



EVALUATING CARNIVAL CALABAR AS CATALYST FOR DIFFUSION OF INDIGENOUS SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES SYSTEM IN CALABAR, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Carnival Calabar is one of the most prominent socio-cultural activities in Nigeria, attracting participants and visitors from across the globe. This study evaluates the role of Carnival Calabar as a catalyst for the diffusion of indigenous socio-cultural values in Calabar, Cross River State. Data were collected through questionnaires, checklists, and focus group discussions in the study area. Multinomial logistic regression was employed to test the stated hypotheses. Findings revealed a substantial influence of tourists' socio-cultural values on the indigenous population, as locals exhibited a preference for external cultural practices over their own. This preference negatively affected indigenous traditions, particularly dance, music, food, and social lifestyles. Statistical analysis further corroborated these results, showing that art and music, food, and social lifestyle were the most influential components shaping cultural changes. More so Cultural diffusion through Carnival Calabar significantly influences indigenous socio cultural values, as cultural exchange fosters interaction between locals and foreigners while shifting value systems gradually reshape traditional beliefs, norms, and lifestyles, especially in areas such as dance, music, and entertainment. The study underscores the global implications of tourism-driven cultural transformation and emphasizes the urgent need to preserve and promote indigenous socio-cultural values amidst increasing globalization and tourism development.

Keywords: Carnival, Diffusion, Indigenous people, social lifestyle, Socio-cultural values

**Introduction**

Globally, indigenous value systems today remain deeply entrenched in the historical and cultural context of indigenous communities, guiding their interactions with the environment and each other (Ford et al, 2020). The diffusion of these value systems refers to the process by which they spread and are adopted by individuals or groups outside of the indigenous communities (Greenstein et al, 2018). This comprehensive analysis delves into the drivers, challenges, impacts, and implications of the diffusion of indigenous value systems (Amankwah-Amoah, 2019). Globalization has played a pivotal role in facilitating the diffusion of indigenous value systems, especially in destinations with thriving tourism activities (Yee, 2022). Increased global interconnectedness has allowed for greater exposure and interactions between indigenous and non-indigenous communities, offering opportunities for the diffusion of indigenous values (Brundu et al, 2020). Cultural exchange programs, festivals, and events further promote intercultural understanding and dialogue, creating platforms for indigenous communities to share their values with the wider society (Searle et al., 2018).

The growing recognition of indigenous rights and the importance of cultural diversity have also contributed to the diffusion process, fostering an environment that encourages the sharing and adoption of indigenous value systems (Bilbao et al, 2025). Scholars such as (Ayeni & Aborisade, 2021; Jieshan, 2024; Ayu et al., 2025) have observed that the diffusion process contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage by promoting the transmission of traditional knowledge, customs, and practices to future generations. In many tourism destinations, indigenous value systems (Fuchs & Konar, 2025; Islam, 2025; James et al., 2025) offer tourists the opportunity to engage with authentic cultural experiences, which can be a significant motivating factor for travel. Authentic cultural encounters provide an opportunity for tourists to engage in meaningful and transformative experiences that broaden their perspectives and deepen their understanding of different cultures (McCombes & Vanclay, 2022; Ramkissoon, 2022; Vongvisitsin & Wong, 2024). Consequently, (Dube & Nhamo, 2021) and the Oad, (2022) assert that indigenous value systems serve as a major vehicle for economic growth in many nations around the world. Allam et al. (2023) and Arora & Stirling (2023) further stress that indigenous value systems are cultural heritage with the capacity to influence visitor arrivals, income generation, and enhanced employment opportunities in tourism destinations.

However, Nigeria's colonial history has had a lasting impact on the diffusion of indigenous value systems. The imposition of Western values and the marginalization of indigenous cultures during the colonial era led to the erosion of traditional practices (Ikegbu & Bassey, 2019). Religious conversion, particularly to Christianity and Islam, has profoundly affected the diffusion of indigenous value systems in Nigeria (Ossai & Okwueze, 2024). The curriculum often neglects or marginalizes indigenous knowledge, beliefs, and practices, leading to a disconnect between young generations and their cultural heritage (Matindike & Ramdhany, 2025). The lack of inclusion of indigenous values in education hampers their transmission and perpetuates the dominance of external cultural norms. Cultural appropriation occurs when elements of indigenous cultures are appropriated by external entities for commercial purposes without proper recognition or benefit to the originating communities (Dennis-McCarthy, 2020). The coexistence and interaction of these



diverse cultures can lead to clashes and a dilution of traditional practices, as dominant cultures influence and assimilate smaller ethnic groups (Sun et al., 2024).

Despite the existence of empirical research on indigenous value systems globally and regionally (Chuma-Okoro, 2022; Ruhanen & Whitford, 2021; Abascal, 2021; Ngo & Pham (2023), some studies have focused on the prospects and challenges of indigenous value systems concerning tourism and the influence of visitors and tourists on indigenous heritage and cultural diffusion. In Nigeria, works by Adediji, & Bigon, (2024), OmotomilolaAdetola et al. (2024) and Iwuh & Adeyemo (2025) have shed light on the impact of tourist arrivals on cultural heritage and indigenous value systems. Their analyses have revealed that the influx of visitors and the introduction of foreign cultures have significantly eroded many indigenous value systems. Moreover, research conducted in Cross River State has raised concerns about the influence of indigenous value systems on tourists and visitors, even though several scholars have explored the prospects and challenges of indigenous value systems (Aule et al., 2022; Brownson et al., 2024; Achu et al., 2024). Surprisingly, none of these studies have focused on the diffusion of indigenous value systems and the preference for tourists' socio-cultural values in the tourism destinations of Cross River State, Nigeria. By exploring these aspects, the research seeks to provide valuable insights into the dynamic interactions between tourists and the indigenous population in Cross River State, shedding light on the potential impacts on the preservation of indigenous culture and heritage.

This study aims to provide valuable insights into the indigenous value system and identify which aspects of these value systems are being endangered by tourism activities and the influx of visitors to Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically as regards to indigene's preferences for tourists' socio-cultural values, indigenous people of Calabar's preferences for tourists' food, dress code, and language, as well as their preferences for tourists' religion, traditional practices, dance/music, musical instruments, arts/crafts, and social lifestyle. Additionally, it seeks to enhance the understanding of policymakers in the tourism industry regarding the socio-cultural and environmental consequences resulting from rapid interactions with foreign socio-cultural values in the study area. By bridging the gap in the global literature, this research will contribute to the existing empirical knowledge, adding value to the body of literature on this subject.

Literature review

The exchange of ideas and cultural practices in our increasingly interconnected world has led to the diffusion of indigenous value systems beyond their original regions (Darian-Smith & McCarty, (2017). This phenomenon is especially evident in Africa, where the movement of people from rural to urban areas and the influx of tourists from diverse backgrounds contribute to the dissemination of these values (Ndlovu et al., 2024; Mbuyane et al., 2024). These indigenous value systems are deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of African societies, encompassing beliefs, customs, traditions, and norms passed down through generations. The interplay of historical factors, globalization, and tourism has facilitated the diffusion of these indigenous value systems, presenting both opportunities and challenges for local communities and their cultural heritage.



On one hand, this diffusion can lead to cultural revitalization movements as communities strive to preserve and promote their unique heritage (Akova & Atsiz, 2019). On the other hand, it may also result in the erosion of some indigenous value systems and the emergence of hybrid cultural expressions due to the adoption of foreign practices and beliefs (Aktürk & Lerski, 2021).

According to (Phillips et al., 2024), tourism plays a pivotal role in the diffusion of indigenous value systems. On one hand, it can have positive contributions to cultural preservation and foster local pride by generating job opportunities that discourage urban relocation and supporting peace-building efforts in conflict zones, as demonstrated between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. However, as noted by (Aktürk & Lerski, 2021; Akova & Atsiz, 2019), tourism-induced changes can also pose threats to indigenous cultures. For instance, in Hoonah, Alaska, the trade of cultural items like the Totem by tourists is perceived as a threat to the community's heritage and identity.

Furthermore, tourism can disrupt social customs and patterns in societies, leading to changes in social structures and displacement of communities (Darian-Smith & McCarty, 2017; Wang, 2021). The lack of awareness or disregard for local customs and moral values by tourists can also cause negative impacts, leading to cultural clashes and conflicts with traditional norms in indigenous communities (Elbaz et al., 2023). As tourism demands increase, cultural events may face pressure to be altered or commoditized to meet tourists' expectations, potentially leading to a compromise in their authenticity and cultural significance (Soukhathammavong & Park, 2019; Maxim & Chasovschi, 2021).

In conclusion, the socio-cultural impacts of tourism on indigenous communities present a multifaceted landscape, encompassing both positive contributions and challenges to their cultural identity. To ensure sustainable tourism practices, a paramount focus must be placed on respecting local customs and traditions, while also minimizing any negative repercussions. By fostering mutually beneficial interactions between tourists and indigenous communities, we can strike a balance that preserves and respects their unique value systems. This literature review serves to illuminate the global significance of safeguarding indigenous cultures amidst the ongoing forces of globalization and tourism.

Methodology

This work is anchored on evaluating Carnival Calabar as a catalyst for the diffusion of indigenous socio-cultural values in Calabar, Nigeria. The study was conducted in Calabar, the capital of Cross River State, which is renowned for its rich socio-cultural heritage. The research adopted both survey and ethnographic research designs. The survey design involved administering predetermined sets of questions to a target population, while the ethnographic research method provided an in-depth study of the community's values, behaviors, beliefs, and language. In this research, the ethnographic design was used to explore the socio-cultural phenomena of the study population, as applied by Zhang (2019).

Focus group discussion was adopted as part of the survey design, incorporating both drop-and-collect methods and face-to-face interviews (Dennis & Kinney, 1998). In addition to questionnaires, participatory research appraisal techniques were employed, which included focus



group discussions with the council of community elders, women leaders, and youths in each of the sampled wards, as applied by Schubotz (2019). A sample size of 400 respondents was used in this study, drawn from a total population of 104,166 individuals. The population was selected from ten council wards that formed the study area. The Taro Yamane formula was employed to determine the appropriate sample size for the research. The formula is presented below:

The Taro Yamene's formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \dots\dots\dots(\text{equation 1})$$

Where

n = Sample size

N = Sampled population (104,166)

E = level of precision or confidence level (0.05)

1 = unity (a constant)

Bourley's proportional allocation formula was used to obtain the number of questionnaires to be administered in each ward. Bourley's proportional allocation formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \dots\dots\dots(\text{equation 2})$$

Where

n₁ = element within the sample frame (total number of persons in each ward)

n = sample or the population of the universe used (400)

N = total population (104,166)

Table 1 below illustrates the number of council wards, sample population, and the corresponding sample size (obtained using the method described) that were used in the study.

Table 1: Sample Population and sampled size in the study area

Council Wards	Sampled population	Sampled size
One	19,364	74
Two	9,350	36
Three	12,773	49
Four	8,296	32
Five	6,105	23
Six	12,192	47
Seven	4,834	19
Eight	14,734	57
Nine	6,467	25
Ten	10,051	38
TOTAL	104,166	400



In this study, a purposive sampling technique was employed, targeting specific groups of respondents, including family heads, youth leaders, and women leaders. The decision to use purposive sampling was informed by the type and nature of data required for the research. The primary instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, and the study relied on information derived from attributes of the indigenous socio-cultural value system. One hypothesis proposed was as follows: The socio-cultural values of tourists do not significantly influence the diffusion of indigenous socio-cultural values among the inhabitants of Calabar, Nigeria.

To explore this relationship, the study employed multinomial logistic regression. This statistical technique was selected because it allows for the analysis of the relationship between tourists' socio-cultural values and the indigenous socio-cultural preferences concerning aspects such as food, dress code, social lifestyle, language, and others. Moreover, multinomial logistic regression is appropriate for analyzing variables measured on nominal and ordinal scales. The underlying assumption of the multinomial logistic regression model is that the dependent variable, denoted as Y , is categorical, with a probability distribution represented accordingly.

$$\pi_i = \exp(n_i) / 1 + \exp(n_i) \dots \dots \dots (\text{equation 1})$$

$$\ln(\pi_i / (1 - \pi_i)) = \ln \pi_i = X_i^B \dots \dots \dots (\text{equation 2})$$

Hence, the likelihood function l for observations y_1, \dots, y_n with probabilities

$$\pi_1, \dots, \pi_n \text{ and case weights } W_1, \dots, W_n, \text{ can be written as } l = \sum_{i=1}^n W_i \pi_i^{y_i} (1 - \pi_i)^{1-y_i} \dots \dots (\text{equation 3})$$

It follows that the logarithm of l is $\ln l = \sum_{i=1}^n W_i \ln \pi_i^{y_i} (1 - \pi_i)^{1-y_i} = \sum_{i=1}^n W_i y_i \ln \pi_i + \sum_{i=1}^n W_i (1 - y_i) \ln (1 - \pi_i)$

and the derivative of l with respect to β_j is

$$\frac{\partial \ln l}{\partial \beta_j} = \sum_{i=1}^n W_i (y_i - \pi_i) x_{ij} \dots \dots \dots (\text{equation 4})$$

Findings and Discussion

Diffusion of Indigenous socio-cultural values system

The Diffusion of Indigenous socio-cultural values system presented in table 1 indicate that a significant proportion of indigenes preferred tourists' religious practices, with 71 representing 19.18 percent; language, with 63 representing 17.01 percent; dances and music, with 60 representing 16.20 percent; and dressing styles, with 56 representing 15.12 percent. Additionally, indigenes expressed preferences for tourists' social lifestyles, with 54 representing 14.58 percent; food, with 30 representing 8.1 percent; art and craft, with 22 representing 5.94 percent; and musical instruments, with 14 representing 3.78 percent.

Variations were also observed across different wards of Calabar Municipality regarding preferences for tourists' food, dress codes, language, and other socio-cultural elements. For instance, food preferences revealed that noodles accounted for 36.6 percent, macaroni 30 percent, spaghetti 20 percent, rice with chicken 20 percent, and bitter leaf soup (Ndole) with fufu 20 percent. In terms of dressing, corporate wears accounted for 32.12 percent, jeans with shirts 32 percent, fez caps 16.07 percent, boubou 16.07 percent, kaftan 16.07 percent, and Senegalese attire 16.07 percent. In contrast, a smaller proportion showed preference for tourists' dress codes such as



French suits, at 14.27 percent, and wrappers with blouses, at 7.12 percent. These findings indicate a strong diffusion of tourists' socio-cultural practices into the indigenous community, particularly in the areas of religion, food, dressing, language, and entertainment.

Furthermore, figure 2 indicates the Brazilian cultural parade during Carnival Calabar showcases vibrant costumes, energetic samba dancers, and rhythmic music that highlight Brazil's rich cultural heritage. Participants wear colorful feathered outfits with elaborate designs, creating a dazzling spectacle. This display promotes cultural exchange, blending Brazilian carnival traditions with Nigerian festivities, and enriching the global appeal of Carnival Calabar. More so, the Brazilian cultural parade has significantly influenced and diffused into the Calabar Carnival over time. This is reflected in the adoption of flamboyant feathered costumes, vibrant colors, samba-inspired dance styles, and synchronized street performances, which closely mirror Brazil's carnival tradition as reflected in figure 1 and 2. While Calabar Carnival retains its indigenous identity through music, folklore, and masquerades, the Brazilian style has added global flair, glamour, and international appeal. This cultural blending has transformed Carnival Calabar into a cosmopolitan event, merging African heritage with Brazilian carnival aesthetics, thereby enriching its artistic expression, boosting tourism, and reinforcing its recognition as "Africa's Biggest Street Party."

Table 1: Diffusion of Indigenous socio-cultural values system

S/N	WARDS IN CALABAR MUNICIPALITY	FOREIGN FOOD		FOREIGN DRESS CODE		FOREIGN LANGUAGE		FOREIGN RELIGIOUS PRACTICES		DANCES / MUSIC		ART/CR AFTS		MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS		SOCIAL LIFESTYLE		TOTAL	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	
1	WARD ONE	5	1.35	6	1.62	14	3.78	17	4.6	10	2.70	5	1.35	4	1.08	8	2.16	69	18.64
2	WARD TWO	3	0.81	7	1.9	7	1.9	6	1.62	4	1.08	1	0.27	2	0.54	3	0.81	33	8.91
3	WARD THREE	2	0.54	5	1.35	9	2.43	12	3.24	11	3.0	3	0.81	1	0.27	2	0.54	45	12.16
4	WARD FOUR	0	0	4	1.08	7	1.9	10	2.70	5	1.35	2	0.54	1	0.27	1	0.27	30	8.10
5	WARD FIVE	4	1.08	1	0.27	4	1.08	5	1.35	3	0.81	1	0.27	0	0	3	0.81	21	5.68
6	WARD SIX	3	0.81	8	2.16	10	2.70	8	2.16	7	1.9	2	0.54	1	0.27	4	1.08	43	11.62
7	WARD SEVEN	41	0.27	3	0.81	4	1.08	3	0.81	5	1.35	0	0	0	0	2	0.54	18	4.
8	WARD EIGHT	5	1.35	13	3.51	3	0.81	4	1.08	9	2.43	3	0.81	2	0.54	14	3.78	53	14.32
9	WARD NINE	3	0.81	8	2.16	2	0.54	2	0.54	1	0.27	1	0.27	0	0	6	1.62	23	6.22
10	WARD TEN	4	1.08	1	0.27	3	0.81	4	1.08	5	1.35	4	1.08	3	0.81	11	2.97	35	9.46
	TOTAL	30	8.1	56	15.12	63	17.01	71	19.18	60	16.20	22	5.94	14	3.78	54	14.58	370	100

Source: Author's fieldwork (2025)



Figure 1: Indigenous Cultural Parade during Carnival Calabar



Figure 2: Brazilian cultural parade during Carnival Calabar



Implications of cultural diffusion through carnival Calabar on the preservations of indigenous socio-cultural value system

The Table shows the implications of cultural diffusion through Carnival Calabar on indigenous socio cultural values, measured by percent. Cultural exchange recorded the highest percent at 23 percent, indicating that the carnival provides a platform for interaction between local and foreign performers. Closely following this is the shift in value systems at 22.5 percent, showing that exposure to international elements is gradually influencing local norms, beliefs, and priorities. Loss of authenticity 14.7 percent and erosion of indigenous practices 7.5 percent reveal that cultural diffusion also carries risks, as some traditional practices may be diluted or modified. Other positive implications include innovation in art forms 7.25 percent and youth engagement 5.25 percent, suggesting that younger generations are creatively adapting traditional dances and music to incorporate contemporary performance techniques. Tourism promotion 6.5 percent, fashion displacement 5 percent, food consumption changes 2 percent, global recognition 1.5 percent, and documentation opportunities 1.5 percent highlight additional effects of cultural diffusion, both economically and socially. Overall, the percent distribution demonstrates a balance between positive and negative implications, emphasizing that while Carnival Calabar promotes cultural exchange and modernization, it may gradually influence the preservation of traditional socio cultural values.

Table 2: Implications of cultural diffusion through carnival Calabar on the preservations of indigenous socio-cultural value system

s/n	Implication of cultural diffusion	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Erosion of indigenous practices	30	7.5
2.	Loss of authenticity	59	14.7
3.	Documentation opportunities	6	1.50
4.	Global recognition	14	1.50
5.	Fashion displacement	20	5.00
6.	Shift in value systems	90	22.50
7.	Cultural exchange	92	23.00
8.	Innovation I of art forms	29	7.25
9.	Youth engagement	21	5.25
10.	Food consumption	8	2.00
11.	Tourism promotion	26	6.500
12.	Any other specify	5	1.25
	Total	400	100

Source: Author's fieldwork (2025)



Extent to which Calabar Carnival Influences the Adoption of Visitors' Socio-Cultural Practices

The table shows the extent to which the Calabar Carnival influences visitors' socio cultural practices among participants and residents. Findings reveal that the carnival greatly affects expressive aspects of culture such as dance, music, and entertainment. Dance style recorded the highest influence with 120 responses representing 30 percent, followed by music preference with 88 responses or 22 percent. These results indicate that the carnival serves as a major platform for cultural exchange, where participants adopt new dance moves and musical tastes introduced by visiting performers and tourists. Entertainment choice ranked next with 75 responses amounting to 18.75 percent, showing that visitors' leisure and recreation patterns have influenced local entertainment culture. Art and craft also recorded 53 responses, representing 13.25 percent, suggesting that creative expressions and designs from visitors have inspired local artisans.

Fashion and dressing 4.75 percent, hairstyles and grooming 2.75 percent, food consumption 1.5 percent, and drinking habits 2.5 percent showed moderate influence, while language use 1 percent, value systems 1.75 percent, and religious practices 0.5 percent were minimally affected. These results imply that expressive and aesthetic aspects of culture are more easily influenced than deeply rooted cultural values. Overall, the Calabar Carnival promotes cross cultural interaction, artistic creativity, and social integration, thereby enhancing the adoption of visitors' cultural traits while maintaining local traditions and values.

Table 3: Extent to which Calabar Carnival Influences the Adoption of Visitors' Socio-Cultural Practices

s/n	Visitors socio-cultural practices	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Religious practices	2	0.50
2.	Language use	4	1.00
3.	Music preference	88	22.00
4.	Dance style	120	30.00
5.	Fashion and dressing	19	4.75
6.	Hairstyles and grooming	11	2.75
7.	Food consumption	6	1.50
8.	Drinking habits	10	2.5
9.	Art and craft	53	13.25
10.	Entertainment choice	75	18.75
11.	Value systems	7	1.75
12.	Others (specify)	5	1.25
	Total	400	100

Source: Author's fieldwork (2025)



Accordingly, the correlation analysis examined the interrelationships among variables representing tourists' influence on indigenous socio cultural values in Calabar. The table shows the correlation matrix, where coefficients of ± 0.50 and above at a 0.05 significance level were considered significant. The results indicated predominantly positive associations, with only a few coefficients falling below ± 0.50 , and no negative correlations were observed. The weakest intercorrelations were between American slang and English (0.0), American slang and French/Chinese (0.0), American slang and pastries (0.20), and American slang and French/Indian wears (0.20). In contrast, strong and perfect positive correlations were identified between wrapper with blouse and corporate wears (1.0), as well as drawing and painting (1.0). High correlations were also observed between pastries and noodles (0.90), corporate wears and pastries (0.90), and clubbing, wrapper, and blouse (0.90), underscoring the interconnectedness of tourists' cultural elements and indigenous adoption patterns.

To improve interpretation, varimax rotation was applied to the eigenvectors, resulting in three extracted components from 33 variables, each with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, indicating substantial tourist influence. According to the Kaiser Selection Criterion, only variables with loadings above 0.80 were deemed significant. The three components collectively explained 77.89 percent of the total variance, confirming the validity of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and surpassing the 60 percent benchmark suggested by previous studies. Component one, labeled "Arts, Music, and Fashion Influence," accounted for 40.2 percent of the variance and included American slang, dances, food items, beadworks, clothing, and entertainment activities. Component two, the "Food Component," explained 37.6 percent of the variance and emphasized the dominance of tourists' foods such as noodles, pastries, and fried rice in influencing indigenous diets. Component three, the "Social Lifestyle Component," accounted for 17.3 percent of the variance and highlighted tourists' impact on clubbing, partying, eating out, drinking, and language preferences. High loadings for English (0.999), French/Chinese (0.994), and American slang (0.991) reveal strong linguistic influence, while religious and traditional practices remained largely unaffected, showing resilience to external cultural pressures. However, this analysis result is found in Appendix 1.

Similarly, Carnival Calabar is gradually influencing local cultural heritage by introducing global elements from Brazil and the Caribbean. Flamboyant costumes, synchronized routines, and samba-inspired movements are inspiring traditional performances to adopt enhanced choreography and visual appeal. While dances like the Ugep Dance and Ekpe cultural dance retain their rhythm, spiritual significance, and communal essence, they are increasingly infused with carnival aesthetics as indicated in figures 3 and 4. This gradual blending creates a dynamic space where indigenous traditions evolve alongside global influences.



Figure 3: Indigenous cultural heritage parade during Carnival Calabar. (Obam dance)



Figure 4: Indigenous cultural parade (Ekpe cultural dance) during Carnival Calabar

**Discussion of findings**

The present findings align with earlier studies highlighting the influence of tourists and cultural interactions on indigenous communities. Kay Smith et al., (2023) observed similar patterns of cultural adaptation in festival settings, where local populations gradually adopted visitors' cultural practices. Katalin (2020) also noted that international festivals often serve as vehicles for cultural diffusion, particularly in regions exposed to global tourism. Regarding food preferences, Forsythe & Markides (2024) and Maris (2022) emphasized that tourists' cuisines can reshape indigenous food systems, resulting in hybridized diets. This is supported by Chuma-Okoro (2022) and Okoye (2022), who reported that traditional cuisines in Nigerian communities are increasingly influenced by global culinary trends. Similarly, shifts in dress preferences are evident. Aduonum (2022) documented changes in Ghanaian communities, where Western-style clothing is increasingly favored over indigenous attire, while Darian-Smith and McCarty (2017) and Wang (2021) highlighted global dress codes as cultural symbols that influence local identity. However, (Nwigwe, 2022; Ko & Yim, 2024; Hariati & Purwarno, 2024) noted that some traditional clothing styles persist, albeit mainly in ceremonial contexts.

These observations correspond with research on festival globalization and cultural heritage. Cultural exchange illustrates the carnival's role as a platform for interaction between local and international performers, consistent with Rolle et al. (2020), who emphasized that festivals facilitate cross-cultural learning and exposure to new artistic forms. The gradual shift in value systems reflects findings by Obijuru (2023), who noted that foreign influences in local festivals can subtly alter traditional norms, beliefs, and priorities. Udo (2024) also warned that hybridization in festivals may compromise the authenticity of cultural expressions, even as it enhances performance appeal and global visibility. Positive outcomes, such as innovation in art forms and youth engagement, align with prior research showing that younger performers often adapt traditional dances and music to modern contexts, ensuring continuity while introducing creativity (Rolle et al., 2020; Obijuru, 2023). Festivals also contribute to lifestyle and aesthetic adoption, including fashion, grooming, and food consumption, without fundamentally altering deeply rooted cultural values. Collectively, these studies reinforce the selective nature of cultural diffusion, where expressive and interactive cultural elements are more readily adopted by visitors than core beliefs or practices.

The findings demonstrate that Carnival Calabar acts as a catalyst for cultural diffusion, influencing food, fashion, language, and lifestyle among locals. The dominance of foreign foods such as fried rice, noodles, and pastries confirms earlier research (Chuma-Okoro, 2022; Forsythe & Markides, 2024; Maris 2022). Western fashion trends also reshape local dress identity (Aduonum, 2022; Wang, 2021; Darian-Smith & McCarty, 2017). Language adoption reflects linguistic assimilation (Katalin, 2020; Ruhanen & Whitford, 2021), while new social lifestyles raise concerns (Hariati & Purwarno, 2024; Ko & Yim, 2024). However, resilient indigenous religious practices resist tourists' influence (Okoye, 2022). Thus, Carnival fosters cultural exchange (Samhere, 2017) but accelerates homogenization (Mouw & Harris, 2012).

**Conclusion**

Indigenous cultures are diverse and unique, and the diffusion of these cultures in many destinations can be detrimental to their sustainable development. The introduction of foreign cultural elements often erodes traditional values and threatens the socio cultural fabric of indigenous societies. This study highlights the potential cultural diffusion in Calabar, Cross River State, resulting from tourism activities, which may impact the indigenous socio cultural values of the Calabar people in the future. However, the study is limited to a specific location, Calabar, Cross River State, and does not account for the broader global context of indigenous cultural diffusion through tourism. Consequently, the conclusions drawn from this single case may not fully reflect the complexities and variations in how indigenous cultures are influenced by tourism worldwide. Nevertheless, the findings have broader implications for indigenous cultures globally. The risks of cultural diffusion through tourism extend beyond Calabar and affect various indigenous communities. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize these implications and adopt proactive measures to safeguard the rich cultural heritage of indigenous societies across different tourist destinations.

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Conceptualization, E.E.E. and O.F.E. and P.A.M and E.I.E.; methodology, E.I.E and I.B.E and E.F.A-O; software, N.E.C and F.I.A and A.C.A.; validation, K.O.I O.D.E E.E.E. and E.I.E.; formal analysis, N.K.T I.V.U and E.I.E.; investigation, E.E.I and J.R.D and E.I.E.; data curation, E.I.E. and E.E.E. and N.E.C and F.I.A and A.C.A. and J.R.D.; writing - original draft preparation, E.E.I and J.R.D. and E.I.E.; writing - review and editing, E.I.E. and E.E.E. and O.F.E. and P.A.M; visualization, E.E.I and J.R.D and E.I.E.; supervision, I K.O.I O.D.E E.E.E and E.I.E. and J.R.D.; project administration, E.I.E and I.B.E and E.F.A-O. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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