cycle, shaped and modified by actors in an interaction circuit. In the analysis of power relations in these cultural processes, rather than the dominant unbalanced perspective which situates power on either the state, tourists or locals, the chapter adopts a cultural perspective which assumes agency on the part of all stakeholders involved. Thus, the chapter describes three forms of power namely, knowledge power, bargaining power, and economic power in analysis. As the literature review revealed, the dynamics of power involve the intersection of local and global flows where diverse stakeholders co-constitute and contest each other in diverse ways with challenges to cultural preservation in particular. The challenges emerge because modern destinations increasingly attempt to respond to the preferences of their diverse tourists/consumers through commodification, thereby becoming susceptible to continuous cultural transformation. Consequently, notions of cultural hybridity and exoticisation are argued as outcomes of circuitous power dynamics where global- local interplay produce a negotiated balance to adapt to changing cultural realities.

As a consequence of the global-local interplay, I developed the concept of cultural co-coloniality, to demonstrate the co-dependent interaction of people across geographies as creative agents, who are able to challenge and construct their own sense of social world to suit their cultural needs. Furthermore, the literature review identified a gap in existing studies, namely that cultural curation is an important form of cultural agency (O'Neil, 2013; Karen, 2011), which requires more analytical consideration. To add understanding to Du Gay et al.'s relational model, I proposed a revision of the model to include notions of power and curation in tourism circuits of interaction which I describe as neo-circuit of cultural tourism model. In this model I frame tourists as modern cultural curators, yet do not strip destination's curators of their competencies, instead my model emphasises the interconnectedness and fluidity of the modern world that enables the co-construction of situated cultural meanings.

*In chapter three*, I discussed the research methodology underpinning this empirical work by extending the theoretical debates to the empirical study conducted during the Calabar Festival. One of my research questions sought to understand the nature of power relations between the study's stakeholders in producing and consuming culture in the Calabar Festival. Therefore, I employed an ethnographic approach to gain a first-hand insight to the actions of these stakeholders in their natural settings (and political and socio-cultural contexts) over an extended period of time, while living local. Specifically, I used interview and observation methods to gain insights into the perceptions of the stakeholders about power, culture and cultural processes. Also, my other research question involves analysis of how tourists perform as modern cultural curators, and I considered it important to ground research with policy assertions for validity and depth, thus, the need for policy documents. Observation method helped me in recording people's behaviours and activities, as well as their observable influences on cultural processes, in their natural settings. The combination of these methods also helped me to identify patterns across interview responses, actual actions and observed realities. Furthermore, this chapter analysed the geo-historical setting of Calabar, Cross River State to enable an understanding of how the geographical links have influenced the development of the Calabar Festival as a cultural tourism attraction.

*Chapter four* is the first empirical chapter, here, I analysed the cultural production dynamics of the Calabar Festival and the power relations among various stakeholders. This chapter shows that diverse people with varying degrees of power jointly shape the Calabar Festival into a significant tourism event, however, its production is a contested space of interaction. It was particularly evident that government officials in Calabar worked with an alliance of people and organisations across geographical scales, internal cultural institutions, including those involved

in the conservation, and local creative sectors, the tourism, research and statistics sectors. For example, it was gathered through interview that while the Cross River State Research and Statistics Department (CRSRSD) provide data on tourists' experience, preference and satisfaction, the cultural institutions are forwarded with such data, to understand which aspects of culture to preserve, which the tourism sector capitalises upon. Thus, the interaction involves a network of people, who jointly select preferred aspects of local culture and tradition, produced for a tourism experience. In the Calabar Festival context, such ideal rationalisation is expressed in the use of renowned brands in the production of the Calabar Festival; 'the exoticisation of culture as a representational strategy to construct an ideal tourist attraction'; the production of a hybridised festival space that converges various national and international cultural identities. In many cases, production reflects a neoliberal development strategy by officials, with the approval of some local communities, involving the commodification of cultural elements to stimulate economic growth. However, tourism development introduces contested power relations between for instance, external actors (tourists) and local hosts as well as amongst internal actors (government and locals) themselves. Within the Calabar Festival, a significant issue was the transformation of the cultural village into a fully-fledged tourism enterprise in 2018, which was perceived by locals as a form of disempowerment from the control of such important shared space, used for the performance of a collective local identity and everyday social interaction. Yet, locals are altogether not passive, they contest this development to reclaim their cultural space. These arguments were found to be consistent with literature understanding locals as active agents in cultural processes (Lin, 2021; McFall, 2011).

*In chapter five* I then analysed the Calabar Festival from a consumption perspective, focusing on how tourists consume culture, and how their preferences feed back into cultural production and become the motivation for the conservation of certain cultural aspects. Like production, consumption is a contested space, where consumers can negotiate and challenge existing power



relations. Through consumption, tourists can overturn/subvert conventions by creating their own meanings through sensuous experiences including gazing and touching, situated roles and performances in seeking to consume the authentic. The chapter also provided evidence of how power is exercised and contested by different tourists through specific consumption styles and levels of access. Also, as I argued in chapter two, my findings further suggest that tourism consumption opens up a contested space for the (re)construction of local cultural meanings as local communities become influenced by global flows (Cornelissen, 2017). For instance, some locals claim that the hybridisation of local culture, which is an outcome of transnational and internal cultural exchanges (Cohen 2000; 2004) is bad for maintaining cultural authenticity. However, many officials and some locals, claim that the intersection of the global and the local is helping to reinvent and reinforce a continuity of ancient cultural forms (discussed in chapter two). Thus, the rhetoric of tourists curating culture is then advanced because their production-consumption dynamics empower them to partake in shaping local cultural representation and curation. These arguments are combined to advance the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, which reinforces that cultural politics extends beyond consumption, representation, regulation, identity construction and the conventional function of cultural production, it includes the mechanisms of curation and dynamic power relations.

Having discussed the main content of my chapters, I will now discuss my key empirical findings in relation to the ideas in my proposed neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework and its theoretical implications.

## **6.2 Key empirical findings in relation to my proposed neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework and its theoretical implications.**

This section discusses my key empirical findings in relation to my proposed neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework and its theoretical implications. The neo-circuit of cultural tourism model provides a revision of Du Gay et al (1997), to enhance understanding of emerging cultural tourism dynamics, simplifying the outcomes of the complex relationships in our ever-fluid cultural world. As my fieldwork shows, power is central to the performance of cultural processes among the study's key stakeholders in the tourism circuit of interaction. Also, Du Gay et al offers that cultural processes are interconnected within a circuit that links production and consumption in the co-creation of situated cultural knowledge. What also emerged from my study is that the intersection of production and consumption, and the market logic of prioritising the tourists' taste, opens up frameworks of inclusivity that rearranges the local power dynamics and at the same time, empower tourists to participate in determining how local cultures are regulated, represented and curated. Hence, the rationale to revise Du Gay et al.'s framework to include power and curation as empirically emerging constellations. Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that the core purpose of a theoretical framework is to explicitly describe the key issues under study – in relation to factors, ideas, or variables - and their supposed interrelationships. The neo-circuit of cultural tourism model recognises cultural tourism as a relational process - particularly linking policy, practice and cultural processes with stakeholders and power relations.

My study produced four key findings that contributes to knowledge. The first finding responds to my first research question: *What is the nature of the power relations between the (Cross River State) government, tourists and local communities in the production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival?* Power is typically determined and regulated by multiple factors in human interactions. I mentioned in chapters one and two that scholars have

frequently studied politics through a one-sided perspective that highlights an unbalanced power binary involving for example, powerful tourists and disempowered locals (Smith, 1989), dominant and the dominated (Gibson et al., 2006); or gazers and those being gazed upon (Urry, 1992); but not simultaneously all key stakeholders. However, Schiller & Salazar (2013) called for more theorisation that challenges the binarism, given the frameworks of increased global mobility and commercialised relationships. Thus, my empirical research responds to this call by demonstrating that different stakeholders actively exert one or multiple forms of power over the other, and in the production, consumption, representation and the regulation of culture, through an integrated circuit of interaction. At various points in chapters four and five, I demonstrated how such power relations are expressed in different forms including knowledge, economic or bargaining influence. This argument significantly forwards the ideas of my proposed neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, where tourism relational dynamics reinforce and enable distributed power relations among all stakeholders in cultural processes. In the Calabar context, producers are influenced by consumers, whose consumption is also sometimes regulated by the local structures where they practise consumption. For example, this argument was highlighted in various interviews with government officials. Among many, an excerpt from the Head of information of Cross River State Carnival Commissions which I quoted in chapter four, asserts:

“What we do as a government is to consolidate the needs of tourists and demands of our local communities.... We do not take the domineering power of our local communities for granted... always disputing many decisions when they feel it is not in their interest but... tourists condition the type of cultural experiences we offer...when they (tourists) come, they give us the challenge for our local people to ... makes us cherish our own...even when we try to modernise it, make it loose to modern

aesthetics.... that has a way of influencing...each other in some ways” (OR 8, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

This statement clearly illustrates the interconnections between the various stakeholders with varying degrees of power and influence. Explanation of the statement is also consistent with the ideas of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model that all stakeholders are active in the production processes. In this specific example, (referring to our analysis in chapter four), it is obvious that while the locals can exert knowledge and bargaining power, the officials can perform any of the dimensions of power because they have legitimated access to capital (discussed in chapter two). But the officials’ powers are also regulated by tourists’ economic and bargaining powers, by which they influence what is continuously produced as cultural in the festival. Thus, contrary to the argument (in chapter two) forwarded (by Hall, 1980; Theodore Adorno,1975; Max Horkheimer, 1947) that consumers are passive robots, who accept meanings as they were projected by the powerful and elitist culture industry, like other stakeholders, tourists are not simply consumers. As the comment above expressed, tourists are essential part of tourism dynamics that regulate cultural processes and outcomes. Thus, there seem to be a balance of power between all stakeholders where they can influence each other regarding how the cultural attraction is represented, what identities are developed, and the mechanisms that regulate its production and consumption.

However, as my research further shows their relationships are not always on an even level, but filled at times, with conflicting interests in regards to how they instrumentalise culture in tourism processes. For example, as I demonstrated in chapter four, while tourism policies aim to meet the objectives of developing profitable cultural tourism experiences, the cultural policies highlight the preservation and development of cultural assets and traits. Despite the efforts by the preservation Department of Culture and Heritage to push traditional cultures to

the fore (CRS government, 2010), officials and tourism planners prefer the exoticism of culture (discussed in chapter two) to drive tourism profit, with conservation awareness, sometimes, obscured by development (CRS tourism and investment footprint 2016-2017). The implication involves some potential problems between notably, those pushing to preserve traditions and those modernising those traditions to create values that fit a modern tourism experience. Notwithstanding, these groups are connected by their shared quests to internationalise the Calabar Festival, produce a unique experience for tourists to experience local culture, and to develop local economies. Thus, there is a negotiated balance of power among all stakeholders as to how they influence themselves, or cultural processes in the Calabar Festival.

My second finding argues that curation is an inevitable component of modern cultural tourism politics, and tourists perform as modern curators. This finding directly responds to the research question: *How do tourists perform as modern cultural curators within contemporary tourism circuits of interaction?* This study is the first empirical research project that has considered the role of tourists as modern cultural curators, based upon a revision of Du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture model. Du Gay et al offered an understanding of how culture is constructed and experienced dynamically within a circuit, through relational processes of regulation, production, consumption, representation and identity construction. However, as I discussed in chapter two, curatorial practice has become a dynamic force of cultural agency, which Du Gay et al.'s (ibid.) model does not consider. My empirical chapters have demonstrated that the convergence of the relational processes identified by Du Gay et al. (ibid.) has blurred the boundaries of established forms of cultural agency. Here, the curator, initially recognised as backstage art mediator (O'Neil, 2007), currently sets the contexts for social interaction and new relational frameworks that influence cultural processes (Karen, 2011). Ultimately, such contexts have become an indication of the dynamic practice of cultural curation being performed by tourists. Thus, the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model permits the systematic

framing of 'tourists as modern curators of culture'. The application of this framework links contemporary tourism politics with diverse groups in forming social reality, while anchoring tourists in the situated social, cultural, political and economic structures within which they perform. Also, discussions in chapter two related curation to three critical ideas through which power is performed namely- conservation, production and sharing of cultural knowledge (O'Neil, 2013). Chapter Five reveals how the Cross River State Tourism Masterplan (2006) prioritised tourists' preferences in conservation and production initiatives. These were also demonstrated through interview responses by policy-making officials. For example, the department of Media, Communication and cultural studies official, OR 11 (quoted in chapter four) revealed that:

“Today tourists are changing and they are helping us change, teaching us so many things about our culture that we took for granted: we have always known them but perhaps we did not give them the desired prominence or possibly the accurate worth. Tourists have luckily forced all of us to re-evaluate traditions and customs that were disappearing.”  
(OR 11-Dec. 22, 2018).

The meanings embedded in the comment above strongly suggest that tourists can be understood as custodians and circulators of situated cultural meanings. According to the statement, these abilities stem from their roles in stimulating destinations to reinvent lost cultures, share cultural knowledge and influence production decisions. It follows that, tourists curate culture as their consumption preferences feed back into the cultural realities of the host destination and become the frame of reference, or justification for what destinations preserve, select, produce and represent as culture at tourism events. However, this role does not completely relegate the abilities of local conservationists in curating at destinations, rather, as co-creators and through their significance in the modern circuit of interaction, tourists have the power to shape and

define what qualifies as culture for tourism and ultimately, what becomes cultural. Combining an analysis of cultural practices and policy has made it possible to advance understanding of curatorial dynamics which have been lacking in previous research on cultural tourism. As I argued in chapter two, cultural curation is a rapidly growing practice and discourse that is fundamentally shifting the ways in which we understand culture (Kreps, 2017). Particularly, this research furthers understandings of how culture is negotiated, offering a richer awareness of how tourists currently perform as modern cultural curators.

My third finding responds to my last research question: *What sociocultural changes are induced by tourism politics on the Calabar Festival and Calabar culture?* My research shows that the Calabar Festival enhanced the development of an entrepreneurial culture, which was formerly unsophisticated among local people and thereby serving as a launchpad for local artists' careers. Several literatures on the role of festivals emphasise their obvious economic, place-making and promotion impacts (Goldberg-Miller, 2015) for cultural tourism (discussed in chapter two). While this finding is partly consistent with previous research, a significant dimension is that Calabar Festival provided locals valuable opportunities to develop an entrepreneurial culture. It has been demonstrated through interviews with locals and government officials that prior to becoming a tourist-based economy, Calabar was formerly a city populated with office-based workers and traders, where entrepreneurial activities were largely controlled by non-locals (chapter four). However, as the Calabar Festival evolved, locals were encouraged to develop a sophisticated entrepreneurial culture in order to control their cultural narratives in the field of arts. For example, an art shop owner (LR 22 quoted in chapter four) asserts how the cultural village was developed out of the local's need to innovate cultural realities in order to "*self-manage, safeguard, and promote authentic cultural products that represents real local identity*". This development was also supported by the formation of complex networks involving the government through state-sponsored skills development

initiatives (Nwosu and Onah, 2016), different national artists, public and private businesses and others. This finding strengthens the need for the revised neo-circuit of cultural tourism model that I have developed by stressing the importance of a circuitous relationship involving diverse people in all cultural processes, including representation and curation. This importance is grounded on the locals' resolve to develop entrepreneurial skills that will assist them to produce the Calabar Festival as a distinctive tourist attraction, in ways that communicate and sustain the preservation of culture. Also, the politics of cultural tourism is not considered simply from the production or consumption perspective (see Chapter two); rather, as the model has shown, it recognises evolving developments and realities as part of its dynamisms. In relation to the Calabar Festival, it was interesting to find how an event can empower stakeholders (in this case, the locals) to seek innovative skills, build complex national and international networks, motivated by the desire to influence and self-manage local cultural processes. Thus, this study adds to knowledge of how a cultural event can be an empowering mechanism of cultural preservation and innovation.

Another significant finding relating to the sociocultural changes induced by tourism politics is that cultural commodification has become naturalised; accepted by the state, local communities and tourists, and justified in view of potential economic, social and personal gratifications. This finding sits in-between earlier researches (such as Ravenscroft and Matteucci, 2003; Greenwood's, 1989) which argued that commodification induces negative socio-cultural consequence; and those who advocate its positive impacts (for instance, Shaw and Williams, 2004). On the one hand, the Calabar Festival dynamics allows that policy makers seek to transform the Calabar Festival into a booming tourism attraction, tourists are provided the opportunities to enhance their consumption, creativity and interpretations, to the representation of people and their cultural practices (Chapter five). Also, many locals are convinced that commodification enhances their economic quality of life. For example, chapter five explains



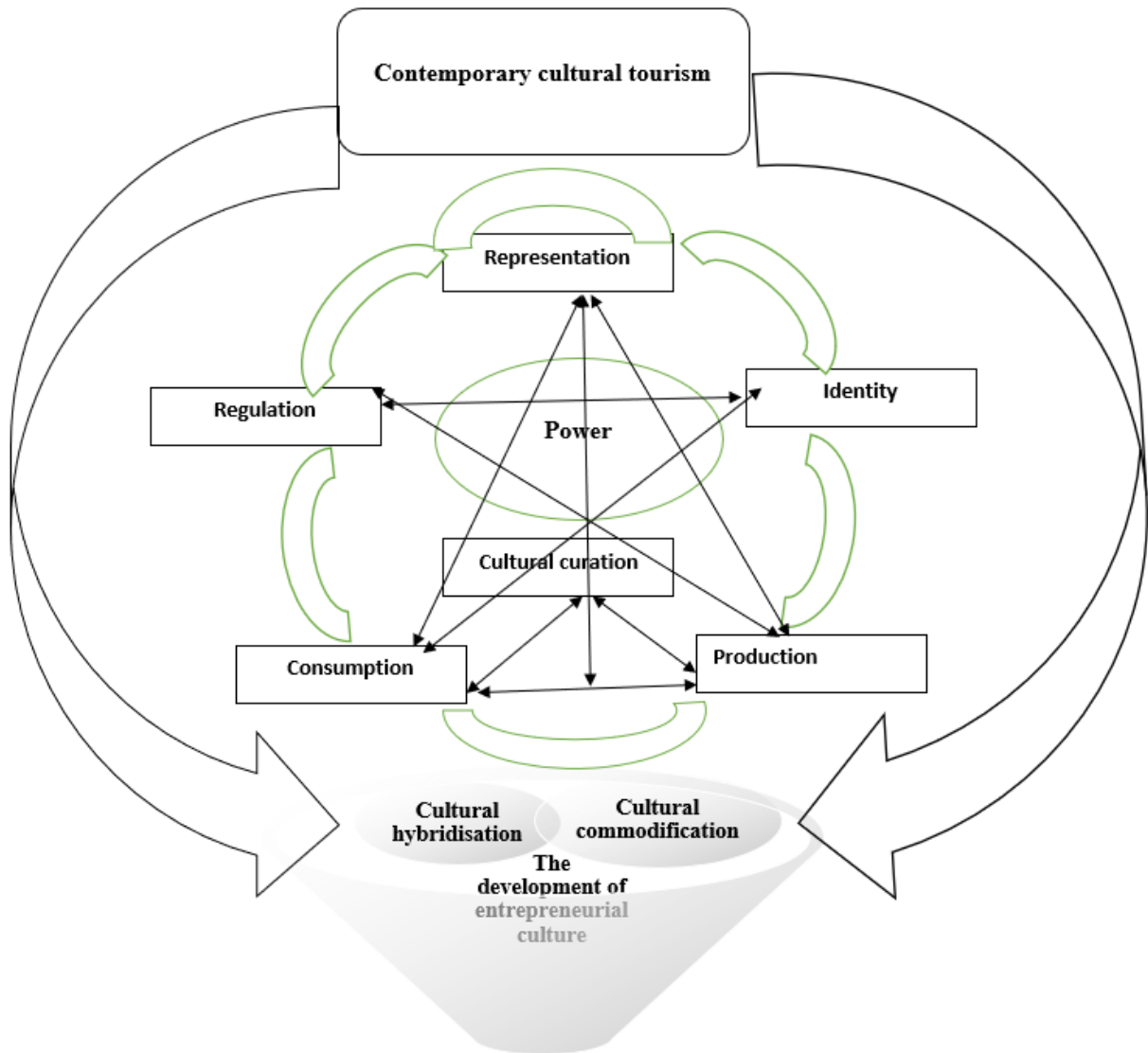
how some local residents regularly rent out their family houses as tourists' accommodation, "... to make some extra money..." (OIR 25- Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020). This signifies that economic gain is the direct motivation for the commodification of everyday life (Getz, 2012). On the other hand, however, it was also found that commodification dynamics in the Calabar Festival introduce some adverse sociocultural changes, where the city itself has developed into a symbol of tourism consumption (Atsu, 2016). As I demonstrated in chapter four, my observations during the Calabar Festival revealed how specific cultural elements like costumes and artefacts are commodified that they became simply branded souvenirs.

Additionally, community ties are affected as family homes are adapted to accommodate tourists in order to generate money, thereby replacing local daily life with tourist-oriented businesses that cater to the festival and its tourists' demands. Similarly, aspects of rituals like dance, music and masquerade performances are commodified that their traditionally-associated meanings become blurred. This finding reinforces the contributions of Hall (1994) and Greenwood (1977) who insist that mass commercialisation of souvenirs standardises quality and destroys cultural meanings. Thus, by converting everything into tourism products for sale, commodification strengthens the fetishism of culture (Harvey, 1989) that emerges during market exchange. Apparently, when culture becomes a performance for tourists, it alters the dynamics of the cultural environment to accommodate and gratify their needs. Nevertheless, I argue that the convergence of these findings about commodification in a particular setting ultimately suggests that commodification can neither be classified as good nor bad, but a processual form of culture itself, and cultural agency. This argument echoes the ideas of Cohen (1988) who maintained (in chapter two) that commodification actually introduces fresh cultural perspectives to people instead of denigrating cultural values.

A fourth finding demonstrates that identity in the Calabar Festival is a hybridised form of transnational cultural expressions constructed in a local setting. This is also understood as the outcome of circuitous power dynamics where the intersection of globalisation and localisation, production and consumption have opened up spaces for the innovation of new negotiated cultural identities at destinations. I have demonstrated this claim in chapters four and five through interview extracts. For example, an official of CRS Tourism Bureau quoted in chapter four confirmed that the Calabar Festival has been redesigned like “...*world city festivals like London, Brazil, Spain, Trinidad, and Tobago, Venice, New Orleans, and so many others, is what we have combined and fixed into our local festival....*” (OR 3- Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020). The analysis of this comment revealed that identity is co-created like Du Gay et al (ibid) suggested. Destination producers prioritised the blending of cultural identities so that tourists would have a wider selection of consumption choices. Although scholars (such as Friedman, 1999; Teo and Lim, 2003) have expressed that increased cultural hybridisation can erode cultural uniqueness and standardise societies, this finding is consistent with Bhabha’s (2012 and 1994) hybridity theorisation, which argues that new forms of identity politics and politics of difference is one of the current changes of our time. In Bhabha’s new politics, the binary categorisation of ‘us/them’ and ‘self/Other’ previously associated with hybridity is too narrow to understand evolving social realities, thus, the idea of hybridity comes to displace the domains of difference, to create a cultural newness. But while the Calabar Festival has adopted cultural hybridisation as a strategy to create a sense of belonging and of a shared human identity for all, it created a frame for contestation among many groups (see chapter five). Yet, in an increasingly globalised world, understandings of culture remain fluid and contested.

In applying my neo-circuit of culture framework, to understand these negotiations, this study adds new conceptual knowledge by advancing the concept of ‘cultural co-coloniality’. The concept provides a renewed understanding of the world as an entity formed on synergy instead of domination, by forging a hybridised space for the co-construction of situated cultural meanings. In chapter Five, I demonstrated how a combination of artists from different countries constructed a joint artistic performance that has now become a conventional practice in the Calabar Festival. As such, the Calabar Festival has shown the cultural co-coloniality as a key element of tourism practices, demonstrating how cultural knowledge can be jointly formed within a particular tourism setting in ways that challenge the established structures of race, power, and euro-centred modernity. My work contributes to furthering understandings of how festivals in particular are naturalised arenas that (re)form new relationships and socio-cultural practices as experiences are constantly adjusted to suit actual realities (Quinn, 2005).

Following discussions of my key empirical findings in relation to my proposed neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework and its theoretical implications, I will now move to present the proposed updated revision of Du Gay et al (ibid) which I termed “the neo-circuit of cultural tourism” model and its value. The revised model incorporates key concepts of power and curation, within which the model allows the framing of tourists as modern cultural curators and therefore as active agents in the relations of power. Also, elements of cultural hybridisation, commodification, and the development of entrepreneurial culture are seen as outcomes of all the intersected cultural processes as shown below.



**Figure 18: The neo-circuit of cultural tourism model**

source: Author

**6.2.1 The value and application of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism framework: A revision of Du Gay et al.'s (1997) model.**

As has already been shown in chapter two, the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model recognises cultural tourism as a relational process - particularly linking policy, practice and cultural processes with stakeholders and power relations. The interconnections are indicated by the use of double-edged pointers. Each of the edges in the pointers (Fig. 18) evaluated the relationships

within and across the themes in the model. The use of a double-edged pointer also implies the incorporation of diverse concepts that have not been connected earlier (Maxwell, 2005), in the case of this model, cultural curation and power relations.

The key advantage of the conceptual model is that it provides an enhanced understanding of cultural tourism in city destinations, and it assists in simplifying the complex relationships in a changing political, economic and socio-cultural environmental context. Miles and Huberman (1994:18) observed that the main function of the conceptual model is to “explain, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied - the key factors, concepts, or variables - and the presumed relationships among them”. Therefore, a conceptual model can help researchers to simplify the many complex elements and relationships involved in urban cultural tourism, to clarify the different elements involved, to consider the relationships between the phenomenon being studied and the wider context, to examine the connections and relationships between the elements, and to evaluate the relevance of the model’s simplifications and explanations in different contexts (Pearce, 2014; Xin, Tribe and Chambers, 2013). The conceptual model developed in this study adopted a relational perspective, and it integrated specific elements- power and curation into the existing theoretical model of Du Gay et al.’s “circuit of culture” (1997) model. Du Gay et al.’s model helped in explaining how culture works in modern societies and how stakeholders are interconnected within a circuit of interaction, where they co-produce culture and influence cultural processes mutually. Such a relational approach was a helpful tool for investigating tourism stakeholders ‘interactions, and uncovering the types, and patterns, of their power relations in the Calabar Festival context.

The neo-circuit of cultural tourism model however, demonstrates the interconnectedness of stakeholders in cultural processes. Like Du Gay, my framework suggests the intertwining of producers and consumers as co-actors in creating situated cultural meanings through

representations, identity construction, productions, regulation, consumption and curating of culture, but within a continual negotiation of power Pearce (2013). Johnson (1986) argues that the values of cultural resources are constantly disseminated and converted in production and consumption and lived cultures across geographical and historical settings. My framework may assist in understanding these dynamisms of time, space and power. Clearly, from the drawing, power is centrally positioned and all the elements cut across power diversely. More often than not, the state and enterprise are thought to wield economic and political power to overpower others towards their own interests. However, evidence from interview, observations and policy documents report about the Calabar Festival demonstrates that, the politics of cultural tourism involves diverse power relations and endless negotiations among people, who exploit cultural values, aesthetic and economic fundamentals to influence the outcomes of relationships with others (see Ateljevic 2000). Nevertheless, as destinations are increasingly attempting to respond to the preferences and demands of their diverse tourists/consumers through commodification, it was also found that they have become more inclusive of varied viewpoints, reciprocal relationships, networks of exchanges, that decentralises local power dynamics by being sensitive of people's rights to participate in determining how their cultures are represented and curated. Thus, through consumption, tourists take part in the production and conservation of culture, as well as in the circulation of cultural knowledge, their consumption and readings of culture feed back into local lived culture, and in particular forms to represent local social relation. Yet, the modifications and conversions in culture feeds into local cultural conservation policies and practice, while the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model recognises the active ability of diverse stakeholders to modify and undermine meanings, it intertwines tourists as curators of culture.

The application of this model specifically to the Calabar Festival was essential to evaluate its validity to that specific event, in order to understand the complexities and dynamic processes of cultural tourism, and the possible broader applicability. The study findings revolved around the general themes in the adapted Du Gay et al.'s model (Fig 2.1), however, few specific sub-themes bordering on Cross River state's unique environmental situations came up. These included themes of the development of entrepreneurial culture, commodification and cultural hybridisation as outcomes of circuitous power dynamics in tourism development. In light of data collection through interviews, observation, and other secondary data for the research, these sub-themes were further analysed and advanced. It was important to ensure that the sub-themes that emerged, evolved according to the unique conditions of the Calabar Festival. This analytical technique contributed to a new understanding of cultural tourism in a particular event and demonstrated the model's applicability to the specific case study. Applying the model through the Calabar Festival event context therefore provides fresh conceptual and empirical insights into this under-examined aspect of power and curation, which can be used in studying interaction patterns, critical practices and structures that permit the shared construction of cultural realities and their wider implications in a globalised and ever-changing world.

### **6.3.2 Policy implication and recommendations**

This research provides an enhanced understanding of cultural tourism processes and stakeholders' power dynamics in the production and consumption of culture within a specific cultural tourism event. Grounded on international, national and local relationships, the findings may contribute to effective policy making. As Edgell (1990), which I highlighted in chapter two argued, the highest purpose of tourism policy is to integrate the economic, political, cultural and intellectual benefits of tourism cohesively with people, destinations and countries, to improve the global quality of life and provide a foundation for peace and prosperity. It is clear from the work presented here that culture is now an integral aspect of urban development

policy in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. Therefore, there is a significant benefit of understanding cultural events' processes from Edgell's outlook. This provides a perspective that does not focus exclusively on the established benefits of tourism and economic outcomes, rather, one that also evaluates the kind of governance (Harvey, 2001, in chapter two) that has been adopted to achieve such events. Importantly, Edgell's perspective permits understanding of how various stakeholders engage with power relations in cultural processes and the circuitous outcome of such interactions on culture and the cultural event.

The findings here, demonstrate the intricate ways cultural tourism processes can decentralise local power dynamics through reciprocal relationships and systems of exchange that allow diverse stakeholders, including tourists, to participate in determining how local cultures are curated and consumed. Based on the evidence provided here, this research may be beneficial for the enactment of policy since it employs a relational framework to understand the social process that can enhance understandings of policy implementation process (Krutwyscho and Bramwell, 2010) and their, which are influenced and shaped by different tourism stakeholders. This approach can permit policymakers and local communities' representatives to identify the factors and challenges against effective policy implementation and to moderate possible conflicts between hosts and tourists, while promoting favourable environment for collaboration and sustainable development practices (McComb, 2016). It has been demonstrated that strategic alliance among diverse stakeholders is important for sustainable cultural tourism practices, such as preserving culture and heritage resources, satisfying the expanding tourists' taste, and improving the lives of local communities (for example, empowering local creativity and innovations, provision of basic amenities, and improved participation in tourism industry). Thus, the understanding of different forms of power relations among stakeholders can also aid destinations to develop practical approaches to how culture can be sustainably exploited, by initiating programmes which promote healthy alliances, strengthen the interconnections among



stakeholders, and establish successful systems of communication (Robertson, 2011; Novelli et al., 2006).

Furthermore, there have been significant shifts in the field of curatorial practice, which has now become a multidimensional practice, flexible and constantly changing (Richards, 2020). This research reinforces the importance of cultural curation as a practice, but from a novel perspective. The earlier notions that a museum curator is solely responsible for preserving a place's culture is not entirely an accurate representation of who a curator is, in light of recent discussions about how tourists can contextualise cultures (O'Neil, 2013) and the multitude of cross-cultural interactions, and global conversations (Cornelissen, 2017). These contexts have set frameworks empowering tourists to participate in situated power frameworks that shape how local cultures are curated (Kreps, 2008). With the complexity of the modern curatorial practice sustained by tourism and the numerous local and external stakeholder groups usually implicated in cultural tourism circuits and exchanges, this study has implications for practitioners to understand curation dynamics outside the institutional context (particularly of museums) but on collaborative exchanges among stakeholders, to better understand the modern systems of cultural production, conservation and knowledge dissemination.

The application of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model permits the recognition of power across key stakeholders (government officials, tourists and locals) in the Calabar Festival circuits of tourism interaction. It is suggested that these stakeholders are embedded with different forms of power because of their competencies in knowledge, bargaining and economic capital. Particularly, this study will be helpful to locals, who work as custodians of ancient cultural heritage at destinations. According to the findings of this study, these locals can have a significant impact on the preservation of cultural uniqueness through the development of entrepreneurial abilities to self-manage culture and heritage assets. It is crucial

that these custodians actively participate in the transfer and dissemination of cultural knowledge to assist in increasing tourism and enhancing the attractiveness of the event and its city. In addition, this study also highlights the possible harm that the introduction of quick social and economic growth may cause to the preservation of cultural assets. Excess commoditisation of cultural assets might necessarily undermine the unique cultural worth of these resources, substituting many unique ancient traits and practices with standardised automated production. Locals ought to be continuously involved in the strategic development of cultural tourism, to enhance the productivity and profitability of utilising local resources and to mitigate the adverse effects of tourism events on local cultural sphere. Through these approaches, all tourism stakeholders are properly represented in cultural processes, and can profit from cultural tourism. Thus, this research can be used in studying interaction patterns, critical practices and structures that permit the shared construction of cultural realities in a globalised and ever-changing world.

Additionally, this research adds a cross cultural and relational approach to cultural tourism development. Even though such an approach might be different in diverse geographic contexts, however, the dynamic political, economic, and socio-cultural environment of Calabar, can provide insights on ways to foster new types of collaborations in strategy, development, marketing, and the management of financial resources for the Calabar Festival and other destinations. Thus, understanding the interaction of people and the embedded power dynamics will serve to create a balance between the protection of interests of the culture and tourism industries, the stakeholders affected by tourism, and to provide a plan for action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. Also, since all the actors are considered as to how they influence each other's decision-making, it might also serve to forecast possible implications that changes would have on the different stakeholders and how they might be affected by these changes. In advancing the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model, the

inclusiveness of key stakeholders, considering their influence on the cultural environment where they operate within a framework, allows for an enhanced analysis of the processes of cultural tourism development and its implicit power relations that shape and are shaped by it. Yet, despite the implications discussed, there are limitations that should be considered in assessing the study findings.

#### **6.4 Study limitations and direction for future research**

This study has analysed the nature of power relations among cultural tourism stakeholders in a specific case study namely, the Calabar Festival. In particular, the relational approach constitutes both interaction and conflicts in tourism development. First, this study analysed the dynamic interaction between stakeholders in the production and consumption of culture in the Calabar Festival. The research analysed three key categories of stakeholders involving the (Cross River) State government, tourists and locals. Within these groups, several micro-groups and clusters were merged (for example, local performers, creatives, community leaders, local private enterprises and cultural intermediaries, were categorised as locals). As I discussed in chapter 2, Hall (2000) argued that the fragmented character of the tourism sector necessitates the identification of stakeholders, their networks, and partners. However, this thesis does not accord much attention to the analysis of sub-networks as separate entities, including the formal and informal ones. Particularly, in cities like Calabar where the borders of commodification and tourism politicisation is indistinct, it is important that micro-processes and groups are recognised in policy-making and discussions around power relations. Further research might be required to provide insights into the involvement of various micro groups and networks (such as tour guides, agricultural, manufacturing, aviation and transport sectors and others). Similarly, within the tourist's category, this research paid more attention to tourists from the national and international levels. This does not suggest that local people could not be cultural tourists, rather the inclusion of locals as tourists tended to open up series of vast questions

concerning what and who a tourist is, which is not the central focus of my research enquiry. Because part of this research is to analyse how tourists curate culture, it was important to give more attention to outsiders. Analysis of locals as tourists can further be developed in the future, perhaps, through a comparative analysis of other classes of tourists.

Second, the gendered sphere of production and consumption received little analytical consideration in this study of the Calabar Festival. During my field work, the processes of data collection revealed some obvious indicators of gender disparities and dominance both in official positions and practice. I briefly talked about how gendered performances might harness the power of the feminine body (Yta, 2020) in Chapter five when female performers' bodies were envisioned through exotic and sexualised attires and then objectified in tourists' photos and observations. However, it may be possible for future research to examine the ways in which festivals and other cultural tourism events provide gendered and romanticised representations of power that can help to integrate history with culture and reality with fantasy.

A third limitation is associated with the practical application of the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model and the concept of cultural co-coloniality, in wider inter-national contexts. This research revised Du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture model to advance a 'neo-circuit of cultural tourism model' and, like the concept of cultural co-coloniality, I assessed its practical application through the Calabar Festival context. However, while the themes might be generally practicable, the sociocultural, political and environmental factors particular to Calabar, might be different in other places/events, the phenomenon of cultural tourism cannot quickly be isolated from these situated contexts. Due to the variable factors influencing the Calabar Festival in a dynamic process, it was practical to choose only a single case study, however, the model may be further applied to several other cases in Africa or globally. More so, it was outside the scope and resources of the current study to study how tourists curate

cultures online, more research is required in that aspect, especially given their propensity to share cultural elements in online forum in a globally connected world.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This thesis has analysed the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria in relation to the interconnections between people, power and culture in the Calabar Festival. The thesis establishes that cultural tourism politics involves the dynamic interaction of people from different geographical contexts, with culture and embedded in complex power relations. My analysis of the relational interaction between stakeholders in diverse sectors, such as the government, local communities, cultural and tourism sectors has highlighted how these interactions are grounded in the shared goals of gratifying tourists' needs by creating unique tourism experiences and building a successful tourism economy. This relational interaction also means that all stakeholders constitute each other to create a shared cultural space in which meanings are created, shaped, modified and recreated (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). Within the context, I observed how the intersection of stakeholders in the tourism circuit and their co-creation of cultural meanings blurs the boundaries of established forms of cultural agency particularly in relation to cultural curation, where tourists currently perform as modern cultural curators. Also, in analysis of tourism power dynamics, sociology, culture and tourism scholarship have tended to highlight the unbalanced power binaries involving, for example, powerful tourists and disempowered locals (Smith, 1989), gazers and the gazed upon (Urry, 1992); dominant and the dominated (Gibson et al., 2006), but not the co-creation/co-curation of tourist events and practices by key stakeholders. However, recognising a cultural perspective on politics and power, this research has shown that through a circuitous relationship, all the different stakeholders actively exert different forms of power over the other in ways that influence cultural meanings and determine tourism outcomes. Hence the neo-circuit of cultural tourism model offered a valuable means to understand how cultural tourism can be a driving

force that shapes situated culture and power dynamics by setting the contexts for new relational frameworks that influence cultural processes.

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## **Appendix**

### **Appendix 1: List of policy and promotion documents**

- 1) Cross River Tourism Bureau (2006). A Tourism Master Plan for Cross River State.
- 2) Nigerian Tourism masterplan (2006). Cross River Tourism Bureau (2006). A Tourism Master Plan for Nigeria.
- 3) The best of Carnival Calabar (2008). Carnival Calabar Magazine. A publication of the Cross River State Carnival Commission.
- 4) Cross River Tourism Bureau (2008). Pre -event Brochure. Calabar, Teemwok.
- 5) Cross River State Strategic Policy Advisory Committee (CRS-SPAC), (2009) Cross River Vision 2020 (2009 -2020).
- 6) Calabar Festival brochure (2013) 8<sup>th</sup> edition of Calabar Festival.
- 7) Cross River State Tourism Bureau (2012). Calabar Festival /Carnival statistical report
- 8) Cross River State Tourism Bureau (2013). Calabar Festival /Carnival statistical report
- 9) Cross River State Tourism Bureau (2014). Calabar Festival /Carnival statistical report
- 10) Cross River State Tourism Bureau (2016). Calabar Festival /Carnival statistical report
- 11) Explore Cross River, CRS tourism and investment footprint 2016-2017. Maiden edition.
- 12) Cross River State Bureau of statistics, 2018.
- 13) Destination Cross River: The Nation's Paradise (2017).

## **Appendix 2: Research Participant Information Sheet**

**Study title:** The politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria: People, culture and power in the Calabar Festival.

### **Research Participant Information**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me, if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether you wish to take part or not.

### **What is the purpose of the study?**

Overall, this research project aims to investigate the politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria, by examining the dynamic interaction of the (Cross River State) government, locals and tourists in the production and consumption of culture, through the annual Calabar Festival. This study seeks to analyse the nature of interaction, and power relations between these key stakeholders in cultural tourism processes, and interrogate how culture is produced, negotiated and consumed within the specific tourism setting. The research will involve interviews, participant observation and the collection of documents related to cultural tourism in the city, and the Calabar Festival in particular, which are meant to enhance objective responses and valid information. I will appreciate if you would provide me the necessary assistance during this

research, such as with being interviewed or providing relevant information. The results from this study might also be used in academic publications and policy debates.

### **Why have I been chosen?**

You are invited to take part in this study because you have been identified as a key actor in the cultural tourism sector and will have knowledge about my research data. You therefore qualify to represent the category of selected sample.

### **Do I have to take part?**

As participation is entirely voluntary, it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If at any time you choose to opt out, you are free to withdraw, and without giving a reason. Your participation or lack thereof, will in no way affect your performance and evaluation in this study.

### **What do I have to do?**

If you decide to be involved in the study, you will be interviewed for approximately one hour and it will be audio recorded. The total period of the research will last for about three years. During this time, I may get in touch with you again for a repeat interview, if need be. The interviews will be carried out in your office, at a café, the stadium, or in a place which is convenient for you. You will be asked a series of questions about your experiences, involvement and influences in the Calabar Festival. You will also be asked whether you are happy to share them for academic publications.

### **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

I do not anticipate that any risk should be brought to you by taking part in the study.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Some of the results of the study may become part of academic publications which you will be made aware of. You will not be identified in any report or publication. If you wish to be given a copy of any reports resulting from the research, please ask me to put you on my circulation list.

### **What if something goes wrong?**

If you would like to complain about any aspect of the study please contact the Chair of the principal investigator's College Research Ethics Committee at Brunel University, Prof. Peter Hobson; The secretary is Ms Kate Dunbar. They can be contacted by e-mailing: [res-ethics@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:res-ethics@brunel.ac.uk).

### **Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

All information which is collected about/from you during the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified or identifiable in any reports or publications. With your permission, any data collected about/from you in the interview will be stored online in a form protected by passwords and other relevant security processes and technologies. Data collected may be shared in an anonymised form to allow reuse by other researchers and individuals.

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

Data collected during this research may be used for policy regulations and academic publications.

### **Who is organising and funding the research?**

This research project is being run and funded by the researcher.

**Who has reviewed the study?**

The study has gained ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee at Brunel University London.

Brunel University London is committed to compliance with the Universities UK [Research Integrity Concordat](#). You are entitled to expect the highest level of integrity from our researchers during their research. Further information can be found on the Brunel research integrity webpage.

**Many thanks for taking part in this study.**

**Contacts and emails for Further Information and Complaints:**

Dr Monica Degen, Reader in cultural sociology - [monica.degen@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:monica.degen@brunel.ac.uk)

And

The Chair of the College of Business Arts and social sciences Research Ethics Committee,  
Brunel University London email: [CBASS-ethics@brunel](mailto:CBASS-ethics@brunel)



### Appendix 3: Research consent form



College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences  
 Department of Social Sciences, Media and Communication

#### CONSENT FORM

The participant should complete the whole of this sheet		
	<i>Please tick the appropriate box</i>	
	YES	NO
Have you read the Research Participant Information Sheet?		
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?		
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions?		
Who have you spoken to?		
Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning the study?		
Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study:		
• at any time?		
• without having to give a reason for withdrawing?		
I agree to my interview being recorded.		
I agree to the use of non-attributable direct quotes when the study is written up or published.		
Do you agree to take part in this study?		
Do you give the researcher permission to grant Brunel University London the recording of any interview or other data gathered for the research?		
Do you agree to share any of the data gathered from you during the interview for academic publications?		

Signature of Research Participant:
Date:
Name in capitals:

Researcher name: Obijuru Clementina C	Signature:
Supervisor name: Monica Degen	Signature:

## Appendix 4: Ethical approval letter



College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
Brunel University London  
Kingston Lane  
Uxbridge  
UB8 3PH  
United Kingdom  
[www.brunel.ac.uk](http://www.brunel.ac.uk)

2 January 2020

### **CONDITIONAL LETTER OF APPROVAL**

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 02/01/2020 AND 01/10/2020

Applicant (s): Miss Clementina Obijuru

Project Title: The politics of cultural tourism in Nigeria

Reference: 13747-MHR-Dec/2019- 22557-1

Dear Miss Clementina Obijuru

The Research Ethics Committee has considered the above application recently submitted by you.

The Chair, acting under delegated authority has agreed that there is no objection on ethical grounds to the proposed study. Approval is given on the understanding that the conditions of approval set out below are followed:

- **Please note the dates above during which this approval is valid.**
- The agreed protocol must be followed. Any changes to the protocol will require prior approval from the Committee by way of an application for an amendment.

#### Please note that:

- Research Participant Information Sheets and (where relevant) flyers, posters, and consent forms should include a clear statement that research ethics approval has been obtained from the relevant Research Ethics Committee.
- The Research Participant Information Sheets should include a clear statement that queries should be directed, in the first instance, to the Supervisor (where relevant), or the researcher. Complaints, on the other hand, should be directed, in the first instance, to the Chair of the relevant Research Ethics Committee.
- Approval to proceed with the study is granted subject to receipt by the Committee of satisfactory responses to any conditions that may appear above, in addition to any subsequent changes to the protocol.
- The Research Ethics Committee reserves the right to sample and review documentation, including raw data, relevant to the study.
- You may not undertake any research activity if you are not a registered student of Brunel University or if you cease to become registered, including abeyance or temporary withdrawal. As a deregistered student you would not be insured to undertake research activity. Research activity includes the recruitment of participants, undertaking consent procedures and collection of data. Breach of this requirement constitutes research misconduct and is a disciplinary offence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Gallear'.

Professor David Gallear

Chair of the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Brunel University London

## **Appendix 5: A sample of Interview Transcription (OR 8)**

**Timing: 1hr, 9mins.**

**Q1: First thing I would like to ask you about is, could you tell me a little about your organisation's connection with the Calabar Festival and your individual role in it?**

**OR 8:** As you may be aware of, the Cross River State Carnival commission was set up by the State Law, Number 4 of 2006 to regulate and make carnival culture a thriving tourist, cultural and commercial enterprise in Cross River state. Without going into much details about the laws governing our establishment, it is important to know that my commission is responsible for planning, organising and marketing the Calabar Carnival as a government activity. We find sponsorship and bargain partnerships, obtain marketing rights, and promote the carnival. Erm, we also ensure that we maintain quality standards in the delivery of the Calabar Carnival, my commission organises a post-carnival interactive forum, bringing both the organisers and the participants together to discuss procedures and processes, which are aimed at mitigating operational tensions and challenges. Erm, my individual role? Well, my role has metamorphosed in time past. 2000 I was a mere band member in one of the bands and, 2005, I was still a member of the band. Ok, 2000 I was into the planning because the festival was organised from the governor's office. So, I was into the planning of the festival from that direction. 2005 we had carnival bands. So, I became a member of the carnival band. And then 2006 I was being brought into the carnival commission. Now, what we do is to build it, organise it and promote it. So, I was inculcated into the administrative arm of this commission and since 2006, I have been in this carnival commission and I have also risen to manage information and communication units of the carnival commission. I also do a little bit of media and publicity and marketing.

**Q2: We often get to hear that the Calabar is the cultural hub of Nigeria, and I was just eager to know how is it possible for Calabar to carve a niche for itself in the tourism sector in Nigeria (b) What characterises the tourism image of Calabar?**

**OR 8:** Basically, in the year 2000, as the country returned back to democracy rule, we figured out that we have this, imbibed in us, a character of warmth that we receive people with open heart, we receive people with a welcome approach that everybody talks about, even with less to offer in terms of infrastructure, people come and feel at home in Cross River State. So, we now said, okay, how can we make this our city as our low-hanging fruit to utilise, to promote the economic fortune of the state. So, we first of all looked into our yearly Christmas activities, which has its different rhythms in the centre of songs and performances in years past, years back to the 18th century where it picked out Cross Riverians, especially the Efik extraction does not joke with Christmas. So, we chose to metamorphose this process or this practice into a festival and that was how we had the Calabar Festival. And then in doing the Calabar Festival, we looked at the cultural components of our states and our nation at large. And we discovered that if we package what we have and tell the world about it, it's gonna be phenomenal in terms of boosting the economic fortune of our people. And of course, if you, if you have listened or you are a good student of history, you will know that we have cuisines that is very exceptional in Nigeria. We take advantage of our climate, then the vegetables we have in abundance in this area of the state, across the state in totality, and we do good cuisines. So, people come to Cross River before now, before the emergence of, or before the intention of tourism came to us for two things, to have that peace of mind and to have good cuisines. So, we put all these together in a one-month festival. Initially it was just a parade where we do carry our potentials, we create them in artefacts in terms of arts and sculptures and the rest and parade them across the city and let people know that this is what we have in Cross River, and then get tourist to see it and then create excitement around it. And then this metamorphosed to what we call now the

Calabar Festival which was Christmas Festival initially. So, in doing this, we discovered that it was also generating a ripple effects on the economy where hotels are booked out, where people go out to extend their homes to guest houses for that period. And then we discovered that there was inflow of investors in terms of building hotels and all of that. So, it automatically boosts the economic potential of the state and we introduced Tourism Development levy which now of course increased our IGR. So, we knew that we had the content all what we did in year 2000 was to repackage the content, from cuisines to the cultural displays and to our warmth, in other words, the way we welcome people from the airport, from the park, you can see, people talk differently here. So, that's what we capitalised on to make ourselves uniquely stand out in Nigeria and of course to the world.

**Q 3. The Calabar Festival is considered to be a cultural event, what does culture mean to you?**

Okay, culture as we popularly know, is a way of life, the customs and characteristics which distinguishes people from others. Erm, for me, culture is also the inherited traditions from our forebearers, those traditions that have been passed down to generations including values, arts, music, folklores, dressing, morals, norms and belief systems. In fact, culture is everything about a people.

**Q 4: How do you decide what is produced as culture in the Calabar Festival?**

Like I said earlier, we look at the cultural components of our states and our nation at large, and we also work closely with the cultural industries and tourism ministries, agencies, and parastatals to come up with ideas and events that we think best represents our vision. The main focus is the uniqueness of our culture that can provide exciting tourism experiences for tourists. Each community chooses and develops specific activities according to our cultural trait and

potentials. What we do as a government is to consolidate the needs of tourists and demands of our local communities to put the festival together, that way, we ensure that the interests of all parties involved are to some extent, well represented. In fact, the unique thing about organising this festival is that we all come together to agree on what to put out there. For example, in performances, costumes and design of floats, we let the people choose how they want to perform their locality, then we package them as commercial tourism products so that we can reap the benefits of tourism. First, in doing so, we pay greater attention to promoting products and events that reflect the traditional values of our people. But we mix the traditional and the modern to achieve contemporary aesthetics, mainly with the goal of meeting modern tourism demands. Also, we make sure that it is rooted in the demands of the local people. As a matter of fact, we do not take the domineering power of our local communities for granted. Many times, we allow them take the lead and make certain decisions otherwise you will find that they are always disputing many decisions when they feel it is not in their interest. But, then on another note, I would say that to an extent, tourists influence the type of cultural experiences we offer. I said that because one thing we also discovered is that, when they come, they give us the challenge for our local people to understand that you have to stir up, people are actually taking their cultures very important, so we see that expression of value in terms of what they bring and how they protect it. We invite people from all over the world and the thirty-six states of the federation, sometimes two different cultures in each state to come and perform in the Calabar Festival. Some even bring masquerades which is their cultural symbol, and they protect their masquerades from being devalued. So, it also makes us actually cherish our own, what we do here, even when we try to modernise it, make it loose to the modern aesthetics. Sometimes, we seem to lose those artefacts that come with traditional images or traditional costumes. So, in that way, it has a way of influencing our cultural production, but I think we've

not lost totally the originality of our content. So, in all of these, you can see that when it has to do with deciding what to produce, we are always influencing each other in some ways.

**Q 4: What is the nature of relationship you/your organisation have with other stakeholders, in constructing the Calabar Festival as a cultural tourism attraction?**

**OR 8:** It is mainly cordial, I would say a symbiotic relationship. Like I have already explained, in planning the Calabar Festival, we collaborate with each other in many ways because it is not an event that my commission alone or only the ministry of culture and tourism can plan. It is a collective effort, so while we depend on each other, we also influence each other in several ways, either through policy regulations, say for the government, you can also talk of resource control by the local communities, or interests and embedded purchasing power of tourists can also influence certain workable decisions.

**(b): You mentioned collaboration, what are the benefits of the collaboration?**

**OR 8:** Yes, with the collaboration of people, departments, and sectors in tourism development, there's mutual benefit for all parties involved. So, in the first instance, the government can achieve its goal of attracting more investments, which is hoped to crystallise into social development. Over the years, the government has learned that the involvement of private sector organisations can bring about tangible social and economic development. Our local economy is built on tourism, so through tourism activities, the government strives to attract investments to stimulate development. But having realised that no real development can be achieved solely by the government, the government puts up policies, industrial management and other services in order to build up stakeholders' cooperation platform and also create a healthy business environment for the private sector organisations. For example, the state has quite some liberal regulations on hotel operations, land use, tax, bank loans, financial resources, technology and talent resources in order to support the private sector organisations who do business in Cross

River state as a whole. Second, sponsors like the DSTV, we don't pay them to cover the festival for one month. They come to do it as part of banter, banter in the sense that they take the content for free, they sell it to their consumers, they make money while we get visibility for what they do. So, we don't need to pay you to get content that you're not paying for. That is part of what I mean by mutual benefit. We engage these media as partners and sponsors, we give them a sense of shared ownership, and these organisations develop confidence to invest and develop further. Also, in our case, these media outfits help to attract investors and more tourists who come to spend their money here. Then, their spending trickles down to development in terms of local infrastructural development, social capital, job creation and a lot more. So, local communities are always on the receiving end of development, and we cannot overlook a good relationship with locals.

**Q 5: Are there conflict of interests between you?**

**OR 8:** Do you mean between the Calabar Festival organisers and the sponsors?

**I mean between the various stakeholders, the officials, organisers and sponsors, locals and tourists included.**

**OR 8:** Well, first of all, for government departments and agencies in Cross River, being harmonious and avoiding conflicts is a key principle. But that does not mean that from time to time, you do not experience some form of opposition and clash of interests especially in setting regulations and planning the festival. For example, we, as a commission, that is the Calabar Carnival Commission, are interested in promoting a carnival culture in Calabar through the Calabar Festival and of course, with a mix of modern aesthetics, on the other hand, the ministry of culture and heritage might be mostly interested in promoting and showcasing undiluted aspects of local cultural relics, so, in the same way, the tourism industry might be primarily concerned with attracting tourists and all that. Remember as I said, our local communities are



always on our necks, when they believe certain workable decisions do not represent their interest. These are all strong bases for conflict which we have seen several times. So, there cannot be many vested interests without opposing views. Then, when we consider that all of us share a common goal which is to attract investments, generate revenues and boost local development, we consolidate our different interests and negotiate a compromise. Where the government can, they persuade. So, yes, there are conflict of interests but the government does well in balancing the many interests well to avoid actual conflicts.

**Q 6: How much power do you/your organisation have over the activities of the Calabar Festival (do you influence decisions in the culture and tourism systems, if yes, how)?**

**OR 8:** How much power do I have? I work under the dictates of my commission, I only have as much power as the commission has bestowed on my office as the head of information. Erm, like I have just said, the thing about the Calabar Festival is that coordinating its activities is a collective one, you can't say one department has absolute power to control what happens. Let's just say there is division of labour because the whole process requires expert opinions and inputs from different departments and organisations. Some departments or groups might have more power in administrative rights and responsibilities, others may be considered more powerful in operational efficiency, or funding structures. So, for my commission, I think we have significant power to regulate, or I would rather say, navigate the operations of the carnival aspect of the Calabar Festival. So, as a major component of the Calabar Festival, we have the expert knowledge to coordinate its operations. Many of us are tourism consultants with international networks and we work in partnership with other experts including most cultural organisations in the city and beyond Nigeria, we put people together to deliver things, so when it comes to the carnival specifically, we have the power of execution. The floats, the costumes,

the parades, the everything, we plan, organise and direct whatever happens during the carnival.

What was the second bit of your question?

**(b) Do you influence decisions in the culture and tourism systems in Calabar, if yes, how?**

Okay, like I said, we have the power of execution for the Carnival Calabar which is famous for attracting tourists to the Calabar Festival. In mapping out the activities, our decisions are often accepted by the local people and the state because they believe in our expert abilities to deliver successfully, and we have been delivering. You can see that, if you check the records, the number of tourists attending the Carnival Calabar have grown progressively every year, probably because we package unique experiences each year. It means there's something we are doing right that everybody is happy with, so it's not shocking that the government, the tourists, commercial enterprises, cultural industries and the local people trust our judgement. So, we can be influenced by others in several ways, it can be through funding, for example, apart from our sponsors and partners, state funding goes a long way in helping us successfully execute the event, but when there is insufficient funding, we might be constrained in some ways, although that situation doesn't always occur, just once or twice so far. We can also be influenced by what tourists want to experience. For example, the Calabar Festival is about showcasing the undiluted culture of the Nigerian people, but then, it is also about creative experiences, otherwise, people may be fed up or overwhelmed from consuming the same form of cultural experiences. So, for us to attract a variety of people in their numbers and for them to keep coming, then, we have to ensure that we creatively appeal to their tourism needs, constantly. So, in this case, the state tourism ministry has a unit, the research and statistics department, which collects information directly from tourists as to what they love to experience and what their interests and needs are, then, we include the information into our selection of cultural offers, that is also why I said we engage a collaborative process. So, yes, we influence

decisions through expert knowledge which we have shown over the years, our decisions can also be influenced by others, it's all about creating a balance and negotiating properly.

**Q 7: Are there policy regulations around the organisation of the Calabar Festival?**

Yes, a lot. In fact, I can't start recounting or elaborating on them, but a lot. From the hotels, there are regulations. There are the dos and don'ts for the people selling on the streets. To the people coming to build and to cover the events, there are. For the people who are driving or doing transport companies, there are. So, there are different regulations that cover different activities and moderated and supervised by different government departments. Even the participation in the Carnival Calabar, there are. There are regulations that tells you what to do and how to go about it and there are also other ones we call dos and don'ts. Dos and don'ts are what we try to push into the hands of almost every traveller that comes on the street of Calabar for the carnival, especially what to drink and what not to drink, how to dress, what to wear and what not to wear. So, these are all regulations and they're being enforced and managed and supervised by different departments of government.

**(b) In your opinion, do you think either the culture department or the tourism department have more powers and ability than the other to make policies and influence practices associated with cultural tourism in Calabar? And, if they differ, why is that?**

**OR 8:** I think it is better to think of both the cultural and tourism departments as having different capacities and influence that complement each other in terms of policy and practical operations. Tourism requires the involvement of many people with expert decisions from different departments, groups and agencies from national to local levels. So, policy designs are also influenced by these units, and then, for social and economic development of the people. But in practical terms, tourism department might have more influence in implementing and

expanding the tourism industry, with a view to improving the living standard of local communities and ensuring sustainability, rather than more complex issues like the protection of cultural resources and identity. But, the cultural department might have more control over the protection of cultural resources because they have the expert knowledge required to do so. Take for instance, issues relating to museum curation, the conservation of historic monuments and heritages and others, that is the domain of the culture department. I mean, tourism department might only be interested in generating revenue from these aspects, but not in their preservation. So, if you talk of which department has more power over the other, their power should be clarified based on their actual role, expertise, responsibility, function, and so on. When you look at it critically, you find that the departments are coordinated and influence each other in mutually beneficial ways.

**Q8: How about local communities and tourists, are they involved or do they participate in tourism policy regulations and initiatives of the state?**

Yes, the local communities are duly involved, usually, they participate in policy making through the various traditional authorities who serve as middle men. So, what these traditional authorities do is to consult with local community members, ascertain their demands and stance on certain decisions, and communicate to the government. For example, a review of the tourism masterplan is in the pipeline, the leaders of each Cross River state community are required to produce a detailed report on the tourism demands of their different communities. Then, the ministry of tourism will adopt some of the contents of their reports in reviewing the state tourism masterplan, and according to their order of importance. It is always easier to get the acceptance and support of the local communities for policy developments through this means. For tourists, it may be safe to say that they are indirectly involved in policy plans and implementation. Erm, apart from issues of local sustainability and economic development,

most tourism policies are in reality, targeted at plans and strategies to attract and satisfy tourists, and to influence them to come back. That could serve as participation by tourists too.

**Q9: I understand that the culture and tourism policies, and events of the Calabar Festival seem to be influenced by various factors including different needs, interests and ideologies, but are there particular individuals and/or groups, whose interests influence what is produced as local culture?**

**OR 8:** I would say that the interest of all stakeholders come together in mutually beneficial ways and manifest in what we see in the Calabar Festival. No one can say that only a particular set of individuals or groups influence what is produced because we are all involved. As I have mentioned, we take a lot of factors into account such as how the local communities want to showcase themselves culturally, that is, our different cultural identities. The various traditional authorities would play a lot of roles in what is put forward. We as a government, we put a calendar out and we partner with the traditional institutions who are the influencers. Their desires to win some of the prizes we put across in these activities make them go extra miles to dig out their uniqueness because everything we do in the festival, most of the things we do comes with prizes and judging criteria. So, even the traditional displays come with judging criteria and the carnival itself and even the festival musical artists come to add a way of adjudicating this thing so that people will know that they are not just doing, they are doing it for a prize and in doing this, they bring out the best in them. Also, this strategy even creates wider consumption options for tourists because, by the time Calabar municipal for example, showcases their unique traits, Odukpani community displays their own unique performances, Obanliku, Ikom, Obudu, Yakurr and all the communities perform their uniqueness, you would have ended up providing assorted and exciting experiences for consumers. So, I would say the traditional authorities are the ones that kind of, influence what happens and how it's put

forward, we only moderate and make sure safety is put in place in achieving the festival and all the other modalities, protocols and all of that are put together to have a smooth festival year in year out.

**Q10: So, is it safe to say that these group of people, who can be identified as the culture elites, influence what is produced around the festival?**

**OR 8:** Yes, they influence to some extent what is produced in terms of the traditional contents, the cultural contents. But you know the festival has both the cultural content and we try to also modernise it to what we call the music, local artist both in Nigeria and in Cross River. So, like in the year, between 2006 and 2010, we had major musical artists in Nigeria that produced like the Psquare, the likes of 2face, the likes of D'Banj. They produce music because they know that Calabar Festival is coming and Calabar Festival then, was the biggest musical stage in Nigeria, so you have to produce music because Calabar Festival is coming so that you can be called upon to hit the stage, and we were also privileged to have people like Lucky Dube of blessed memory, we had people like Wyclef Jean, Joe, Fat Joe, Keri Hilson, they all took turns to come to Calabar to perform in this big stage in West Africa they've been told about. And we also had artists like Kev Franklyn, Don Moen, erm, a lot of, erm, what's this other guy's name, Don Williams, you can name it. They came to perform in the stage they heard that in west Africa there's something big happening. So, if we could attract this, you can see that culturally, the traditional institutions are producing contents and influencing the festival in one aspect and the other way round, the creative industry which has to do with artisans, music makers, entertainers you know, are also building up to get advantage or to make the uniqueness of the festival come out. So, they talk about it on social media, they talk about it on their various artisan meetings and all of that, and people say wow, I want to be there and these invites are always welcome and we put the logistics in place to make them make it happen. But on another

note, other factors that influence what is produced are how we can drive revenue out of these series of events, what can attract the tourist consumers and how we can package it to excite them, erm, how the whole thing benefits the local population and we also put in check, how sustainable the practices are on our communities. These are some of the factors that influence cultural production, and how we produce the Calabar Festival.

**Q11: Speaking about the local people, have you ever received any reactions from them in terms of contestations around how their local culture is being performed? What are their reactions and your responses?**

**OR 8:** I think what I would like to say in that aspect is that in as much as we are in the world and there's activity, people will always come to say this and that, and people will always come to say the opposite. As I said, when bringing in cultural perspective into the festival and carnival, we try to work with the traditional authorities because they have their own rules, they have their own perceptions. So, we do not just go straight to performances or picking traditional artists that's just doing our own. No, we involve the traditional institutions who will now bring out what they have. They may have disparity within themselves, probably when funding is released and all of that, but we don't go directly to say we organise it ourselves. We also have a cultural centre, a cultural centre is where people are being trained on different performance dance and all of that and then we try to also work with the cultural centre where we cannot have such performance dance troupe in Cross River State, and we can't also source it outside. What I mean by we can't is that sometimes we invite state and they cannot make it because of probably what they have in their state at that time. Because we don't work directly with people, like I said before we work with government and institutions. So, we send invite to a state, expect them to send it to their traditional institutions who will now bring out this content so we built the cultural centre to try to do a prototype of what should be. So, we do not have much of

a conflict between us and the traditional institutions in terms of our traditional dances and costuming performances. But the other aspect is tourism when you go into a tour site that is located maybe in a remote area, that's where we may have to talk about a little bit of conflict but what we do here is best answered by the Tourism Bureau. They have a strategy to which they do probably by, not probably, they do it by training locals to be tour guards and all of that so that when people come they have people locally who understands what tourism is and will be able to relate between their people and the tourist. So that is a job for the tourism bureau to manage but I can say that I am aware that they have been doing such intervention. We see the rancour and deflection that may have existed between tradition and tourism development or cultural development or cultural practices.

**Q12: Do you think that your tourism dynamics (including power relations, flexible alliances between sectors and groups) have introduced any form of cultural or social changes?**

**OR 8:** Yes, I would say so, first of all, we discovered that there has to be an economy beyond oil. Nigerian economy is driven by oil and totally dependent on oil, now when I mean oil, it's crude oil. So, we discovered that as a state, we are not privileged to have abundance of this, and with continued dependence on federal government, oil will dry out, what else do we have as advantage? What is our best foot forward? What is our low hanging foot? What do people want to see about us? What makes us unique as a people? So, we discovered that tourism is the next big thing for us, and when we liaise with ourselves in terms of the sectors, and partner with outsiders and investors, we can build a stronger economy for ourselves by making tourism a cardinal point in our economic system that drives revenue generation. So, we have been doing that and it has been working for us. We were even able to attract global investors like Dangote group of companies, with its food extracting factory to Cross River State, other investors have



also come to invest in our state. So, what you called flexible alliances have opened up more industrial opportunities for us and importantly, it has awakened the business consciousness among our local people, who were formally nonchalant about running commercial enterprises. Then, apart from the business angle, I would say that our tourism dynamics have brought the world closer to us and taken us to the world, which is a good thing. What I mean is that Calabar is one of the cities in Nigeria where foreigners feel safe and at home, and that has boosted positive global interactions. For example, when we tried taking the Calabar Festival to the world, it was a bit challenging because we were looking at things at the nation, like security challenges, insurgency and kidnapping, but we now said, no let's look at ourselves at the state level. So, in doing so what we first worked on was our state security. Let me give credit to the former governor of Cross River State Donald Duke, because when he came in, he focused on sanitising the state and made sure that Cross River State became the safest city in Nigeria. By that singular effort, it was easier to sell the Calabar Festival to foreigners, who came and saw that the city has a lot of exciting things to offer. We started with Trinidad and Tobago, after we went there, we partnered with them and invited them as consultants to build the MTS and then we called it Middle Term Sector Plan, with the government department all gathered to drive a one full year training and monitoring, to make sure that we set this plan rolling and that's what we've been practicing. Today, you see a lot of foreign countries come to perform in the Calabar Festival, there is nothing like racial intolerance. The beauty in all of this is that such alliances have set the tone, as a powerful socio-political instrument, for intercultural and racial cooperation among the local people and foreign tourists. By the way, the Calabar Festival as it has become, is a race-free zone because racial identities are made fluid and people interact not as different but as humans coexisting and enjoying the essence of life, and learning about each other in a culturally diverse but friendly environment. This is a good example of a less racial

sensitive arena. So yes, the Calabar Festival is pushing the boundaries of race and introducing new ways of understanding the world we live in.

**Q13: In terms of funding, how is the Calabar Festival funded? I understand you work in collaboration with partners and sponsors, what is the structure like?**

**OR 8:** Well, every year we have what we call marketing team. A marketing team is saddled with the responsibility of taking our contents, working in line with government agencies to package it into a sellable and a buyable activity and then we go ahead partnering with interested sponsors who see, who leverage on the huge participation of the festival and carnival, so when this happens, we have sponsorship like the DSTV, which I mentioned earlier, and then other institutions like the Nigerian breweries, Guinness, they take advantage of our Festival Village and all of that, and the banks too. We segment these activities to suit certain corporate entities we know. Like the children's carnival, Dangote has been solely responsible for the children's carnival and he has been sponsoring children's carnival with that because of his drinks, the noodles they do for the children. So, it now takes the burden of funding from us. We have other things like Cadbury Bournvita, Ribena and the rest. They come in to do things that has to do with children's party and the rest. So that's how our funding is segmented. We contract it to a specialised agency, OKHMA, that understand marketing and sponsorship, we will now build the packages which guides different activities we put together and then interfacing with locals, government come in, things like honorarium and the rest could come from government for other local content events and then security comes from government. Safety, the road safety and all these parastatals, department of public transportation, check traffic and all of that. So, it's a partnership that we fund certain activities as a state, and sponsors fund certain activities due to participation and way of creating visibility for their brand.

**Q14: Now let's talk about cultural preservation, do you consider that the relationship between the preservation of cultural resources and their commodification for the Calabar Festival is an advantage, or a disadvantage for local culture?**

**OR 8:** It can go both ways, but I think the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. It is obvious that in many ways cultural resources have been used to drive our aim of building a thriving economy in Calabar, even in ways that promote the preservation of our local culture. Here in Calabar, we prioritise the prudent preservation of cultural resources and artefacts. But apart from the efforts of the culture and heritage department who are the representatives of intangible cultural resources, you would find that many custodians do not keep up with practicing or using their intangible skills because they cannot make a good living off of it; and majority of intangible cultural skills and procedures are outdated by modern technology and social advancement. For example, the Ekpe masquerade performance was a protected social custom in ancient Calabar society, so, it was thought to be governed by the spirits as a supernatural force, and members of the Ekpe cult were said to be messengers of the ancestors. Then, prior to the introduction of the Calabar Festival, we all knew that the stronghold of Christianity made it difficult for the cult to get new recruits because many people thought of it, mostly the new generation thought it was as an archaic practice or some sort. So, what that means is that the old skills and practice might have been forgotten by now. So, when we introduced the Ekpe masquerade as one of our tourism products in the Carnival Calabar, the creative developments that came with it made people to see that there is nothing malicious about it, and to our amazement, many youths became interested in the practice again. So, the Ekpe masquerade practice was revived and that aspect of our intangible heritage was saved, by being given a commodity value. So, you see how the commercialisation of a culture can be an advantage for its preservation?

**Q15: Speaking about curation, it is a concept linked to 3 core cultural practices namely, production, conservation and dissemination of cultural knowledge, from what you have suggested so far, are there any ways that the dynamics around the Calabar Festival, may help to promote the idea of tourists as modern cultural curators?**

**OR 8:** Erm, I would like to think so, in a way because like I said earlier, tourists sometimes challenge us to value and protect our culture from being devalued. So, even though we add creativity, but we still want to preserve our ancient traditions and use it to create new and exciting experiences for tourists. This interpretation may not always be clear and easily decoded but it is imaginable. Also, when they come, they take pictures of their experiences or make videos and circulate on social media, they unconsciously sell us to a wider audience who might also key into the vision of visiting and cherishing our culture. So, I guess it is possible in some ways.

**Final points:**

**Q: Do you have any further information to share?**

**OR 8:** No thank you, I hope I was able to address your enquiries, and I wish you good luck in your research.

**Q: Can I follow up post-Calabar Festival?**

**OR 8:** Sure, feel free to.

**Q: Do you have any questions for me?**

**OR 8:** No, I think I am clear on your research purposes.

**Q: Are you happy for me to share the information you've given me and the results of my research for academic publications?**

**OR 8:** Let me say this, I'm glad that you've come from London to do this and I want to say thank you that you even in the course of your research, you may venture into other researches that has been done in your direction because people come all the way to even participate. We have researchers, last year we had somebody a white lady who did not just come to research, she came, stayed with us, entered the mass camp where they build costumes see things for herself, attempt sewing these costumes herself, follow up the carnival, take details undiluted and left. So, we have several other researches already out there on this festival so I'm glad to have you do this and I'd be very much glad if the content I'm giving you today are undilutedly shared with the general public and I want to say this, in doing this, tell them or say anybody put it on record that Calabar has the warmest place in Africa not just Calabar, Cross River. It's the warmest place in West Africa or Africa as a whole and whether you're for business or leisure, you're always welcome home.

**Final remark: Thank you so much for taking part in this, I will use the information you have provided strictly for my research purposes.**

## **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR OFFICIAL RESPONDENTS IN THE CONSERVATION SECTOR**

- 1) You give an impression that you are responsive to the needs and interests of tourists and tourism demands, can you say that tourists have power to influence how culture is now curated?
- 2) Do you think that tourism practices are(re)shaping the social ordering of cultural knowledge and, by extension, how culture is understood and curated?

## **Appendix 5i: Sample interview questions for locals**

1) How long have you lived in Calabar?

2) What is your general assessment of the Calabar Festival in terms of tourism development and the production and consumption of local culture?

Follow up- what does culture mean to you?

4) Are you involved in any form of decision-making and planning processes regarding the production of culture for the Calabar Festival?

Follow up: do you belong to any traditional community association?

5) How would you describe the nature of your (locals) interaction with tourists and government officials?

Follow-up- Are there conflict of interests between you (stakeholders)? If yes, how do you resolve it?

6) Who (persons, groups, organisations) do you think is most powerful and influential in producing the Calabar Festival and why do you think so?

7) I understand that there is a collaboration between the cultural and tourism institutions, would you describe such relationship as beneficial to the preservation of your culture?

8) How would you describe the extent of cultural preservation and commodification of cultural resources sustained in the Calabar Festival?

9) In your opinion, do you think that the need to constantly satisfy tourists has an influence on the conservation, production and circulation of cultural knowledge?

Follow up- Can you say in any way suggest that the need to reinvigorate local culture is motivated by tourists' needs and tourism demands?

10) Regarding cultural curation, do you think tourism has introduced new relations of power or perhaps, altered the local power dynamics? If so, how and why, in your opinion?

11) Can you suggest that tourists are curating local culture? If yes, in what ways?

12) In your view, are there any sociocultural changes introduced by the growth of tourism and the Calabar Festival? Could you elaborate on the kind of changes observed in the local cultural environment?

Follow up- How would you describe these impacts, good or bad for local culture?

Are you happy to share these responses and the result for academic publications?

Thank you for participating.

### **Appendix 5ii: Interview questions for tourists**

- 1) Where are you originally from and is this your first time here?
- 2) What attracted you to the Calabar Festival and what influenced your decision to attend?
- 3) Cultural tourism involves people travelling, principally for cultural motivations, would you consider yourself a cultural tourist?
- 4) Broadly, how would you describe the Calabar Festival?
- 5) The Calabar Festival is understood as an event that offers diverse cultural experiences, in your opinion, what is culture?

Follow up: What is your overall impression of the Calabar culture represented/performed in the Calabar Festival?

- b) Did you have any preconceived notions of the local culture here? If so, do they match your expectation and actual experiences here?
- c) What influence does the whole tourism experience have on your perception of this local (Calabar) people?
- 6) How would you describe the nature of your interaction with local people, Cross River state government officials and the local cultural environment?
- 7) From your experiences, do you face any form of challenges from locals and government officials?

Follow up- do you think are there conflicts of interests between you all?



8) According to your expectation of local culture, would you consider that cultural preservation is sustained in Calabar?

9) How would you describe the interaction between the preservation of cultural resources and their commodification for tourism development in the Calabar Festival?

Follow up- do you think it is an advantage, or a disadvantage to local culture?

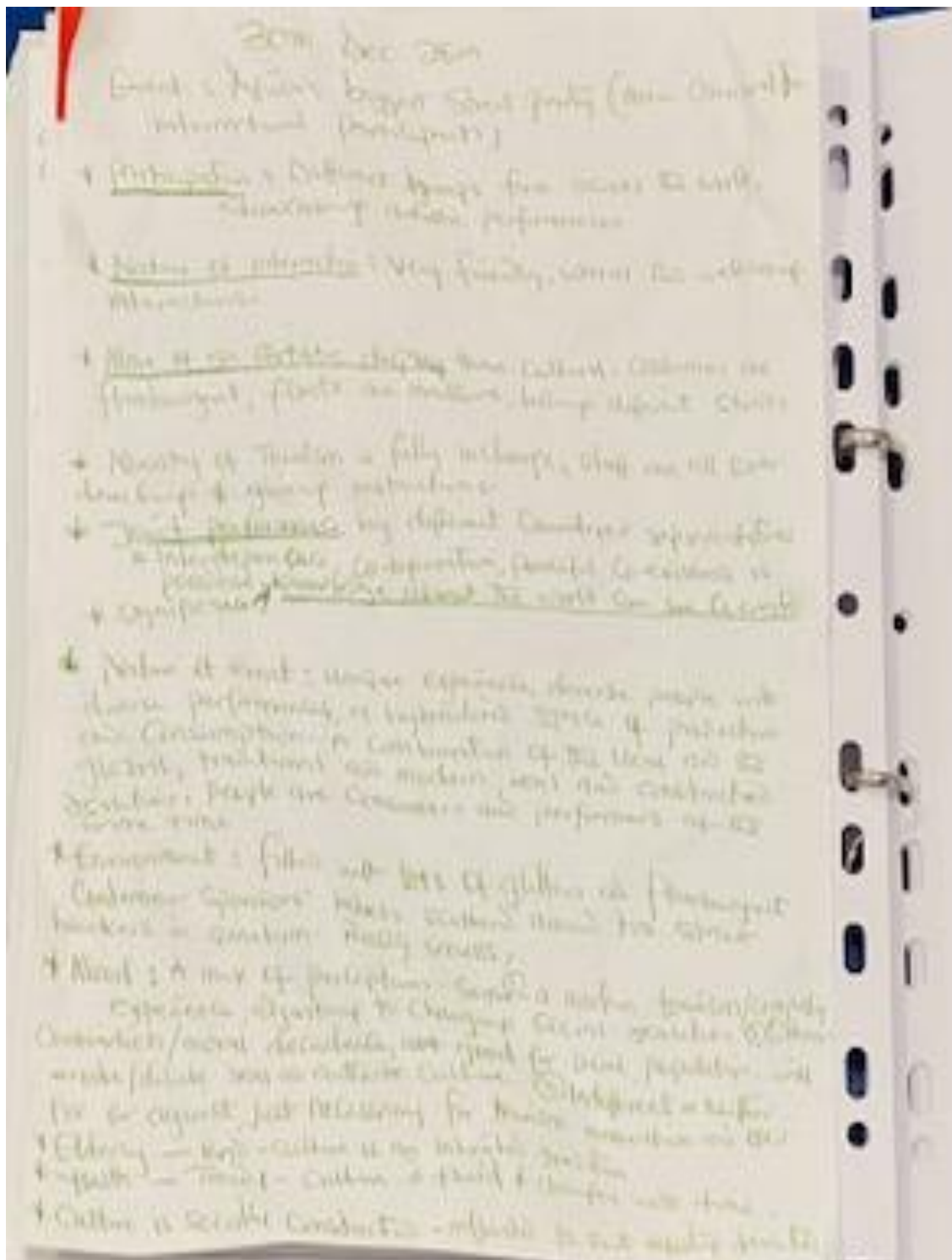
10) Do you think that the Calabar Festival practices respond to your cultural and tourism needs and demands?

11) Tourist experiences are thought to be dynamic and powerful because of the interactive processes where the tourist engages either passively or actively. How do you participate in the creation of these experiences and processes?

Are you happy to share these responses and the result for academic publications?

Thank you for participating.

Appendix 6: Field note records



Dec. 28th Contd!!

- \* fluidity of planning / policy
- \* multiplicity of roles played by different stakeholders
- \* I was participant today, rather than just observing
- \* Positive attitude from the group participants
- \* Did my feedback play a role?
- \* Importance of spending time with locals
- Divide/tension between the locals & official organisers

Competition / Collaboration across stakeholder?

- \* Think about patterns of destination / festival branding

### Challenges

- Maintain focus as just a participant
- \* focus on locals as to their networks / patterns of interaction
- \* Relationship btw tourism policy / strategy / marketing

### Reflexive Draw!!

- \* Think about
- \* locals and local business owners
- \* officials & locals about festival village tension
- \* How is the festival shaped?
  - Different networks at dif. levels
  - Collaboration / sponsorship / partnership
- \* Hybrid Character - Strategy
- \* The networks interact in complex ways to design policy, strategies, define event & destination and the nature of the experience.

### Organisation / Hosting !!!

- \* Temporary & fluid networks of hosting.
- \* Different forms of schedules and different brokers align in specific ways depending on the nature of the event and experience to be provided.
- \* Day / Night activities

### Official pointers

- Volunteering
- Marketing - industry
- Promotion - who / where / how
- Support - from where / negotiated?

29th December 2019!

Event: Carnival Cabbar Street  
Party/parade of the bands

Convergence point: 11/11 Conotaph  
Time: 10 am to start

\* Distance from my accommodation  
to the flag-off point is short  
So I walk.

11:50 am Flag-off by the governor

\* Mood in the atmosphere: activities  
Seem like a normal day. people  
go about the routine activities  
Seemed uninterested: . . . . .

\* Environment: Swept so clean  
Major junctions are decorated,  
visibly, along the Carnival route.

\* Control personnel: Carnival  
Commission staff are all  
Over dressed in jeans (blue)  
and T-shirts. They are practically  
controlling everything.

\* Many bead & costume shops,  
and native wears, are all over  
the streets, tourists stop to shop  
at intervals.

\* Speak to a bead seller, she  
confirms that business is good.

\* The 11/11 Cenotaph is filled with thousands of people - tourists, performers, local spectators, craftspeople, street hawkers, pressmen, photographers, security personnel.

People interact in a friendly manner, very welcoming environment

\* Band members: Dressed in particular uniforms. Costume designs are flamboyant, it was obviously competitive

\* The governors band members are dressed in jeans & t-shirt, different from other bands.

adorned in traditional clothing

\* Bands: 5 competing & 6 non-competing bands

\* Seats are reserved for visitors at the adjudication unit. They are paid for (£40k). Locals complain of such exploitation. Tourists do not pay extra to occupy the reserved seats (state invited tourists) = Unequal power relations & access to resources between locals & tourists, aided by govt. officials

Dec 28th 2019!!!  
it's Cultural parade day

\* Event

There will be a parade of the different Nigerian cultures/states today, dressed in their distinctive costumes and showcasing their performances.

\* Meeting place: Everyone converges at 11/11 ie the millennium junction at 10:00 am

12:pm: parade and procession through the route, the adjudication units, and

then, to the stadium which is the final destination

\* Mood: Fascination

\* Theme: Africanism

\* Atmosphere: kumbura in the environment which managed to be home-like, neat, and vibrant.

\* Scam: At the take-off point, a visual display of vibrant colours and aesthetic sights, floats, iconic costumes.

\* Dominant/significant costumes: Akasi, Ibusi Abing, made of raffias, beads, essential items

\* Environment / Streets !!!

A garden of well-groomed Umbrella trees, busy street markets (locally bustling)

\* Landscape: Beautiful designs with traditional drifts palms, floral lights shimmering in the day & Sparkling at night.  
Compelling aesthetics.

\* Safety: Security personnel are everywhere in their numbers, every corner of the streets.

\* Transportation: Road is free of cars, no obstruction by

motorists. . . . . !!!

MIDDAY

\* The sun is scorching, it is hot, almost dehydrated by the hawkers are everywhere reminds me of the season of hawthorn growing up.

Environment is well designed that even with the hot sun, the Umbrella trees can provide a cover and as they sway back and forth, the air felt like it was filled with jasmine

\* On the rusty smells, reminds me of dry & dusty season.

## Appendix 7: Sample interview thematic coding with links to literature review

Interview themes	Sub-themes	Interview quotes	Links to literature review and research objectives
Power of tourism officials	Influence Legitimacy Expertise	<p><b>OR 8:</b> When it comes to the carnival specifically, we have the power of execution. The floats, the costumes, the parades, the everything, we plan, organise and direct whatever happens during the carnival.</p> <p><b>OR 4:</b> It is customary that all culture and tourism activities get clearance from us. In planning any state tourism activity, we ensure coordination from the centre, the ministry relies on the initiative and expertise of the various departments and agencies to execute decisions successfully. We also try as much as possible to sell our protected cultural resources, but in line with global tourism market trends.</p>	<p>This code is linked to literature on the power of stakeholders, where the most prominent stakeholders would have the power to impose their decisions, and be perceived as legitimate in exercising their power (Church and Coles, 2007; Allen, 2003; Mitchell et al.,1997). Related to research objectives 1 and 2.</p>
Nature of interaction between production stakeholders	Conflict Interdependent contest Cooperation Tension	<p><b>LR 23:</b> When the former governor was in office, we used to decide how we produce because we table our demands through our</p>	<p>This is related to literature that highlighted that due to the fragmented nature of the cultural tourism industry, stakeholder identification</p>

	Negotiation Compromise Mutual	<p>traditional leaders, and they listened to us. Recently, we still want to maintain our art production standards, but the government want mass production. They have power because they control capital so they ignored us and turned a deaf ear. But we made them realise that they cannot do much without our input, in that case, they had no choice than to listen to our demands when we threatened to shut down any form of activity if not adequately empowered.</p> <p><b>OR 8:</b> sponsors like the DSTV, we don't pay them to cover the festival for one month. They come to do it as part of banter, banter in the sense that they take the content for free, they sell it to their consumers, they make money while we get visibility for what they do. So, we don't need to pay you to get content that you're not paying for. That is part of what I mean by mutual benefit</p>	<p>and involvement is crucial for effective collaboration and tourism development. Stakeholders' perception and understanding asserts power on tourism development and their varying perceptions and interests can create conflict and power imbalances (Forjts, et al. (2020; Byrd, Bosley, &amp; Dronberger, 2009).</p> <p>Also, this code supports Williams (1958) conceptualisation of culture as a common meaning resource, in which all aspects of life are entwined in a network of mutual relationship between people, their beliefs, and their social environment, which helps construct common identities</p>
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Curatorial tourists	Conservation Preservation Cultural value Production Sharing/dissemination/distribution	<p><b>OR 11:</b> Today tourists are changing and they are helping us change, teaching us so many things about our culture that we took for granted or gave less value to, we have always known them but perhaps we did not give them the desired prominence or possibly the accurate worth. Tourists have luckily forced all of us to re-evaluate traditions and customs that were disappearing.</p> <p><b>OR 8:</b> I would say that to an extent, tourists condition the type of cultural experiences we offer. I said that because one thing we also discovered is that, when they come, they give us the challenge for our local people to understand that you have to stir up, people are actually taking their cultures very important, so we see that expression of value in terms of what they bring and how they protect it. We invite people from all over the world and the thirty-six states of the federation, sometimes</p>	<p>This relates to the following arguments in the literature:</p> <p>Tourists are the main actors in cultural exchanges, who influence cultural development (Tsaou, Yen, &amp; Teng, 2018).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The art of curation has become essential in the digital age, with tourists as content creators (trusted guides helping us to understand the world and the cultural values we create and seek- Good 2017), undeniably implicated in curating through digital and social media (Richards, 2020)</li> <li>- With the convergence of production and consumption, a framework of openness and inclusive cultural exchanges can change the local power dynamics (Berger, 1999; Henderson, A. C., 2013; Holtzhausen, 2002; Hutton, 2015) and at the same time, empower</li> </ul>
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		<p>two different cultures in each state to come and perform in the Calabar Festival. Some even bring masquerades which is their cultural symbol, and they protect their masquerades from being devalued. So, it also makes us actually cherish our own, what we do here, even when we try to modernise it, make it loose to the modern aesthetics. Sometimes, we seem to lose those artefacts that come with traditional images or traditional costumes. So, in that way, it has a way of influencing our cultural production, but I think we've not lost totally the originality of our content. So, in all of these, you can see that when it has to do with deciding what to produce, we are always influencing each other in some ways</p>	<p>tourists to participate in determining how local cultures are regulated, represented and curated (Kreps, 2008).</p>
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