

## Design, Technology and Human Capital: Exploring the Paradigm Shift in Contemporary Nigerian Carnival Performance

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### Abstract

The application of indigenous design and technology has been an integral feature of Nigerian theatre practice since antiquity. This is evident in the areas of costume, scenery, lighting, make-up, sound design and even special effects deployed in rituals, festivals and carnivals celebrated in different parts of the African continent. This technical practice has continued to grow with the advancements in technology. Indeed, the rapid and heightened application of performing arts technologies is currently transforming the character of contemporary African carnivals. This development is expected to increasingly boost the livelihoods of indigenous designers, technologists and artisans as practitioners in the culture and tourism industry. However, the emerging trend of Westernization, copying and outsourcing of design and technical production projects in contemporary African carnival programmes poses a challenge to sustainable human and cultural capital development in the industry. The present study uses survey and observation methods to investigate this paradigm shift and its implications in order to explore a way forward for artistic and technical development in the African theatre and creative industry.

Key Words: Design, technology, carnival, paradigm shift, human development, sustainability.

### Background

The deployment of design and technology has been an essential aspect of theatrical production process since earliest times. These design and

technical aspects are exemplified in the stage costumes, make-up, properties and scenic elements used in performance presentations. Indeed, traditional societies everywhere have consistently applied available technologies such as carving, weaving, architecture, sculpture, knitting, taxidermy, tannery, painting and cosmetology to support theatre performances. These technologies range from the indigenous to the foreign. In many cases, traditional and modern elements and approaches have been applied, these have been adapted and applied in both complementary and eclectic fashions. In the evolutionary developments that characterize theatre history, commensurate advancements in design and technical production have been recognized by scholars and practitioners. Oren Parker, Harvey Smith and Dick Block (2009: 4) observe that theatre today, with its arts, is “undergoing rapid change” in both form and idea and “these changes in some measure affect designers and their position in the theatre”

The aesthetic and theatrical dimensions of indigenous design and technology have been frequently highlighted in Western theatre traditions. Some examples of these highlighted in Western theatre history can be seen in the classical Greek (*Deus ex Machina*), Roman theatre (gladiatorial costumes) as well as the performance spaces in the English Elizabethan theatre (The Globe architecture) where local technical ingenuity have been applied in performance presentation at various venues and contexts. However, the African and Asian legacies in technical theatre production as seen in elaborate costuming and masking techniques have often been overlooked, de-emphasized and sometimes denied by historians and critics. For instance, Elaine Aston and George Savona (1991: 91-92) traced the evolution of theatre practice and highlighted the role of technical theatre in achieving aesthetics using Western theatre as the paradigm. Hence, while the technical creativity of the Greek masks and *Deus ex Machina*, the Roman gladiatorial costumes and accessories, the Italian perspective scenery and the special effects of the medieval theatres were widely acknowledged, the technical ingenuity behind African masking, costuming and accessories have been largely ignored. At best, the designs are subsumed under ethnic visual spectacles while the associated and supporting special effects are explained away as sheer magic and ritual action.

Oscar Brockett (1999: 631) attributes this marginalization to the negative impacts of the colonial encounter in Africa. Hence, “because Africa had little performance that resembled forms they knew, Europeans, when they began to colonize Africa, were convinced that it was devoid of the theatre”. Nevertheless, technical creativity and application of indigenous technology have been a part of theatrical tradition in Africa. The

indigenous theatre designers and artisans earn social recognition and often make a livelihood out of their arts by earning cash and material rewards. For instance, Nnabuenyi Ugonna (1984: 88) explains that among the Igbo of Nigeria, mask designers are highly respected and admired due to their mastery of costuming technologies. Hence, they are often called “udide” (the spider) which “symbolizes the supreme artist” with the creative “power of gathering together fragments of any object and creating them into a new object”. Consequently, “members of the community contribute funds and materials towards the costuming of their masks. Some well-to-do patrons may make endowments towards the costuming” and these are used to gratify the designers (Ugonna 1984: 147).

Traditional African theatre designers also maintained one of the most effective artist-training systems through mentoring, apprenticeship and right of primogeniture. Some of the designers are attached to royal palaces and elite cults and serve as technical crew in festivals and theatrical events. Through their artist-training traditions, the community is assured of continuous supply of designers and sustainable development of human and cultural capital. In practice, indigenous African theatre designers and technologists also observe a marked level of specialization. Hence, there are carvers, sculptors, weavers, tanners, taxidermists, blacksmiths, body designers, decorators, painters and experts at needlework. During major productions, they work together as a coordinated team. One of such major productions is the festival which embodies a range of other arts in one theatrical event. A carnival is also a form of festival but it is regulated by themes which define the artistic and technical practices or concepts in each year’s production. Toni Duruaku (2011: 16) affirms that carnivals are “theme festivals” and he further explains that, “theme festivals are built around a central theme, a particular purpose and with a specific philosophy. They are not rooted in any particular traditional setting and so are hardly in their original state”. To illustrate with a Nigerian example, he states that:

The Cross River State Government has in the immediate past started a theme festival called *Calabar Carnival*, which is making enormous impact both in Nigeria and beyond our shores. Designed as a tourist treat, it has received wide acclaim due largely to the conceptual design reflected in its organization, scope, content and glamour (Duruaku 2011: 19-20).

Hence, since the carnival presentation is regulated, it makes utmost demands on the designers whether in the indigenous or contemporary (globalized) mode or performance context. This study thus explores the implications for human and cultural capital development in the area of

carnival (theatre) design in Nigeria using participant observation as a major research method. The participant observation method adopted for the study provides what J.P. Spradley (1980: 7) refers to as “insider status” and it involved active participation from the pre-carnival (planning) stages to the presentation (processions and viewing of the carnival processions) as well as post-performance (winding up) activities. Additional data for this study were obtained through in-depth interviews held with some designers and organizers of the carnivals to augment the data collected through observation. The interview data also helped to clarify some issues concerning the designs and management of carnival events which could not be ascertained through observation. The data analysis was descriptive, critical and interpretative in approach and logically arrived at conclusions based on content analysis of the information obtained. Generally, the research methodology followed a qualitative approach supported by materials obtained from the library. In affirming the suitability of the qualitative method to this type of study, Sam Ukala (2006: 13) states that “observation, participant observation, interview, live recording on video or audio tapes are cardinal techniques of data collection in this methodology”. All these were applied in the course of the fieldwork conducted in this study.

### **Globalization, Technology and Human Capital**

Globalization fosters a socio-economic system that connects different peoples and cultures of the world into one universal network of relationships. This system is driven by the twin engines of technology and the media which provide a global platform for economic and cultural interchange. Bertus Haverkort, Katrien Van't Hooft and Win Hiemstra (2003: 23) explain that globalization brings about “increased global communication, application of internationally accepted technologies, and the uniformity of commercial products and values” thereby creating “opportunity to link people across the globe, to exchange information and goods” and also “link production systems in a complementary way”.

However, Bertus Haverkort *et al* and other critics such as Toyin Falola and Femi Osofisan argue that the platform offered by globalization is neither equal nor mutually beneficial for all parties. Hence, instead of globalization offering a horizontal pattern of socio-economic and cultural relations, it foists a vertical communication structure that places less-developed countries at the receiving end (the bottom) of global interactions. Falola (2016: 58-59) affirms that, “it is the weak nations that are being asked to adjust, to subordinate their national interests to the threatening agenda of globalization”. This raises the concern that

globalization may “become the transitional narrative to imperialism” because, ultimately, “it is not going to benefit rich and poor countries alike”. One factor that influences the lopsided impact of globalization is the technological gap that exists between the global North and South. This gap appears to widen as technology advances into the complex format of digitization. The digital divide has wide implications for indigenous cultures, heritage and the creative industry particularly in developing countries. This is because globalization has made most of these countries mere receivers or consumers of materials, ideas, and technologies from the more advanced societies. In their struggle to survive, Africa and other poor economies are forced to attune their tastes and resources to suit the Western-induced global pattern or model of production and consumerism in order to find markets for their products.

In the culture and creative industries, a coping mechanism that has been advanced for dealing with the impacts of globalization is technological adaptation. This involves the domestication of borrowed or globalized technologies to create compliant and effective platforms for global marketing of indigenous culture productions in a sustainable way. This process demands creative ingenuity and has led to the emergence of the term “glocalisation” – the quest to situate the global in the local. Responses to the impact of globalization on local culture and the creative industries, particularly within the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, have led to the emergence of a hybrid culture referred to as “glocalisation”. The term has been used by various scholars, such as Melanie Smith who has been studying global cultural production, tourism and patterns of consumption in the culture industry. But the term “glocalisation” appears to have first emerged in the 1980s when it was used by the Harvard Business School to describe global economic trends. (Sharma 2009: 51). Thereafter the sociologist Ronald Robertson used the term in 1997 to describe the impact of globalization on indigenous cultures. However, in recent discourse, “glocalisation” has been popularized by Professor George Ritzer, an American sociologist noted for his landmark studies on globalization, patterns of consumption, as well as modern and postmodern social theory. Ritzer further coined other related terms such as: “McDonaldization”, “Grobalization”, “Americanization” and “Prosumption” which are all used to describe global trends in consumption. From its practical perspective, “glocalisation” reflects how globalization and localization processes are providing new platforms for cultural expression. In essence, “glocalisation” represents the tangible and intangible consequences of globalization, providing an opportunity for local resources to mount global market platforms as well as paving the way for global trends to become entrenched in local market contexts and production environments.

Furthermore, Smith (2009: 63) argues that the “glocal” platform remains a lopsided pedestal reflecting “the intersection of political, economic and socio-cultural concerns with its emphasis on the local and community impacts of global structures and processes”. Similarly, Ritzer (2004: 73) considers glocalisation as “the interpretation of the global and the local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas”. Hence, “although globalization has broadened knowledge through the dissemination of and exposure to a variety of hybrid cultural forms from different parts of the world, such dissemination has hardly been in equal measure for all cultures” (Osofisan, 2016: 232).

Consequently, a recurrent keynote requirement of practice in contemporary creative industries is skills development. This goes beyond mere mentoring, apprenticeship, understudy and natural flair that characterize Africa’s indigenous design and technology education. Globalization is influencing skills development due to frequent changes in technology and their application in various sectors of human endeavour. Hence, the need to update technical skills on a regular basis has become imperative. In the arts and culture industries, the need to align productions to the digital template is increasingly becoming stronger. Whether in design, performance, management, and product and production marketing, the tools and resources for creating works and reaching the target audiences are now digitized and this requires technical training, retraining and eventual switch-over to new platforms.

However, some scholars have expressed concern over access to technology and interpretation of technological acquisition, especially in developing economies (Osofisan, 2016: 232). Daphne Jayasinghe (2001; 79) has also observed that the tendency to embrace new technologies, maximize production outputs and link into the global markets could, in reality, lead to labour “displacement” and “de-skilling” of local craftsmen and women who may be reduced to mere operators of machinery or packaging attendants. This is against the backdrop of the argument that technology can stimulate creativity and enhance production output and quality.

One setback in the area of technological adaptation is that it is considered more tasking, expensive and time-consuming. It requires patience and repeated trials to get an effective model. This requires expensive investments in research, equipment and human capital. However, when the model is achieved, developed and promoted, it could become cheaper with time. This is particularly the case when the new model has gained wider market acceptability thus encouraging mass production, higher patronage and increased returns. But globalization does not encourage poor economies to make substantial investments in research and local technology because the controllers of global capital and markets

aggressively pursue a policy of dependency among consumers and discourage competition in local markets. The trend of globalization thus encourages the multinationals through local agents and subsidiaries to flood poor economies with more advanced production technology, as well as alternative and cheaper products that drive consumption patterns and stifle local industries out of the market due to higher production costs and low patronage. Therefore, in Africa's creative industries, there is less effort to cultivate and sustain a technological model to support home grown production. This is a reflection of the mentality that affects other sectors of the continent's economies. The governments and private sector do not invest enough in indigenous creativity and technology. Many African societies appear to be in a hurry to get what they need. In such circumstances, it seems faster and more convenient to use imported or ready-made solutions.

There are also the economic and social undertones behind the reluctance of many states in Africa to cultivate and promote an effective policy on technological adaptation in various sectors of the culture industry. In many cases, it may be cheaper to use imported materials for production, even though it cannot guarantee quality. Though many of the imported materials are inferior and less durable, many people patronize them because they are cheap. In a poor economy, cost is always a major consideration in production and patronage. This is supported by the mentality and social regard often attached to using "foreign" goods and the low consideration given to local materials and products. These factors are fuelling new trends that are creeping into African culture industries, especially in carnival design and technology.

### **Trend and Shifts in Carnival Design**

Generally, the theory of carnival as advanced by Mikhail Bakhtin (1998: 138) holds that a carnival is a performance in which people dress up in fanciful or extraordinary costumes, process through the streets in groups or large numbers, singing, dancing and having fun. The carnival, according to Bakhtin, offers the common people "unrestrained freedom" to poke fun at the authorities, dress as they choose, crack jokes and be "released from the constraints of everyday life to engage in sensuous, hedonistic and licentious pleasure".

Furthermore, Safi Mahfouz (2015: 187) explains that the carnival is a popular culture that relies on the comic and "highlights the twisted reversal of supremacy and authority where royalties and men of noble stature are made powerless while 'dregs' of society such as fools, clowns, jesters and plebeians are momentarily endowed with power to mock

royalty". The carnival performance is commonly regarded as a form of festival governed by themes (Duruaku 2011: 19). Hence, it constitutes a part of the growing artistic and cultural heritage of most societies. Carnivals have been held in various forms in different communities and cultures in Africa and across the globe. But John Cowley (1998: 1) maintains that the modern carnival, in its contemporary form, is traced to the Caribbean performance, specifically in Trinidad. Similarly, Smith (2009: 138) explains that while the modern carnival reached its height of vibrancy and popularity in the "Afro-Brazilian culture of the Rio Carnival", its history in Europe "can be traced back to the concept of Carnivale in Italy" featuring "masquerade balls" and the "Masked Mardi Gras".

With the rise of cultural tourism as a significant revenue source in global economy, most countries and cities began to establish carnival programmes to attract tourists. Following this trend in tourism development, each culture or community seeks to infuse some uniqueness and artistic identity into its carnival productions. Due to the explosion of interest in tourism and proliferation of carnivals around the world, audience patronage has become more competitive. As part of audience development and engineering strategies, African carnival organizers are relying heavily on design concepts to transform the content, atmosphere and artistic identity of their productions. Indeed, as a strongly visual performance, the carnival makes extensive use of costume, make-up, set (float) design and allied technology to achieve its concepts. Carnivals are organized according to themes that change every year. Their themes are usually reflected in design concepts, motifs and styles and conveyed through a creative application of available technologies which combine with *plastic* (in terms of shape and adaptability rather than material) and three-dimensional designs to create a visual atmosphere that gives the production its artistic identity.

The carnival is essentially a designer's theatre. Its production makes utmost demands on various categories of theatrical designers. They determine the atmosphere and identity to be evoked by the performance through their conceptual selection and application of materials, contrast, rhythm, movement, tone and symmetry. In fact, what differentiates one carnival from the other is the type of materials used in the designs of the costumes, make-up and accessories as well as the principles applied in the design construction.

Currently, there are several carnival performances held in various cities across Africa. Nigeria alone boasts of four vibrant carnival performances presented yearly at Abuja, Calabar, Lagos and Port Harcourt. However, a close examination of some carnivals in Nigeria shows a paradigm shift as the productions evolve with time. This paradigm shift tends

towards the Westernization or Caribbeanization of African carnivals. This trend appears to emanate from the misunderstanding of the concepts of festival and carnival by many programme managers and cultural executives. The misinterpretation which, incidentally is gaining popularity, considers the carnivalesque performances featuring indigenous materials and designs as cultural festivals, whereas those featuring foreign design concepts, materials and accessories (similar to those found in Trinidad, Rio and Notting Hill productions) as carnival.

Therefore, such misconceptions about nomenclature and meaning affect the concept, organization and policy decisions concerning some carnival productions in Africa. The assumption is that designs and costumes need to be “outrageous” and “provocative” to qualify as carnival. Hence, in the Calabar Carnival due to repeated criticisms, the initial format of the carnival presentation was altered by the Carnival Commission to create a separate day and event for indigenous costume parade regarded as “cultural carnival” whereas the Caribbean-style designs are presented on a separate day and tagged “the main carnival event”.

The Port Harcourt carnival (CARNIRIV) also features both indigenous and Caribbean designs as separate segments of the fiesta. According to Sunday Edum (2016: 7), “Carniriv as a cultural festival was developed from defunct RIVIFEST...The carnival has grown to an international standard featuring both traditional and Caribbean styles in dance and costumes”. Furthermore, the Abuja carnival, despite some noticeable “transmutations” in the costume designs was still viewed as a cultural carnival because “it was designed to be an avenue for the showcasing of the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Nigeria”, to facilitate cultural tourism and “promote unity through cultural integration” (Asigbo 2013: 10). This definition is based on the government policy document guiding the Abuja Carnival event. Thus, the erroneous impression created by the carnival managers is that Abuja carnival is a mere display or celebration of Nigerian “cultural heritage” and not actually a global carnival.

The implication of these interpretations on carnival production design is far-reaching. First, it looks outside (abroad) for material, design concept and the human resources needed for modern carnival (Western/Caribbean style) shows. Second, it localizes, reduces the aesthetic worth, value and integrity of the design and artisans needed for cultural festival or cultural performances. There is a popular assumption among some Nigerian carnival managers that Carnivals have become a globalized performance. The Calabar carnival authorities, from the information available on their annual magazine, *Carnival Calabar Preview* tag their event as a “global fiesta” and “Africa’s biggest street party” and they frequently target a foreign audience of visiting tourists every year and for

who the designs and themes hold little cultural capital and significance. Duruaku (2011: 16) affirms that carnivals are “not rooted in any particular traditional setting”. He adds that the Calabar carnival is “making enormous impact ... beyond our shores” (Duruaku 2011: 19). The quest to appeal to a global audience tends to support the practice of outsourcing and copying of carnival designs to present a globalized production. The outsourcing of design jobs leads to capital flight because the contracts are given to outsiders or foreigners, whereas indigenous or local designers yearning for job opportunities are ignored. In the Calabar carnival, for instance, the foreign designers contracted for the project often arrive with their own technical crew and look down on local designers and artisans. In the design of some costumes, such as those used by the “frontline girls” in the Calabar carnival, the visiting designers even complete the project outside the location of the proposed carnival event. Sometimes, the local designers receive the ready-made design components and merely assist to assemble them under the leadership of the visiting designer or crew. There are five bands that compete in the Calabar carnival every year. Some bands such as Masta Blasta and Seagull frequently use imported designers (foreign nationals or Nigerians from outside Cross River State) in their costume, floats and sound (music) designs. In an interview, Maxwell Bebia, a leader with the Freedom Band, states as follows:

Some of the bands that have the resources make their costumes abroad. At least, their major costumes and accessories are fully imported or assembled here. Sometimes, Nigerian designers are used to make the floats, some costumes and some other designs. But most of these Nigerian designers are not residents of Cross River State. Biodun Abbe usually comes with his team from Lagos to design floats while Mr. Kareem of Z-Mirage Company also comes from Lagos with their crew and equipment to design special lighting for the pageants and other night shows. The bands and the Carnival Commission have contracts with these visiting designers.

Similarly, a staff of the Cross River Tourism Board, Lynda Bassey, explained in an interview that:

The State Government has foreign partners that support the carnival programme. They design special costumes for the Frontline Girls usually presented by the Carnival Commission to lead the processions. Those girls do not belong to any band. The foreign partners are consultants that help in various technical matters, planning and the management of the event.

In the Abuja carnival, many of the participating states hire designers from other parts of the country to create their costumes, floats and even dances in line with the official theme of the year. This trend is also noticeable among the various Local Councils that participate in the Port Harcourt carnival (CARNIRIV). A performing artist who has been contracted on different occasions to assist various state contingents to the Abuja carnival, Obi Edochie, observes that:

The carnival is becoming more competitive every year. Each troupe wants to do well and project the name and good image of their state. So, they usually look for the best hands anywhere in the country to help design their costumes, floats, and also choreograph their dances to fit the theme of the carnival. But this costs more money because the fees of these freelance artists are usually high. If your budget is low, you cannot get their services. Instead of releasing money to train local artists and designers on ground, the State directors always wait for the last minute to hurriedly hire experts from outside and spend more money every year. I think it is a policy problem that is common in the Nigerian Civil Service system.

The carnival event is a major project with significant investments. As an annual production, local design technicians, artisans, crewmembers and ancillary service providers in the area usually expect a boom in their industries and trades. The practice of importing designs and designers is often used as a status symbol by some carnival organizers and culture executives who often brag that their project is of “exceptional” quality and thus “superior” to others elsewhere in the continent. A silent competition and struggle for supremacy and greater audience patronage appears to exist among Nigerian carnival committees (producers). This also contributes to the trend of outsourcing of designs as each group seeks the services of those considered “the best” in the industry. Sometimes, the same group of designers is contracted by different states to work for them. Some notable designers such as Biodun Abbe, Molinta Enendu, Wasee Kareem are hired repeatedly to design for different groups in the Abuja, Calabar and Port Harcourt carnivals. For instance, in an interview conducted through email and telephone, Biodun Abbe affirmed that between 2010 and 2013 he designed floats simultaneously for both Kogi and Benue States contingents to the Abuja Carnival while designing for the Seagull Band at the Calabar Carnival in the same period as well. He stopped designing for states coming for the Abuja Carnival after he was appointed the Artistic Director of the carnival but he still designs for Seagull Band at the Calabar Carnival up to the 2016 edition.

This study operationalizes the definition of outsourcing from two perspectives; these are internal and external. The internal refers to outsourcing that goes to experts within Nigeria but outside the administrative State using the service while the external refers to outsourcing agreements made with experts from outside Nigeria. In the Calabar (Nigeria) Carnival for instance, the trend of outsourcing involves both categories. While some designers from other parts of Nigeria are contracted by different bands to design costumes, accessories and carnival floats. expatriates (from Trinidad and the UK) are given the contracts as technical partners by the state government. These foreigners have been made associates to the Calabar Carnival Commission and they provide a range of design services, especially in the areas of Caribbean-style costumes and accessories. Some Bands like the Masta Blasta and Seagull make their major costumes abroad and win first positions every year, whereas bands like Bayside and Freedom that use local designers and artisans rarely win any prize. These foreign experts use superior technical expertise and technology that are not accessible to the Nigerian designers due to cost and availability.

The inclination towards the Rio and Trinidad paradigm as the accepted carnival model is not limited to Nigeria. The 2015 carnival held in Uganda also had Brazilian dancers imported from Rio with their full costumes and accessories to provide the presumed carnival spectacle. The trend of importing designers, costumes and accessories from Latin America is an attempt to take advantage of the popularity of these carnival traditions. Similarly, the practice of copying foreign carnival design models and concepts is an appropriation of culture and cultural products which is becoming a common trend in the African creative industry. In fact, Matthias Krings (2015: 2) observes that appropriation is a popular trend in the African popular culture industries as can be seen in the video-film, music production, and entertainment magazines in different parts of Africa. Nevertheless, while the appropriation paradigm described by Krings is somehow creative and creates jobs and markets for local artists and their cultural products, the outsourcing practice in respect of Nigerian carnivals actually leads to loss of jobs among local designers and craftsmen.

Another impact of outsourcing of designs and the propagation of Western carnival models in Africa is in the area of souvenir design. In the Calabar example, many carnival souvenirs and accessories such as masks of different designs, head gears, wrist bands, face paints, balloons, whistles and so on are all imported from China by local dealers. This could have been a franchise that could create jobs for local designers, artists and craftsmen, if properly harnessed and exploited. With the rising exchange rate of Nigerian's currency (Naira) to the US Dollar and other foreign

currencies, these souvenirs are becoming more expensive and the African patrons are unwittingly creating jobs for young people in Asia.

## **Conclusion**

The carnival is a performance that relies heavily on the work of designers for optimal impact. It is a theatrical event that offers opportunities to designers and adds value to their work in terms of patronage, income generation and human resource development. Hence, the establishment and sustenance of carnival programmes in different cities in Nigeria is expected to boost the development of human capital in the field of design and performing arts technology.

However, the popular misconception of carnival as an imported form has led to the “Caribbeanization” or Westernization of carnival designs. This has created a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of designs and engagement of designers for carnival productions. This trend is reinforced by the high regard often accorded to “imported” or “foreign” goods and services in Africa. Consequently, the tendency to copy foreign design models and outsourcing of design jobs at both national and international levels is becoming entrenched in Nigerian carnival programmes. This, this essay argues, has negative implications for the development of human resources and livelihood for local designers, artisans and associated service providers.

The presumption that carnival should present a spectacle similar to those of Rio or Trinidad is erroneous and misplaced. From the definitions of carnival earlier cited in this study, it can be inferred that the carnival and the carnivalesque are prevalent in African performance traditions. It is also important to emphasize that no theory of carnival prescribes a particular type of costume, make-up, music, float or accessories. Whatever that is spectacular, fanciful or extraordinary fits into the carnival concept. Hence, Nigeria carnival administrators must not reproduce the Latin American model to achieve an exciting carnival spectacle. The local materials and styles can be creatively made to suit any theme the carnival officials may choose for the year without necessarily engaging in outsourcing which takes away jobs and career opportunities from local designers and artisans. .

In essence, African carnival producers and managers need not copy foreign designs or engage in outsourcing of design contracts to make impact. The originality or uniqueness of African carnival designs lies in looking inwards to use available materials in a creative way. This also promotes sustainability and supports livelihoods and human capital and skills development in the culture industry. The paradigm shift in African

carnival design is necessary but this should most importantly, be focused at becoming global models and brands. This is the idea behind the concept of “glocalisation” which, as earlier stated, is focused at globalizing the local and localizing the global in a complementary fashion that engenders sustainability in the industry.

Another option open to carnival executives is to explore the huge potential offered by creative adaption of technology. In this way, African carnival designers can borrow, adapt and domesticate some new technologies available in the garment, fashion and design industries to suit local carnival needs. In fact, Thomas de Gregori (1969: 65-66) emphasized that:

Africans need not consider borrowing technology a mark of inferiority. All cultures throughout their development borrow from other cultures unless they are isolated. It is precisely this isolation or the lack of opportunities to borrow from other cultures that is the major cause of technological backwardness, not race or personality. African cultures have shown themselves to be adaptive in borrowing technology from others. Since science and technology are universal and cumulative, the science and technology of any particular culture depend heavily on borrowing from others.

Therefore, African carnival executives could, where necessary, hire the services of foreign experts to teach new or emerging technologies to local designers. The indigenous designers can then teach the skills and techniques to others. This train-the-trainers approach will engender sustainability in the industry, develop the local human capital and save the much-needed foreign exchange which can then be ploughed back into other sectors of the creative industry. To encourage creativity among indigenous and local designers, the carnival adjudicators may need to create a separate prize for local content design or allocate some reasonable scoring points to indigenous design initiatives. As Duruaku (2001: 19) affirms, “no culture is superior to the other, judging a display by using the Western standards of adjudication negated the spirit of the event and could be a prescription for discord in a festival”. The African carnival producers and adjudicators need to promote technical patriotism by decolonizing the overall concept of carnival and their policy decisions.

African carnival production is apparently responding to the strong currents of globalization. Femi Osofisan (2016: 231-232) maintains that “the site of culture” is one of the key areas “where the most deleterious effects of globalization are especially telling” and this is manifest in “the dissemination of and exposure to a variety of hybrid cultural forms... leading increasingly to the creation of a global, homogenous culture

heavily determined by the American way of life". Furthermore, Haverkort *et al* (2013:24) argue that an impact of globalization on culture industries is that "rural communities experience a change in their local markets" because in cultural productions, "a general Westernisation of taste and consumption pattern is taking place... The economic opportunities for these local products are increasingly being taken over by the international markets, resulting in further poverty as well as loss of traditional skills and experience". These trends are becoming a reality in the African carnival industry. But David Throsby (2010: 197) argues that the negative impacts of globalization on the creative industries can only be curtailed through effective "culturally sustainable development policy" that gives adequate "attention to the needs of creative artists and arts organizations" while maintaining "a strong policy stance in regard to the conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage". The growth and support of indigenous designers and their arts should therefore be a major consideration for African carnival producers, tourism executives and policy makers in the culture industries.

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