

**IMPACT OF FESTAC ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART AND
CULTURE IN NIGERIA**

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UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS,
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BACHELOR OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND
DIPLOMACY.**

FEBRUARY, 2025

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify this research project was carried out by **OGHOSA GIFT OSAHON** in the Department of History and International Studies, University of Benin, under my supervision.

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(Project Supervisor)

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Date:

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for his Divine Favour, Mercy, Grace, Blessings and Protection upon my life, as well as provisions throughout my stay in the University of Benin.

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To my friends; Osemwengie Osatohanmwen, Michael, Jubilee, Gift, Eleazar, Christy and Michael, Obianuju and others too numerous to mention thank you all for being there through the journey.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Art and culture constitute the essence of a nation serving as a mirror to its historical narrative values and aspirations.¹ To Nigeria Art and culture has played a crucial role in promoting unity and safeguarding the rich heritage of its diverse people.² In promoting and preserving its Arts and culture Nigeria hosted a extravagant international festival, celebrating Africa's cultural achievements and diaspora communities from January 15 to February12, 1977.³ This particular festival to known as the second world Black and African festival of Arts and culture.⁴ It is modeled on Leopold Serihor's In Augurol festival of Black Arts or Feaman held in Darkar April 1966.⁵

Festac 77 evoked the legacy of colonial exhibition, pan African congresses, Black nationalist movement and the then ongong liberation struggles within the constituent.⁶ This festival concurrently indicated Nigeria's rise as a regionality and globally influential oil-rich power.⁷The display of various Arts and the performance of African Artists such as; Fela Kuti, Mirian Makeba, King Sunny Ade, and others showed the diversity of richness of African and Black diaspora heritage. This festival extensively impacted the

development of Nigeria Arts and culture as it promoted cultural heritage and led to the growth of the Art industry in Nigeria. It also led to infrastructural development such as the National Arts Theatre and Festac Town etc. Festact 77 was more than just a celebration of African and Black cultural heritage, it was a defining movement that illuminated the significance of Arts and culture in fostering communal bonds, safeguarding traditions and influencing national identity. For Nigeria, the act of hosting the festival served as both an affirmation of its pre-eminence in the pan African movement and a catalyst for the growth of its creative industries.

By examining the impacts of Festac on the development of Nigeria Arts and culture, this study delves into how the festival redefined cultural expression, fostered unity in diversity and established Nigeria as a global centre for African heritage. Therefore this examination revealed the lasting legacies of Festac 77 and its continued relevance in understanding the intersection of culture, identity and understanding.

Aim and objectives

Aim of the study is to examine the impact of Festac on the development of Art and culture in Nigeria.

Specific objectives are:

1. To examine Nigeria's cultural heritage prior to Festac 77
2. To examine the celebration of Art and culture during Festac 77.
3. To examine the impact of Festac on the development of Nigeria art and culture.

Significance

This study highlights Festac's impact on the Nigerian creative industry, including music, literature, theater, and visual arts, tracing how it inspired contemporary artistic expressions. It also examines the festival's influence on cultural policy, tourism, and international collaborations, offering valuable lessons for future cultural events and policy-making.

By shedding light on Festac's legacy, this research contributes to discussions on cultural sustainability and the revitalization of Nigeria's artistic heritage in a globalized world.

Scope of the study

The focus of this research is to examine the impact of Festac on the development of Art and culture in Nigeria.

The specific periods to be examined while conducting this research is January 15 to February 12 1977 to 2024.

The reason for the choice of dates is because in 1977 the second World Black and African Festival was celebrated in Lagos and Kaduna, Nigeria during this period.

To be able to examine the impact of this festival, this research will evaluate how the legacies of Festac has impacted the development of Art and culture from 1977 to 2024

Methodology

This study utilizes an historical research methodology which incorporates both primary and secondary sources. Using historical methodology, this study examines the event that took place in Festac and identifying causal link between the event and subsequent cultural trends in Nigeria

Primary Sources

These are original documents that include, oral interview with knowledgeable people who were participants of the festival, cultural practitioners and people who experienced the festival. Other materials are Archival documentation, visual documentation of performances, pictures of artifacts during Festac etc.

Secondary sources

Given the extensive body of academic work on Festac 77, a significant number of secondary sources such as books, Journals, Articles, Newspapers and online resources were used to complement the primary source materials. Some of these materials were gotten from the Library while others were sourced from the internet.

Literature Review

Festac 77 is a Festival that had been discussed extensively by Nigerian and non-Nigerians writers with lots of media attention, several of these literatures in the form of books, Journals and articles were beneficial in giving background knowledge to this study and some of them are reviewed below.

David Murphy's book titled first world Festival of Negro. Arts, Darker 1966.⁸ These books examined how the international forum provided by the Darker festival showcased a wide array of arts along with thousand of artists across Africa and its diaspora. The festival constituted a highly symbolic moment in the era of decolonization and the push for civil rights for black people in the united state.⁹ Although David Murphy's work gives a large amount of information on the Darker festival s such as Festac by showcasing African cultural developments some considerable gaps remained. David

Murphy's work gives no information on Festac 77 or its impact on the development of Nigeria Art and culture. The reason for this was because the festival was celebrated even years before 1977.

However this particular research will fill this gap by giving a well detailed analysis on the celebration of Art and culture in Festac as well as its impact to modern Nigeria Art and culture. David Murpohy's work will give this particular research a guide on how the idea of Festac as initiated by the first world Festival of Negro Arts Darker 1966.

Hillary Chijioke Okoye conducted a comprehensive analysis on the values of Art and culture ; their challenges to the Nigerian society. 10 This journal reveals the relationship between art and culture and how it can be maintained. The writer extensively aimed at creating an awareness that the natural riches and cultural wealth in Nigeria should be exploited by the Nigeria indigenes and not by foreigner. While this journal gives a general insight on the values of Art and culture in Nigeria, certain areas were not fully addressed

The journal did not examine the impact of the festival of art and culture to Nigeria's art and culture. However, this journal is significant to this particular research as it gives enough information on Nigeria art and culture, its importance and how it has been exploited by foreigners. This will guide this study by giving a groundwork on Nigeria art and culture before Festac.

Andrew Apter wrote an article titled *Festac 77: A black world's fair*¹². In this article Apter examines Festac 77 as a movement cultural event that showcased African and African discipline arts. He analyses how Nigeria utilized its oil wealth to protect a part. African identity, emphasizing the festivals role in cultural diplomacy and nation building. Despite these values, valuable information certain areas of the subject were left unexplained. This work has limited focus on the direct and localized impacts of Festac on Nigeria's art constitutions, artistis and cultural development at the grass root level. There was a also less emphasis on how Festac shaped modern art movement of the career of Nigerian artists.

However Apter's work compliment this research by providing an in-dept analysis of Festac as a platform for Nigeria to assert itself as a cultural and political leader in Africa and the diaspora. Nevertheless this particular research will extensively give and explain some important impact of Festac on modern Nigeria art and culture.

Andrew Apter's book titled *the Pan African Nation: Oil and the spectacle of culture in Nigeria*.¹³ This book explores the intersection of Nigerian oil economy and cultural polices with a focus on Festac 77. Apter discusses how the festival served as a platform for Nigeria to assert its leadership in Pan

Africanism , influencing cultural narrative both locally and internationally. However, considerable gaps remains.

The work primarily concentrate on the political and economic aspect offering less insight into the specific developments within Nigeria's artistic community and post Festac. Nevertheless, this book by Apter is relevant to this study as its highlights how the festival unifies diverse African cultural expression, fostering collaboration among artists and cultural leaders from across the continent and the diaspora. It also contribute to understanding how Festac position Nigeria art and culture as a central mode in the global Pan African movement. However this particular research will examine the impact of Festac on the development of art and culture in Nigeria.

Ahmed Yerima is the author the journal titled the legacy of Featac 77: the challenge of the Nigerian national theater at Igammu.¹⁴ In this journal Yerima assessed the role of the national theatre constructed for Festac 77 in Nigerian National Landscape. He discusses the theaters' contribution to the performing art and the challenges its faces in fulfilling its mandate. However several aspects were not fully addressed. The journal focuses on the national theatre, providing less study of on other cultural sectors influence by Festac. This particular study will examined other areas that were influenced by Festac

in Nigeria. This journal is significant to this research as it gives a breakdown of one of the legacy of Festac which is the national theatre.

Chukwuemeka and Chibueze Eke wrote a comprehensive analysis titled a critical assessment of the socio-cultural impact of Facter 77 on festac town, Lagos Nigeria.¹⁵ This journal extensively assess the socio-cultural impact of Festac on Festac twon, the primary hosting community and its neighbouring sub-urban centres. However the scope of this journal was limited. The journal is geographically limited to Festac town, providing less insight into the festival broader national impact on art and culture.

Nevertheless, this particular study will examine the attribute of Festac in Nigerian art and culture. The journal written by Chukwuemeka and Chibueze Eke is relevant to this study as its gives adequate insight on the social cultural impact of Festac using the Fesatac town.

Ugochukwo-Smooth C. Nzewi work titled infrastructures for a black African renaissance: cultural institution building in post colonial Africa.¹⁶ This work examines the establishment of cultural institutions in post colonial Africa ,with references to festac 77 as a catalyst for such developments. However, some considerable gaps remained. This work mainly discussed cultural institution building in post colonial Africa and did not provide an in depth analysis of how festac impacted the Nigeria contemporary art scene.

However this research will discuss specific impacts of festac on Nigeria art and culture. This article can be seen as relevant to this particular research as it sheds light on the various cultural institution building in post colonial Africa which can also be categorised as one of festacs impact on Nigeria art and culture. Etienne locks article titled the intellectual dimension of the second world black and African festival of art and culture and its relevance to day.¹⁷ This article analyzes the contribution of second world black and African festival of art and culture that took place in Nigeria 1977,in shaping post colonial Africa, as well as its relevance today. The article rediscovers the intellectual tradition that sustained the organisation of that festival which highlighted the intellectual and artistic genius of Africa .However some considerable gaps remained. This work focused on intellectual discourse and overlooked the contributions from non academic intellectuals ,such as traditional artists or community leaders. This particular research will look Into the practical involvement of these non-academic intellectuals during the celebration of festac. Nevertheless this work is relevant to this research as it gives a breakdown of how festac 77 contributed to post colonial Africa.

Lindsay J.Twa journal titled the great Congress of the black spirit: Artist reflections on festac 77.¹⁸ This journal extensively examine the celebration of feste in general its grassroots organizational accomplishment, and the impact the experiences of the festival had on the multi generational US contingent.it

also accounted for the artists experiences and how Festac shaped their artistic practice and outlook. However some considerable gaps remained.

The journal overemphasized on the individual artists experiences without a broader analysis of how these experiences influenced Nigeria national art scene. It also neglects Festac impact on Foster international collaborations among Nigerian Artists. However this research will examine the various impacts of Festac on the development of art and culture in Nigeria.

Lindsay journal is relevant to this particular research because it gives a vivid description of festac77 ,the event and performance of artists, Andrew Apters research titled beyond Negritude :Black cultural citizenship and the Arab question in festac 77.¹⁹ This work focused on the political tensions within the pan-Africanist movement, especially the Arab-African dynamics .Nevertheless some areas of the study were not examined. The focus of the journal was towards the Arab question and not on the impact of festac to the development of art and culture in Nigeria. The work lacked detailed exploration of the cultural programs, exhibitions and performances that took place during the festival.

However this particular research will examine the above shortcomings in details.it will examine how the performances, exhibitions and cultural exchanges during Festac contributed to the evolution of specific Nigerian art

forms and Traditions. The Importance of this journal is that it provides a groundwork for the study of festac77.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter One

This chapter will examine the background to the study, aims and objective of the study, its Significance, Scope, Methodology and Literature Review

Chapter Two

Nigeria cultural heritage before Festac

This chapter will examine Nigeria art and cultbefore festac77, and this includes ;the culture of the Nigeria people, her traditional festivals, traditional attire cuisine and its unique artifacts.

Chapter Three:

Brief introduction of the nature of Festac art and culture

This chapter will examine the predecessors of Festac, the events that took place, the performances, artistic exhibitions and cultural representation that took place during the festival.

Chapter Four:

The Impact of festac on the development of art and culture in Nigeria.

This chapter will examine the various impacts of the festival on Nigeria art and culture, the growth of Nigeria cultural institutions ,global recognition of Nigeria art and culture and how the event has developed modern Nigeria art and culture.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

This chapter will give a brief summary of the subject matter.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER TWO

NIGERIA CULTURAL HERITAGE BEFORE FESTAC

Introduction

The history of Nigeria art and Culture is rich and diverse, reflecting the Contributions of various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Nigeria is made up of over 250 ethnic groups speaking different languages, practicing different culture and art, having diverse religious beliefs and values

The Nigerian culture is unique to its people and has been passed down from generation to generation mostly through oral tradition which is a body of information Concerning history, culture and environment of a people at any given time and space.¹ tradition can be in the form of Folklore, proverbs and myths. The culture of the people is their way of life, it encompasses their belief and Values.

The culture of the Nigerian people

One very vital cultural heritage of the Nigerian people is the culture of respect. Every Ethnic group in Nigeria practice the Culture of respect for elders and it is practiced through greeting. Every tribe has it's Unique way of greeting elders, for the Yoruba, their men greet their elders by prostrating on the ground

while the young Women Knee, this gesture is acknowledgment of the wisdom and experience of those who have walked before them.²

In Igbo tradition, younger people bow slightly or touch the ground with one hand. While the Hausa's greet by having their head or kneeling. These culture extends far beyond Family Structures as these gestures can be seen in the everyday life of the people in their various environment Another act of respect in the Nigerian culture is that one does not interrupt an elder while he speaks. Respect In Nigeria is not just a thought but it's lived and practiced by the people of who takes the word of an elder as wisdom. This is the reason why we hear Proverbs like "what an elder sees when sitting down, a young man cannot see it even if he Climbs an iroko tree. The above adage Explains the wisdom of an elder. The Nigerian people also respect their Ancestors and gods.

The Cultural festival of the Nigerian people

To understand the Nigerian Culture, One must experience it's vibrant, Colourful and deeply spiritual festivals The various Ethnic groups in Nigeria celebrate different festival that is unique to them. These events are more than just social gatherings, it can be Seen as a window into the soul of the people. Examples are the Osun Oshogbo festival, Durbar festival New yam festival and Igue Festival.

Osun Oshogbo festival

This festival is celebrated in Oshogbo in honour of the river goddess Osun one of the Yoruba dieties, it is celebrated for 12 days by the devotees who offer prayers and sacrifices and it also engaged in elaborate dances to celebrate fertility and purity.

Durbar festival

In the Northern part of Nigeria the Durbar Festival showcases the culture of the Hausa fulani people. This festival is often Celebrated during el-Afit and el-A dal and it is a display of skillful horse-riding and colourful customs with the rich Islamic heritage of North Nigeria³ The Emir adorned in Royal Regalia watches over as Calvary men parade in a show of Strengths, tradition and Unity. The Durbar is a reminder of the long history. and heritage of the Hausa-fulani people.

New Yam Festival

The Igbo people on the other hand have their own unique festival Called the New yam festival or 'iriji' this festival is giving Celebration to the gods for the bountiful harvest and it is a time for Communities to bond.⁴ There is the performance of traditional wrestling, masquerade performance and dances. The

yam represents a staple food for the people and this festival is their way of honouring the earth Abundance

IGue Festival

The Benin also celebrate igue festival which is done annually and involves masquerade performances, dances and beating of Royal drums. The Igue festival is a Significant festival in the history of Benin kingdom and in the lives of the people during the pre-Colonial period till present time.⁵ It begins with the Ague Ceremony, a period of national fasting in Benin and at the end of the fast, the otue- ugherha begins.⁶ The oba and his Chiefs display their ceremonial swords (eben) the Chiefs also display the traditional dances during the festival to show the Cultural Prowess of the people.⁷

These festivals are an embodiment of Nigeria Spirituality, Cultural pride and community Spirit. It brings together people of different age and backgrounds.

The Traditional marriage of the Nigerian people

Marriage is a sacred Institution in Nigeria culture and it goes beyond the Union of two individuals. It is the joining of families, Communities and tribes. These marriage are deeply rooted in tradition as the bride price of the woman is

to be paid by the family of the man, and all these practices have been passed down for centuries.

Each ethnic group have unique marriage customs, but they share the same Principle. marriage is not just about love but about family.

Yoruba tradition

In the Yoruba tradition, the groom and his family must first seek permission from the bride's family through an elaborate introduction ceremony which is referred to as "know me and let me know you."⁸ The groom's family presents gifts as a sign of their intention. The bride's family in turn puts them through a series of tests to ensure that they are the right fit.

Igbo Tradition

Similarly the Igbo traditional wedding known as the Egbanku is a colourful event filled with music, dance and symbolic gestures.⁹ The bride price is negotiated and the couple is surrounded with family members to offer advice and prayers for the future. The most captivating moment is when the bride dresses in her red traditional attire, searches for the groom in the crowd and presents him with the palm wine, signifying her acceptance to the union.

Hausa Tradition

For the Hausa's; marriage is closely Linked with Islamic tradition. The fatiah is a religious ceremony In which the Imam blesses the couples Union, what then follow is elaborate celebration with traditional Hausa music, flute and dance. The Bride is adorned with intricate designs on her hands and feet symbolizing beauty and joy.

Benin Tradition

The Benin traditional marriage ceremony is extremely interesting. The groom wears a white Shirt and a big skirt with a bead Cap on his head, beads on his hands and necks, while the women tie red wrapper with red beads on her neck and hands, and okuku on the head.¹⁰ The groan family pays twenty-four naira to the brides family as bride price.

There is one thing that stands Out in the Nigeria Culture and it is the beauty of it's attire.

Cultural attire of the Nigerian people

These attires are more than just fabrics, they are a statement of identity, Status and pride. The various tribes in Nigeria Can be differentiated by their dressing. for the youba's, their men wear Agbada for important occassions and it is a symbol of Status and respect while their women wear buba Which is a

matching blouse and wrapper, adorned with Igele which Can be tied in different styles.

In the igbo culture, the ishiago, is a shirt often made from velvet and it is worn by men during significant Ceremonies, their women dresses in in beautifully adorned Wrappers and hair ties, with red coral beads on the neck.¹¹

The Hausas are known for their Babariga, a gown flowing robe worn by men, while their women wear modest rich and Long gowns, covering their heads as well. In Nigeria Clothing is a language of it's own, telling the story of history's culture and the people wearing it.

Cultural Cuisine of the Nigerian people

The Nigerian Cuisine reflects the Countries diversity and uniqueness. The Nigerian Jollof rice is one of it's wen admired and appreciated Cuisine. It is of no doubt that our traditional Women are great Cooks, In the south-west the yoruba people enjoy Amala and Ewedo and it is accompanied by Gbegiri with assaulted meat. The Igbos are known for their of nsala, a flavorful Peppery broth traditionally made with Catfish or goat meat, it is served with pounded Yam and Cooked with local spices Like the uziza seeds. The Hausa's has Tuwo Shinka Fa, a rice based dish often served with soup. As for the Benin's, they have multiple food like, egusi and pounded yam, Emieke, Ekusu and others and

so these other tribes have their own special food. The Nigerian food is a reflection of Nigeria rich agricultural root and the creativity of the people.

Art of the Nigerian people

The Various ethnic groups in Nigeria has different Art works that are unique to them. These Artifacts speaks of their history, Culture, language, religion, belief and Values. It is mostly influenced by their environment. And some notable ones are the Ife Art, Esie Ikom Stone sculptures, Igbo-Ukwu, Nok terracotta, and others.

Ife Art

Ife art and sculpture are identified today With individuals who lived in the era of Ife King obalufon II. The cultural heritage of ife, upheld Bronze Casting using the lost wax method. The head sculptures are cast in brass and pottery represent rulers, gods and ancestors. The religion of the ife people is bound to their Art. Some of the Art works in Ancient Ife are; Stone Vessel with Crocodile on it's sides, Copper alloy Casting of a king and queen with interlocked arms and legs, a recumbent crowned female Circumscribing a vessel set atop a throne from ita yemoo.¹²

Esie ikom stone sculptures

The Esie and Ikom Stone sculptures represents the two major cultural centers in Nigeria and they are known for large collection of stone Carving. The Esie stones represents a collection of different Cultures with features such as; tribal marks, sophisticated hair styles, necklaces and bracelets with various cultural traits that Connects them with different ethnic groups Like Igala and Nupe.¹³

IGBO-UKWU

The Artistic Legacy of Igbo-Ukwu Is recognized as the oldest bronze sculptural tradition in sub-Saharan Africa with the it's origins traced to approximately 19th century AD, Unearthed within two distinct Compounds belonging to the brothers Isaiah Anozie and Isaac Anozia.¹⁴ Other Arts are the Nok terracotta figures which make use of iron in Smelting and forging tools.¹⁵ The Benin Art which is mostly referred to as Royal Court art of Benin, because the Oba of Benin had a monopoly of the art work.¹⁶

In Concision, the Nigeria Cultural heritage is Alive, Vibrant and ever evolving as the Country is a cultural Landscape with diverse ethnic groups which have various Cultures and Art that is unique to them. some of these cultures like; respect for Elders, the festivals of the people such as Osun

Oshogbo festival, New yam Festival, and Igwe festival, Traditional marriage of different tribes, Cultural attire of the people, Cultural cuisine of the people and the Art of the people are the Identity of the Nigerian culture.



Bronze and terracotta heads excavated in Ife, Nigeria, (XIIth-XIVth Century).



Benin Ivory Mask and Bronze 16th Century (<https://en.wikipedia.org>)



Esie stone figurines (Aborisade Adetone/Cc By-Sa 4.0)

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CHAPTER THREE

NATURE OF FESTAC ART AND CULTURE

Introduction

The second World Black and Africa Festival of Art and Culture is an international festival which celebrated Africa's Cultural achievement and legacies. This festival was hosted and organized by Nigeria to promote the Unity of her people by celebrating the culture and All of her people. The festival uses celebrated from January is to February 12 1977 in Lagos and Kaduna respectively. major events such as, the Durbar, Regatta, the Colloquium, dance performance, art exhibitions and so on were staged to showcase the beauty of Africa Art and Culture to the world.

This extravagant Cultural festival was hosted by Nigeria as a means of producing a new vision for Post-colonial Africa originally Festac was scheduled from 1974 but delayed due to poor planning and two military coup, however Festac 77 succeeded and hundreds of millions of Naira was used in organising the festival.¹

The celebration brought together thousands of Artists, Staffs and Official personnel, which included Participants and visitors from home and abroad. to celebrate black cultural heritage, During the Festival, Nigeria accommodated an estimated number of seventeen thousand Black and African Participants from fifty-six countries which comprises musicians, painters, Journalists, poets,

Photographers and Scholars in Lagos.² This period was a time of great Cultural change and Celebration as there was diversity of performances and exhibitions by well known artisans on display. The festival brought people together in a way that transcended borders and differences³. Festac speaks more broadly to the history and politics of international festivals in post colonial Africa.⁴ The festival was attended by Various peoples such as, The Chuck Davis Dance Company, Stevie Wonder, Randy Weston, Sun Ra, Miriam Makeba, Wole Soyinka, Jacob Festus Adeniyi, Alice Walker, Paule Marshall, Betye Saar and many others.⁵ According to Mr. John Afolabi the Street of Lagos was filled with music, dance and art from around the world, the energy and creativity that filled the air was extremely Captivating.⁶ The various cultures blended together in one sync and this truly explained Unity in Diversity. It was the only time where the various culture in Nigeria came under One Umbrella. It was an unforgettable experience.

The celebration of Art and culture, was a major event which was Carried out in the National theatre Commissioned specifically for the festival and the Festac village where International participants were housed. There were two large exhibition Halls for displaying traditional Sculpture, musical instruments with modern Art works⁷ The National theatre where this event was held has a circular Structure surrounded by the fifty-six Flags of its Participating Countries. It is quite Interesting to know that the Second World

black festival of Art and Culture Is not the first of its kind. It is an imitation of various other festivals which were celebrated before it.

THE PREDECESSORS OF FESTAC

Festac 77 represented the second World Black and African festival of African Arts and Culture, a lineage that traces its roots to other important festivals and events. formally, festac was deliberately Conceptualized in imitation of it's antecedent Leopold senghor's premier festival mondia des Arts Negres (first world festival of Negro Arts or fesman, which transpired in Dakar during April 1966.⁸ Fesman, was a major event which Celebrated the newly independent nations of the 1950s and 1960. Senghor used fesman as a channel to propagate Negritude, inviting 2,500 delegates from thirty African nations as well as Europe, United States, Caribbean and latin America, to express the importance and the Value of Negro art and culture.⁹

The principal events and venues fesman encompassed an inaugural Colloquium featuring distinguished academics and intellectuals Convened at the National Assembly, newly built musée Dynamique exhibiting Negro visual and plastic arts, National theatre, featuring Negro African theatre, music, Literature and handicrafts.¹⁰ There were also notable North American musicians, writers and dancers such as; Alvin Ailey, Amiri Baraka (then Leroi Jones), Marion Willians, Josephine Baker.¹¹ Fesman Saw culture like a state and this

can be seen through the festival's architecture, organisation and classificatory schemes.

Another notable cultural festival was the "panaf" which was conducted from July 21 to August 1, 1969. This festival was hosted by Algeria and it was the first pan-African Cultural festival under the auspices OAU.¹² The festival was hosted by Colonel Houari Boumediene, then Chairman of Algeria's revolutionary Council, and has had prominent guests such as; Mamadi Keita, of Guinea, Black panther party, Stanislas Adotevi of Dahomey and the Black Power Couple Kathleen and Eldridge Cleaver.¹³ The Algier's festival delivered a double blow to Negritude, Contesting it's restrictive definition of black Culture while denouncing it's reactionary politics and racist ideology.¹⁴

Festac 77 organisers were torn between two Opposing Ideas of Black Cultural Liberation, that of panaf's revolutionary culture with it's scientific socialism and fesman's, Cultural revolution and it's socialist humanism. It Can therefore be realized and Concluded that festac 77 imitated the Ideas of it's predecessors. The festival of Art and culture, festec was very expensive as the organization and preparation of the event took so much from the Nigerian economy. However it is pertinent to know how a newly independent nation Like Nigeria Could finance and host such an extravagant event. During this period, Nigeria was extremely Rich in oil and the platform of festac as well as

open (organisation of the petroleum Exporting Countries) Connected Nigeria's high-grade Crude to the world's industrial markets.

The success of festac can also be attributed to the Well organized administrative Structure that brought it into reality, The Various Committees answered to the Nigeria head of state who served as festac's grand patron.

THE EXCLUSIVE EVENTS IN FESTAC

Like any other significant Festival, Festac blended the Formality of planned events and Choreographed performances with the more Popular, Improvised and Unplanned celebrations in Lagos streets, night clubs Festac village and Fela's notorious shrine known as "kalakuta Republic". There were a lot of interesting scenes and Moment's which were photographed by Marilyn Nance who covered festac as the north America zone's official photo-technician. These moments Showcased the energy, excitements, Sight seeing, Shopping in out door markets, Enjoying Nigerian food and partying into the night.¹⁵

This event impacted the lives and works of some North American Artists Like Betye saar, Jamaiah shakaba. Officially festac began by opening Libations, vip receptions and the diplomatic protocols of Visiting ministers and heads of States.

There were three major events that were Spectacular during festac and they were; The Colloquium, the regatta and the closing grand Durbar held in Kaduna

THE COLLOQUIUM

The grand patron lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo referred to festac as the "heart of festac". It Featured opening addresses, Public Lectures and the findings of five working groups representing 35 nations and international organisations Including the Holy see, the OAU and UNESCO.¹⁷ The Featac Colloquium produced 269 Papers by delegates from forty-One Black and African nations within a narrative of Black Civilization and Collective self-determination.¹⁸ The Colloquium Opening Ceremonies was initiated by the grand patron himself, who poured a traditional libration of water and alcohol to show respect to the gods and ancestors and other distinguished guests such as the yoruba oba of lagos, moshoeshoe of lesotho, president siaka stevens of sierra leone and president sir Jawara of the Gambia, Broken kolanuts in Calabash were distributed among the dignitaries by Young girls in traditional dresses.

The libation was followed by festac anthem Sung by the festac Choir. The delegate and officials Stood attention;

Let a new earth rise
let another world be born

Let a bloody peace

Be written in the sky

REFRAIN: Festac 77 is here Let a second generation

full of Courage issue forth let a people of loving freedom

Come to growth.

REFRAIN: festac 77 is here

let a beauty full of healing. and strength of final clenching

Be the pulsing In our Spirits And our blood.

REFRAIN: Festac 77 is here. let the martial songs be written

let the dirges disappear

Let a race of men now rise

and take Control.

REFRAIN: Festac 77 is here.¹⁹

The Colloquium established an archive of knowledge anticipated to fill six volumes, which would attest to the intellectual integrity and unity of black civilization.²⁰

According to Adebisi Olabisi The Colloquium truly enlightening experience. It provided a platform for Intellectuals, artists and cultural enthusiasts to Come together and discuss important issues regarding african Culture and heritage. I got new knowledge about the African Culture, that is I still remember till date.²¹

The Atmosphere of the Colloquium was Charged with intellectual energy. although I was only 19 years old at that time and not very Knowledgeable, it was inspiring to see so many passionate individuals coming together to discuss and celebrate African culture, I was motivated and so did my interest for African culture.²²

THE REGATTA

located in the historically elite area of the Queen's Drive foreshore in ikoyi, Lagos, Fetac's Regatta Showcased Nigerian nation state in microcosm, Commemorating the historic war-canoes and associated canoe-houses that developed along the coast and in the niger Delta dering the era of Atlantic Slavery, followed by the 19th century palm oil trade.²³ The sitting arrangements in the Regatta pavilion reflected State hierarchy, with the head of state and members of the Supreme military Council taking their places on a central grandstand, flanked by the chief Justice of the federation, members of the federal executive council, traditional rulers, leaders of Public institutions and any others as directed.

The festac Regatta Clearly Invoked an era of Coastal trade and Canoe diplomacy which was directly associated with the Atlantic economy.

THE GRAND DURBAR

The grand Durbar was the greatest and biggest event to be staged by Nigeria, it was festac grand finale, which showed it's regional, national and international dimensions.²⁴ As a regional festival it brought together emirs, chiefs and district heads from Nigeria's ten Northern states under the Jurisdiction of the sultan of sokoto.²⁵ Mr David Iyowo, at that time a 21 years old boy followed his father mr Isaac Iyowo to kaduna to visit a relative and according to him he witnessed the event at Kaduna's Murtala Muhammed Square. What drew his attention was the Crowd, horsemanship, drumming and dancing which he has never witnessed before. It was his first time witnessing Such an elaborate Ceremony.²⁶ Mrs Adenike Adeleye also deserted as one of the spectators that the grand durbar was one of a kind and was the greatest and biggest event to be staged by Nigeria The various activities most especially the Camels From kastina, Waziri Dumas dancers and Bori dancers from zaria was really a sight to behold and at that moment to last forever.²⁷ Through the testimonies of these spectators Can therefore be seen that Festac was a major event which impacted every one and was an unforgettable experience it is quite sad that a Festival of this kind may not be experienced by this generation, However the impact of this festival on our Art and Culture cannot be underestimated.



Top to bottom: Horsemen in Pageant at the Grand Durbar in Kaduna, Nigeria (northern Nigeria), 1977. K. Kofi Moyo, courtesy of Monastery Foundation, Chicago, IL. Opening of FESTAC with International Delegates, 1977. K. Kofi Moyo, courtesy of Monastery Foundation, Chicago, IL.



FESTAC '77 opening ceremony: onlookers and photographer, 1977 © Marilyn Nance / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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CHAPTER FOUR
IMPACT OF FESTAC AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART AND
CULTURE IN NIGERIA

Introduction

The second world black and African festival of art and Culture also known as Festac 77, is more than just a festival. It has impacted the development of art and culture in Nigeria, economically by promoting international attention which boosted tourism and spurred infrastructural development socially by fostering a sense of pan-African unity and Pride and also bringing together artists and intellectuals from and across the diaspora Culturally by providing a platform for showcasing Nigeria's rich artistic heritage to a global audience, which has lead to increased recognition and appreciation of indigenous Art and culture politically the festival demonstrated Nigeria's growing influence on the word stage and solidified is position as a leader in Africa. This Chapter will extensively examine these various impact of Festac on the development of Nigeria Art and culture

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FESTAC 77 ON NIGERIA ART AND CULTURE

While primarily a cultural, event, Festac 77 left an undeniable economic foot print on Nigeria. The festival brought about not only short-term economic gaining but also the establishment of sustainable Infrastructure for the arts, thereby creating Lasting Economic benefits for artists and the nation as a whole. The following are the various ways festac 77, economically impacted Nigeria Art and Culture.

Infrastructural Development

Nigeria as the host and organizer of Festac 77 was able to achieve success through the development and Construction of various infrastructures such as, The National theatre, Festac town, CBAAC, transportation, hotel and Accommodation Expansion, communication infrastructural and so on.

The National Theatre

One of the infrastructures that was established is the National theatre Which is located at Iganmu, Surulere Lagos and it was built in 1976. The National theatre provides venues for Conferences, seminars, and exhibitions and provides office space for government parastatals.¹ The national theatre Contains the main auditorium, which could Seat 5,000, a large conference hall,

film halls, exhibitions halls, and a variety of other rooms². The national theatre is today used to stage a good number of international music concerts, drama, film shows, exhibitions and conventions.³ The National theatre is seen as a Cultural Creative center in Nigeria.

Festac Town

The Featac town Comprises of various buildings which were established to aid the accommodation of the participants and spectators from Various Countries. The seventeen thousand participant from various Countries stayed together in Fectac town. The town was extremely lively as various people with different Cultural backgrounds stayed together These buildings Showcased the unique Art and culture in Nigeria and contributed to the Preservation and promotion of Nigeria Art and Culture. It is quite interesting to know that these buildings are still in existence today in Lagos. They serve as legacies of Festac, reminding the people their root and history. During the festival this estate was the venue for performance rehearsals and interaction by participants as various groups rehearsed, however the long term Objective of the village Under the federal housing program to make easy some of the housing challenges in Lagos.⁴

The CBAAC - Center for Black and African Art and civilization

The CBAAC was established by decree no 69 of 1979 by the federal government of Nigeria with the responsibility to promote public interest in black and African Art and civilization as well as to preserve the works of value from the second World Black and Africa Festival of Art and cultures.⁵

The CBAAC ensures the preservation of Festac materials and has published books on African Culture and Art.⁶ The preservation of these. Valuable materials in the centre's museum and Library Can be said to have in a way promoted Art and Culture. Other infrastructural development Were, The expansion of the Lagos Airport, Improvement of road Links to the National theatre. Which facilitated easier transportation for artist's and tourists, both during and after the festival, also five star Hotels and Accommodation expansion, city drainages, and Cultural archives.⁷

Tourism Revenue

Festac 77 significantly boosted Nigeria's economy through tourism revenue thereby impacting the nations Art and Culture. The festival attracted. a massive inflow of visitors from across the globe, generating revenue for Nigeria. This revenue was gotten from several sources:

Accommodation

Accommodation centers such as Hotels experienced a surge in bookings and were filled to Capacity and the demand led to increased prices, which in turn not only benefited the hotel owners but also the country. This impact was also seen in the transportation sector.

Transportation

The movement of people to and from Lagos and Even to Kaduna created significant revenue for airlines, bus Companies and taxi services. the increase In air travels spurred investments and the need to transport materials for the event as well added to this. the Country also got revenue from tickers sold from various performance and events held during Festac

Increased Employment Opportunities

Festac 77 created a good number of Jobs across multiple sectors, both temporary and permanent and many of these Jobs directly of indirectly supported the arts and Culture sector in Nigeria these are some of the Areas

Construction and infrastructure

The building of Venues like the national theater the Festac town and new Hotels Created thousands of jobs in the Construction and related sectors. These opportunities were not limited to skilled Labor but unskilled workers as well. Erhabor Emokpae was involved in street decoration for the second world black and African festival of arts and culture in 1977, and he fulfilled the task of environmental embellishment as one of the functions of sculpture.⁸ There were also other individuals who got job offers due to this festival and this reduced the rate of unemployment in the Country.

Art and Culture sector

The festival also employed numerous Nigerian artists, musicians, dancers and artisans These artists and more received Commissions, creating numerous Job opportunities within the artistic Community The exposure gained at the festival likely led to future opportunities for these artists, North American Artists like Betye Saar and musicians like Jamaiah Shabaka would later acknowledge Festac's lasting impact on their lives and work, the same can also be said to others.⁹ Employment Opportunities during Festac was not Limited to temporary positions in this way Festac 77 acted as a significant engine of job Creation, directly impacting thousands of lives and Contributing to a reduction in unemployment in Nigeria

The Investment and expansion of Art and Culture in Nigeria

The festival provided a platform for Nigerian Artists and artisans to showcase and sell their works. The increased exposure led to increased Sales and international recognition, boosting the domestic arts and Crafts market. This Created new market opportunities and economic independence for many artists. Before Festac 77 the International world did not really Put great importance and Value On the Art and Culture In Nigeria, They believed that these Barbaric people could not Produce anything good that will be useful to humanity, however during the festival, major events such as the Regatta, the Durbar, the Colloquium, debunked European negative Idea Even until now, Nigeria Art and in various museums around the world are known to be Very expensive with great Value like the Queen India head in the British museum.

During and After the festival there was increased government and private sector investments Supporting the development of cultural institutions. This also generated revenue for the government and created a Supportive environment for artistic growth

Social impacts of Festac 77 on the development of Nigeria Art and culture

The celebration of this festival by diverse People from different part of the world about Social impact of Festac 77 is the promotion of national unity and Pride, and fostering pan-African identity and unity

Fostering pan-African identity and unity

Festac 77 strengthened the spirit of brotherhood among Africans The festival can be said to have brought unity among the different tribes in Nigeria, it bridged the gap between Various tribes as the people appreciated the Art and Culture of their tribes. Similarly, Africans in the diaspora interacted with Africans in the continent to learn more about their Identity. These Interactions. Brought about Unity among the people and this in turn promoted Nigeria art and culture. It's value and history to the world. it is pertinent to know that this period was a period of Pan-Africanism as there were Various struggle for freedom from colonial rules. This as well Strengthened the bond between Africans as they saw the need to unite and face the Common enemy while also promoting their Cultural identity. promoting national unity and pride

Festac 77 was the first event to have ever been staged that brought together the various cultural tribes of the country. As a heterogenous country with over 250 ethnic groups, there has been a lot of strife and conflicts between

Biafra and the Nigerian government from 1967 to 1970. The country was in serious need of unity among her people.

Festac 77 was the best avenue to bring about national unity among the people. The celebration brought together these various tribes and for the first time Unity in diversity was extremely displayed in Nigeria. This unity and pride was also seen and appreciated by non- Africans and the world. This display made the spectators from all over the world to be interested in the history of Nigeria art and culture which therefore led to the promotion of Art and Culture in Nigeria.

Cultural Impact of Festac to the development of Art and Culture in Nigeria.

This Cultural event has extensively impacted the development of Art and culture in Nigeria through Cultural integration and collaboration and Global recognition of the Art and Culture in Nigeria

Cultural integration and collaboration

During the festival celebration the people from Various Countries blended together and so did their ideas, values and Culture. There were a lot of cultural exchange among the people and this led to the development of Art and Culture. The Collaboration between various artists from other countries

including Nigeria has influenced the Culture of Nigerian and has added an international touch to her art and culture. Examples of such Collaborations during Festac was when Fela Kuti and King Sunny Ade played host to the likes of mighty sparrow and Intellectuals like Wole Soyinka, Jacob Festus. Adeniyi were Joined by Malauna Ron Karenga as a Spokesperson of the US Colloquium delegation.¹⁰ These and other Collaboration between Africans In the diaspora was a means of educating the Africans in the diaspora, the value of their culture. Recently this Collaboration can also be seen in the entertainment industry; music, drama, dance and literary art. These Cultural integration and Collaboration during Festac has led to the growth of Nigeria Art and Culture.

Global Recognition

Before Festac 77, Africa Art and Culture was Often dismissed and labeled as primitive and underdeveloped. There has always been a misconception about Africa and this has negatively influenced the development of it's Art and Culture. However Festac 77 helped to debunk the negative view about Africa Art and Culture through the exhibitions of various Art works, and performances. The festival gave various Countries the platform to Showcase it's Art to the world. Some of these Art were; Benin Bronze, Ife Sculptures and Tsoede Bronzes, Nok Terracotas, paintings and others. Major events like the Durbar, Colloquium, the Regatta Showcased the beauty and Value of Nigeria

Art and Culture. The Celebration of these Art and culture during Festac 77 has educated the International audience on its historical and Cultural significance and this exposure has also Polarize Nigeria music genres such as Afrobeat and highlife, Leading to their increase in value and global recognition

Political Impact of Festac on the development of art and culture in Nigeria

By hosting such an extravagant international event, Nigeria significantly enhanced its soft power. The festival projected a positive image of Nigeria on the world stage, showcasing its Cultural richness. This event improved Nigeria international standing and facilitated diplomatic relations with other nations, particularly within Africa and the Black diaspora. It demonstrated Nigeria's Capacity for leadership within the African Continent.

Nigeria at this time had a booming Oil economy which Connected Nigeria's high-grade Crude to the world's industrial market according to newly favorable terms of trade With the revenue gotten from oil market, the Country was able to organize such extravagant and expensive event

In conclusion Festac 77 was a major international event hosted by Nigeria which at that time was financially stable. The event has extensively impacted Various sectors and areas. in Nigeria. Economically Festac 77, brought about long and short term economic gains to the country through

infrastructural development such as the National theatre, Festac Village and CBAAC, other are; tourism revenue, employment opportunities and Investments, socially Festac 77, fostered pan-African Identity and unity, and promoted national unity and pride, Culturally, Pestac 77 brought about Cultural integration and Collaboration, global recognition of it's Art and culture to the World. It Can therefore be seen that Although Festac 77 was celebrated in 1977, it is Still Impacting the development of Nigeria Art and culture.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Festac 77 was a Cultural event which took place in Lagos and Kaduna in the year 1977. Nigeria hosted and organized this Extravagant event and festival to showcase beauty and value of Nigeria art and culture to the World. The second world black and African festival was a one month event that brought Together diverse people from different backgrounds across the world Although the festival has only been celebrated once, it has left long lasting impacts on the development of Art and Culture in Nigeria.

In promoting and preserving Nigeria Art and Culture, there has been numerous researches carried out by scholars to examine the uniqueness of Nigeria Art and Culture. However, this particular research got some of its findings from Such relevant research works and this gave a detailed background information of the topic in General Through this research. it was discovered that although Nigeria had diverse interesting Art and culture, she only became globally recognized and accepted during and After Festac. This therefore show that Festac 77 greatly influenced Nigeria Art and Culture.

Before the festival, Nigeria having over 250 ethnic groups have not had any occasion that brought them together as there were several tribal strife and

Civil wars between these ethnic groups. This disunity severely affected the administration, economy and Growth of the country. in 1962 to 1977 the country witnessed a civil war between Biafra and the federal government led by General Yakubu Gowon. Festac Came in at this point to unite the people

Similarly, Nigeria Art and Culture has always been seen as primitive and under developed by Europeans. These art and culture were not globally recognized and accepted. There was never a platform to showcase and celebrate the value and history of the Nigerian culture. However, in the year 1977 Nigeria took up the role during the administration of president Obasanjo to celebrate its root and history.

The Various tribes such as, the Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Bini, and so on with their unique Cultures and Artifacts were given the opportunity to present and showcase it's Art and culture. During the festival major events such as the Durbar, The Regatta, the Colloquium and many more was Carried out to the beauty of Nigeria culture. The festival brought Art and together diverse People and culture, and this led to Cultural integration and Collaboration among the People Artists such as Fela Kuti, Stevie Wonder, Randy Weston, Betye Saar performed on Stage during the festival. Additionally painters, Journalists, poets, photographers and Scholars were also present. It is right to say that the whole world witnessed this marvelous and beautiful event.

It is pertinent to understand that Festac 77 is an imitation of its antecedent Leopold Senghor's premier festival *Mondia des Art Negres* which is the first world festival of Negro Arts of Fesman. This event inspired Festac and was celebrated in Dakar in April 1966. Fesman was a major event which celebrated the newly independent nations 1950s and 1960s. Senghor used Fesman as a channel to propagate negritude. Another important cultural festival was the Panaf which was conducted from July 21 to August 1 1967. This festival was hosted by Algeria and it was the first Pan-African cultural. Although the above two cultural festivals were predecessors of Festac, they were extremely different from Festac 77.

During this period Nigeria has just emerged as a rich producing country and so she was able to organize such extravagant festival. Through this revenue the country was able to make the event a successful one. The country was able to build important facilities such as The National theatre, the Festac village and others.

Festac 77 extensively impacted Nigeria art and culture, economically, socially, culturally and politically. Economically during the festival Nigeria built several infrastructural facilities such as The national theatre which is located at Iganmu, Surulere Lagos. The national theatre provides venues for conferences, seminars, art exhibitions and so on. During the Festac celebration

there was also increase in employment Opportunities as Nigeria was extremely populated, Nigeria profited from tourism revenue, investments on her Art and Culture. Socially the Festival brought together the diverse tribes in Nigeria and this led to Cultural integration and collaboration, culturally various Ideas and culture of people blended together just as the people stayed together. Every tribe was given the platform to educate tribe the spectators and crowd on the history and beauty of its culture. There was intense global recognition of these art and Culture on the global stage. Politically, Nigeria enhanced her soft power and she was able to demonstrate her capacity as the giant of Africa in the African Continent.

This research was able to critically examine origin of Festac 77, what the event was all about, how it was celebrated and why it was as celebrated. The study was also able to link the relationship between Festac 77 and Nigeria Art and culture and how the festival has immensely impacted the growth and development of the art and Culture of Nigeria.

This research through its findings has establish the fact that the culture and Art of the Nigerian people is the Country Identity and history. A people without the history of their root, Can as well be seen as a country without foundation and identity. Great importance and value must be attributed to the culture and Art of a people.

Festac was only Celebrated once and that was in 1977 during the administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo, and has never been celebrated. The Country should be more deliberate in Promoting her Culture and Art as it is her identity. The Federal government should set up offices and plan towards having events such as this annually, in other to strengthen the bond and Unity of the people in the country.

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Oral Interview

List of Informants

Names	Age	Occupation	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
Mrs Ronke Adenike,	61	Business woman	Benin City	05/01/25
Mrs Nwanzi Oluchi,	57	A teacher	Benin City	07/01/25
Mr Smart Ajayi	62	Business man	Benin City	02/02/25
Mrs Osakiodulwa Osahan	54	Interior Decorator	Benin City	14/02/25
Joseph Emeka,	72	A painter	Ikorodu, Lagos	14/02/25
John Afolabi	71	Online	Benin City	18/01/25
Adebisi Olabisi	68	Online	Benin City	07/01/25
Peter Adekunle	64	Online	Benin City	07/01/25
Mrs Adenike Adeleye,	73	Business woman	Benin City	19/12/24
David Iyowo,	69	Business man	Benin City	19/12/24

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