

## **Original Research Paper**

### **“COSTUME ENTERPRISE AS A PANACEA FOR POVERTY REDUCTION AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN NIGERIA”.**

#### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examined costume enterprise as a panacea for poverty reduction among young people in Nigeria by x-raying the potentials embedded in it, in order to ascertain its viability for poverty reduction. The objective of the study therefore was to fill this knowledge gap by carrying out empirical study on the business potentials resident in costume entrepreneurship. The methodology followed survey research design and involved generating data from individuals who are involved in costume enterprise businesses from the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. Primary data sources came from phone call interview and questionnaire survey. In both cases, the respondents for the study were asked questions regarding their average monthly income from their costume business. The result findings revealed that the average monthly income of retail costume entrepreneurs was N30,625; exceeding the monthly earnings of some employed people in Nigeria and even beyond the minimum wage agitated by the Nigeria Labour Union in 2018. The study also discovered that the costume entrepreneurs in the Northern region do not earn as much as those in the Southern region. Bearing all these facts in mind, the study, therefore, concludes that costume enterprise is a viable venture capable of reducing poverty. It is also concluded from the study that Northern Nigeria (the North Central, North East and North West), are still lagging behind in harnessing costuming arts potentials in the region, for revenue earnings. It is therefore recommended that the government should create enabling environment for both local and foreign earnings through costume entrepreneurship. It is also suggested that theatre departments and closely related fields in Nigerian tertiary institutions should incorporate costume arts into their curriculum as a gainful enterprise for job creators and job seekers.*

**KeyWords:** Costume, Costume designers, Enterprise, Nigeria, Poverty reduction

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background of the Study**

Poverty is not a new phenomenon across the globe. It has been an age-long problem in many African countries, Nigeria inclusive. In Nigeria, many people equate poverty with lack of economic wherewithal or low income earning, but it often transcends into many socio-political problems that adversely affect the lives of a significant chunk of the population. For about 70 years, various institutions have in varying degrees and capacities, tried to address this challenge: local governments, governments of developed countries, international organizations (such as the World Bank and the United Nations), aid foundations and non-governmental organizations (Karnani, 2017). Indeed, the United Nations, as well as the World Bank, are notable for their efforts being continually made towards poverty reduction. Aluko (2003) points out that in 1989, the World Bank issued a report on the crises of poverty in Africa, in which it highlighted the gravity of the economic situation on the continent, and also proffered advice on the economic strategy needed, to bring about some improvement in the economic conditions of the people of the continent.

Consequent upon this report, the next few years (specifically 1995), witnessed a World Summit held in Denmark, with the major goal of addressing poverty, particularly in Africa and the world at large. Since then, issues on poverty and poverty reduction have occupied the centre stage in several scholastic and political discussions in Nigeria (Garba, 2010). Also, successive Nigerian governments have introduced several economic reforms and poverty alleviation programs like Operation Feed the Nation (OPF), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) among others. Unfortunately, these have not been sustainable, and are yet to translate into any appreciable reduction in the poverty level in

the country. For instance, the poverty level was at 27.2% in 1980, but grew to 46.3% in 1985, 42.7% in 1992 and shot up to 65.6% in 1996 (FOS 1997). As at today, compared with other countries of the world, Nigeria's poverty ranking is very high. Corroborating, Ewubare and Okpani (2018) revealed that Nigeria ranked 152 out of the 188 countries in the world, on HDI ranking (2017). As a matter of fact, Nigeria today is ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world, despite her abundant natural and human resources.

With this kind of situation, the masses are worst hit. The fundamental necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, security and primary health care are beyond the reach of many of the Nigerian population, while infrastructures like electricity, potable water, education, good road network among others, is hardly accessible or affordable to the common man. The common slogan rife among the poor masses is '*We dey manage, we dey struggle, we dey hustle*', all synonymous with the hardship encountered to eke out a living, while a vast number of the employable citizens are unemployed. Even those that are, are underemployed; either receiving salaries that do not commensurate with their qualifications and services, while many are engaged in services that have no relevance with their specializations. On many occasions, salaries are not promptly paid; fringe benefits are sometimes never paid. In fact, the N30,000/month (approximately \$83) minimum wage been agitated by the Nigerian Labour Congress, NLC (ranking among the lowest minimum wage in the world), prompted a 3-day nationwide strike in November 2018, and another indefinite one that occurred in January 2019. Thankfully, it was resolved at N27,000/month (\$75). This is the social and economic milieu that have induced many social vices among the Nigerian people, especially the youth, the unemployed and the underpaid, whose energy and ingenuity need to find expression somewhere (Donjor, 2011). Hence, the rapid increase in crime, communal crises, street begging and other social vices.

Several recommendations have been proposed as a means of alleviating poverty in Nigeria. For instance, creating opportunities for steady employment that will ensure regular and steady income have been outlined as a tenable means of moving the citizens above the poverty line. This was also posited by the International Labor Organization (2007), that nothing is more fundamental to poverty reduction than employment, and not only mere employment, but there is a need for a reputable job for the citizens. This connotes employment that generates for the employee, income commensurate with a decent living standard. But job availability and accessibility are crucial to poverty alleviation, which is still a fundamental problem in Nigeria. Similarly, it has been argued that jobs have the potential to boost the standard of living, elevate productivity through increased GDP, and foster social integration (International Finance Corporation 2013). This requires, however, that the government provides enabling environment for small private businesses to thrive, provide financial support and also security. Nwekeaku, (2013) reports that the recent global financial crises, in addition to the prevalent economic woes of Nigeria, informed the decision of the Federal Government to pay closer attention to Small and Medium Enterprises SMEs; as the mechanism for the country's economic recovery and re-engineering for national transformation. To boost growth in SMEs, skill acquisition has been advocated and hence, its enclosure in many Government initiatives, including the NYSC scheme. Donjor (2011) submits that in a true situation, an ideal way to curb the menace of poverty amongst people is to enable them to acquire the requisite skills that they so desire, in order for them to excel in life; then to roam about in towns and villages as jobless people.

One of the skills that are identified as a promising one, whose full potentials is yet to be adequately explored as a viable means for individuals to empower themselves financially is Costume designing. It is nearly indispensable to films production, stage performances, musicals

and concerts, drama, festivals, etc, because of the many functions it performs. It tells a story, pinpoints setting, suggests mood, reinforces culture and the cultural diversities of a people, reveals the age, profession, character and many other socio-political and economic affiliations of the actor in a performance. In fact, many are the roles of costumes whose indispensability in a play can hardly be overemphasized. This implies that employment potentials and empowerment opportunities for a costume designer and other personnel abound in this enterprise.

Furthermore, the rich cultural heritage of the Nigerian people requires professionals in the area of costume that will document, preserve, research, reproduce, recreate, redesign and project designs that will relay the richness in clothing and accessories, which are derivative of our diverse cultural heritage. These can be done on the multifarious electronic and social media handles, which Diakhate (2001) noted earlier as Africa's prodigy in traditional customs and values. For instance, Nigeria parades over 300 distinct ethnic groups, with different cultural identities in dance, drama, music, festivals, films etc. Coupled with this, the vibrancy of the fashion, movie and entertainment industry in Nigeria, necessitates an equally teeming number of professional costume entrepreneurs to help interpret, add value and aesthetic appeal to the movies and music videos that are constantly churned out to the public. It is on this premise that this paper examines the entrepreneurial art in costume as an avenue for poverty reduction among young Nigerians.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

With little doubt, Nigeria is still battling with poverty. As shown in our statistics, more than half of the country's population is still living below the poverty line. This is reflected in the living condition of the people, which is incidental to many societal vices like, robbery, kidnappings, cyber-crimes, militancy and many others. In fact, several projected analysis reveals likely untold

poverty for the Nigeria citizens in 2019 and a few years beyond it. This stems from the expected increase in birthrate and declining GDP, which makes hunger imminent. It is also projected that the price of food, clothing and shelter would rise by 10%. The finance industries – banks, insurance companies and stock broking firms, are likely to lay off redundant staff, whose job functions are now been replaced by technology. This would thus lead to an increase in Nigeria's unemployment index. Also, if insurgents persist in their nefarious activities, the nation's economy will suffer a setback, since moneys to combat poverty and boost economic activities will be diverted to countering threats to national security. Inadvertently, poverty would be on the rise, while criminal activities, moral decadence and other nefarious activities would be on the increase.

Despite the different programmes that successive governments have come up with to alleviate poverty, a significant result is yet to be recorded, which makes the continued search for the way out of this catastrophe imperative. There is a need for reorientation and a search for innovative means, capable of stemming down the pangs of poverty. One of these is costume enterprise, (due to its inherent advantages and potentials as a culture and craft industry). A nation's strength in combating poverty and its attending features is also in identifying, harnessing and developing her cultural and craft resources for job creation, income generation, economic vibrancy and societal equilibrium.

### **1.3 Research questions**

1. What is the average monthly income of retail costume entrepreneurs in Nigeria?
2. What is the variation in the average monthly income of retail costume entrepreneurs across the six geo-political zones in the country?

3. Do indigenous costume entrepreneurs transact their business beyond Nigeria?

## **2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Clifford (1973) states that educational theatre must entertain as well as educate students, but should also prepare the ground for students who may be interested in learning the arts and crafts of quality theatre by furnishing them with the opportunity to earn a living and live worthy lives on leaving school. He opines further that, it is also important that the skills the educational theatre impart in students thereafter opens the individual to self-growth and accomplishments that will eventually contribute to the growth and harmonization of the organic society.

Corroborating him, Thorne (2001) submits that costume design for the theatre is an engaging and rewarding experience. This is not limited to job satisfaction, but the entrepreneurial opportunities in one capacity or the other, depending on individual prerogative makes it even more rewarding. As pointed out by the author (2013) the “road to self-actualization”, is rough and competitive. She suggests therefore that a costume designer trains for fashion designing in order to be relevant in and out of the theatre. She further argues that creativity, innovation and resilience will enable a costume/fashion entrepreneur to break new grounds.

### **2.1 Costume entrepreneurship**

Costume entrepreneurship is conceptualized in this paper, as the art of income generation through the design, sale, renting of costumes, to services provision at production locations. Those involved are usually, costume designers, costume renters, costume and accessories merchandisers, wardrobe assistants etc.

In Nigeria, many people within the working-age bracket are not exposed to the diverse opportunities embedded in the art of costume design and merchandising. Hence, its potentials

have not been adequately explored. This paper opines that if properly harnessed, costume entrepreneurship is a viable source of income earning, capable of reducing poverty, especially among young people who are creative and resourceful. This is especially true, because, Nigeria is at a stage where the movie industry, otherwise known as Nollywood, and the music industry have become such a big and vibrant industry. As such, the demand for costumes and accessories that adds functionality and aesthetics to their works would often be in demand. This is because of the many roles that costumes play in performance.

In an ideal production milieu, five tools are indispensable, namely: man, material, money, method and machines (Bassey, 2015). An entrepreneur harnesses these resources to create user value, and the costume entrepreneur is not exempted from using some or all of these tools to create a value chain or fill a position in the course of a production. He/she can work independently, creating different styles and sizes of costumes/accessories in his/her wardrobe for lease/rent/sale to production companies, or be engaged by a production company to build from the scratch, costumes, for a specific production. For the latter he/she must do, with reference to, and in conjunction with the director and other designers in the production, building garments and accessories with specific reference to actors physiology, psychology and other considerations. In an ideal situation, the spectrum of costume enterprise entails a chain of events leading to the procurement of costume and getting it to the end user.

## **2.2 The costume design enterprise chain**

As put forward by (Gassner, 1953) “clothes make the man, at least in the theatre”. As such, a costume designer and his/her crew must play indefatigable roles in conceptualizing, planning and executing costumes for a production. These might be theatre professionals, or those involve in costume business. These, we refer to like the costume enterprise family. is composed

of members that are actively involved in costuming art businesses. These are the lead costume designer, the assistant costume designer, the costume illustrator, the costumer and the costume supervisor. Costume entrepreneurs include, the designers, (those in the business of designing costumes for end users); the renters, (those in the business of renting costume materials to end users); the merchandisers, (those in the business of selling costume materials to end users); and the costumers/wardrobe assistants (those in the business of dressing up the users of the costume). Each of these personnel has pertinent roles to play.

### **2.3 The costume designer**

Wilson (2007) in highlighting the importance of costumes in theatrical performances states that they send signals similar to those that clothes send in everyday life, which Downs (2013) insists must be designed by a costume designer who must be a visual artist, fashion designer, historian and psychoanalyst.

At the apex of the costuming family, chain is the costume designer, who conceptualizes the costumes that are needed for specific performance(s), from script to performance; building and constructing garments that an actor might wear, including headwear, footwear and accessories. In this case, costumes are designed with consideration to, and in consonance with all aspects of production. Irrespective of the platform, a costume designer is trained to work closely with the director, other designers of the visual environment of production, as well as the users of the costumes – the actors. He/she must achieve reality, harmony, unity and balance with his/her designs by projecting to life the imagination of the playwright/script writer, by clothing and accentuating actors in relevant costumes that add meaning, clarity, aesthetic and functionality to the production. A lead costume designer is expected to employ all his/her innate and acquired creative and artistic dexterity in fashioning out the costumes to be used by actors. Deborah

(2014) posits that irrespective of whether or not, a film is set in the present, the past, in a distant location or in an imaginary time, costume designers collaborate with the director, the cinematographer and the production designer to tell a story. A costume designer, however, requires some level of formal education, to be well-grounded in the guiding principles and the effective management of costumes.

#### **2.4 The assistant costume designer**

The assistant designer works closely with the costume designer, works with his/her concept and directives. He/she handles tasks such as working with the stitcher, conducts fittings, mobilizes costumes and accessories to performance locations and also attends to actors' needs. This role requires less skill and formal education since he/she functions by taking instructions from the lead costume designer.

#### **2.5 The costume illustrator**

The costume illustrator illustrates/sketches costume ideas conceptualized by the costume designer, which must be described in details to include silhouette, line, mass and colour. This role requires a person who is talented in the creative arts or has formal training in it. With the sketches, translation of concepts into actual garments is often easier and more effectively related to because of its clarity.

#### **2.6 The costume Supervisor**

The costume supervisor, who sometimes doubles as the costume designer is the head of the costume department; who manages and ensures that the activities in the department are effectively discharged. Additionally, he/she is charged with breaking down the script for continuity, while also creating budget for the procurement of costume and accessories. He /she

oversees the costume department crew members and supervises the purchasing and construction of costumes. He/she pulls resources together - human, capital, skills etc, to ensure that it generates revenue (Deborah 2014).

## **2.7 The wardrobe assistant**

The wardrobe assistant sometimes referred to as the costumer, is mainly tasked with assisting actors to get into costumes in preparation for a performance. He/she may also handle the cleaning and storage of costumes and accessories and assisting with fittings. He/she is also in charge of the continuity book for the costumes, as well as the actors. He/she also ensures that the actor is able to perform without being impeded by his/her costumes (Brianne, 2014)

## **2.8 The sewing personnel**

Indispensable personnel in the chain of costume design is the personnel responsible for the actual translation of concept, illustration and fabrics into actual garments that is worn for performance. Although, some costume designers have cutting and sewing skills, (Cohen 2000); (Downs et al 2013) point out that cutters, stitchers, and drapers, pattern makers are full-time professionals in the theatre, and the designer can leave the constructions of garments to them. With this knowledge, a costume designer may improve his/her skills by training on sewing. In all, it is the costume designer that thereafter gives completeness and detailing to the garment as may be required by the role of the production.

## **2.9 Costume renters**

As stated by Downs et al (2013) not all costumes are built from scratch. A theatre can borrow from patrons, or get from rental houses. Costume renters are the individuals with existing costumes, which are stored in designated locations and given out at a fee, for a stipulated time,

with conditions guiding their use attached. This rental house can belong to individuals, costume designers, production companies, state art councils and national theatres for the aim of income generation.

### **2.10 Costume sellers**

For the purpose of this study, costume sellers are grouped into sellers of existing costumes. Cohen (2003) reveals that sometimes, a costume designer can obtain costumes from thrift shops and stores that sell used clothing, especially for contemporary productions. In view of this, clothes and accessories like beads, cowries and other local and foreign accessories are retailed for theatrical purposes. This is what we refer to in this study as costume merchandising.

### **2.11 Choosing a costume enterprise**

Upcoming entrepreneurs that wish to engage in any of the roles itemized have the opportunity to do so, as long as they have the interest and passion, which is the first and basic requirement of any endeavour. While a few of the roles require formal education and training, some require apprenticeship for a designated period, while others only require that the intuition of the intending entrepreneur is brought to the fore. It is however worthy of note again that costume designing requires a degree of formal education and training, because it transcends the cutting and joining of pieces of fabrics, as done in fashion designing, but requires an in-depth knowledge of the nitty-gritty of the subject.

For the other roles, through training and education may be advantageous, anyone who is interested, passion-driven, talented, creative and innovative can engage in them and learn on the job. For instance, costume merchandisers can select one or more products to retail from a wide array of products like local fabrics, shoe, old/modern fabrics, beads, accessories, vintage

clothes/shoes etc., based on the demand in their environment, and availability of raw materials. For instance, also-oke in Iseyin can be easily merchandised by those living in Oyo State, Nigeria, while beads are easily accessible to those in Benin and her environs. Also, carnival costume accessories and production will retail better in the southern part of Nigeria.

At present, more than five million Nigerians citizens are involved in one form of craftwork or the other (Frank 2016). And a great percentage of this population are young people, and women, many of who are unable to secure “white collar jobs”. This might be due to low academic qualifications, unemployment, underemployment and choice. These categories of individuals are involved in diverse jobs like the production or sales of one consumable product or the other, many of which are over-crowded. In light of this, costume enterprise becomes a veritable channel for revenue generation. For instance, within the last decade, popular craft works and costume accessories which are commercialized have become largely sourced from some places in the South-South and the South-East. These resources can be harnessed to increase costume entrepreneurial activities, both locally and internationally.

Again, with the distinctiveness of the nation's costumes that are a derivate of the various ethnic groups in Nigeria, Nigerian costume products have potentials to attract patronage in the global market, which might make it a worthy enterprise for any person within the costume enterprise chain.

## **2.12 Succeeding in costume entrepreneurship in Nigeria**

One major constraint militating against the viability of costume enterprise is poor branding of indigenous costume arts products and services. This is because the costume enterprise is still a young business in Nigeria. The costume entrepreneurs need requisite information and skills, for packaging their costume art products and services and marketing them

abroad for foreign exchange earnings. For beginners in costuming arts enterprising, it is important to understand some preliminary works that need to be carried out before setting out on the main costuming business. This is to check against gross failure shortly after the commencement of the business. Top among these preliminary measures, is to survey the potential business opportunities that exist.

An intending entrepreneur needs to carry out a feasibility study on the nature of costume business and the ideologies or concepts that will guide them. The entrepreneur must draw a mental picture that forms the base of his/her business venture. From the findings he/she is able to generate from market research, he/she will be informed of the several aspects of the costume products that are available and need to be factored in for consideration, as well as their individual market potentials, rivalry strength, etc.

### **2.13 Factors to consider when venturing into costume entrepreneurship**

An aspiring costume entrepreneur must first identify the prospects and challenges facing the enterprise, which he/she can resolve to his/her advantage. For instance, he/she can conduct a survey of the social functions that hold in his/her immediate society, what people need in costuming the festival, concert, movie, and other performances etc. Also, he/she needs to take note of the frequency and demand for certain costume products and services as well as figure out the transaction figure that potential clients would be willing to pay.

### **2.14 Raw materials availability, accessibility and cost implication**

He/she must ascertain what raw materials are needed to meet product needs, the availability and sources for the raw materials; as well as their relative accessibility. By collapsing

these alternatives, the costume entrepreneur will be able to establish the chosen raw materials vis-a-vis, the financial implication in acquiring them.

### **2.15 Business analysis**

At this point, an aspiring costume entrepreneur must collate findings and discoveries obtained from the feasibility study in order to draw a conclusion on the viability of the chosen business, or otherwise. The anticipated start-off capital and anticipated income should be reviewed at this point to ascertain that its future and sustainability. The tendency for fluctuation of the business with changing seasons also needs to be considered. Additionally, he/she should market strategies to his target customers.

### **2.16 Expanding the Market Share of Costume Business**

Nigeria can attain the height of a country Korea, whose costume arts products are thriving in the global market. In relation to the above assertion, Frank (2016) submits that Nigeria as a country, need to follow the path taken by Korea, to boost the export desirability of its art works through:

- Focusing on innovative art works and accessories and producing them on large scale.
- Taking and instituting a pattern of the registration system, which accommodates the protection of the rights of the original designers.
- Developing and building of human capital capacity, by providing trainings to Nigerians by foreign technicians and also funding the establishment of material processing factories for costuming products and accessories.

Nigeria can further develop her indigenous sports and festivals, in such a way that it would attract tourists from around the world. This will expand the market of costuming arts, as in

the annual carnivals in the South-South. This is because costumes have a close affinity with culture and tourism. So, a growth of culture and tourism would invariably translate to a growth in costume enterprising. Costuming enterprising cannot effectively flourish without the cultural components. Kwakye-Opong and Adinku (2013), submits that costumes constitutes one of the most formidable and versatile agents for the transmission of knowledge and values across ethnic, national and international boundaries.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

This study is based on primary data which was sourced by means of questionnaire and **phone call interview**, granted to individuals in diverse costume businesses from across the six geo-political zones in the country namely: the North East, the North West, the North Central, the South East, the South West and the South South. Ninety (90) respondents were involved in the study (15 respondents from each geo-political zone), comprising: (1) Individuals in the retail sales of costume materials (Merchandizing). (2) Individuals in the retail renting of costumes (Renting services). (3).Individuals in the production of costumes (Product designers) (4). Individuals in the dressing of costume users (costumer services). **The ninety respondents were selecting using multistage sampling technique, following proportionate sampling procedure.** Both questionnaire and phone call interview that were granted elicited responses from the respondents pertaining mainly to their income inflow from their costumes and accessories businesses. A total of thirty three (33) were reached through telephone calls while fifty seven (57) were reached through a questionnaire

In administering the questionnaire to the respondents, the researcher visited them in their respective retail shops and workshops and explained the purpose of the visit. Thereafter, the questionnaire was administered and subsequently collected as soon as they were done. The

questionnaire contained a straight forward question requesting for their average monthly income from their costume business and the extent to which they transact their business beyond the country

In interpreting the response of the respondents regarding the extent of their business transactions beyond the shores of Nigeria, the following quantification rating was used.

Mean Range (X)	Rating
3.30-4.00	High
2.49-3.29	Fair
1.73-2.48	Low
0.61-1.72	Very low

**Source: George; 2014 (Adapted)**

The data obtained were analyzed using mean statistics as generated from SPSS. The result obtained is presented in table 1 and 2

## 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**4.1 Research Question 1:** What is the average monthly income of retail costume entrepreneurs in Nigeria?

Table 1 gives a summary of the monthly income of retail costuming entrepreneurs across the six-political zones in Nigeria

**Table 1: Summary of the monthly income of retail costuming entrepreneurs**

Geo-political zone	Costume Arts Aspect	Average Monthly Income(N)	Average income in the zone (N)	Rank

North East	Renting Services	27,000	26,750	4th
	Merchandizing	29,000		
	Designing Products	27,000		
	Costumer Services	24,000		
North West	Renting Services	28,000	26,500	5th
	Merchandizing	24,000		
	Designing Products	29,000		
	Costumer Services	25,000		
North Central	Renting Services	23,000	24,000	6 <sup>th</sup>
	Merchandizing	25,000		
	Designing Products	21,000		
	Costumer Services	27,000		
South East	Renting Services	38,000	36,750	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Merchandizing	43,000		
	Designing Products	34,000		
	Costumer Services	32,000		
South West	Renting Services	29,000		
	Merchandizing	35,000		

	Designing Products	31,000	30,000	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Costumer Services	25,000		
South South	Renting Services	33,000	39,750	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Merchandizing	44,000		
	Designing Products	42,000		
	Costumer Services	40,000		

The result above shows that the average monthly income of costume entrepreneurs is N30,625. This exceeds the monthly earnings of some employed people in Nigeria, who work in small and medium establishment, and are not in control of their time and growth. This income even exceeds the minimum wage that was agitated by the Nigerian Labour Congress, and which was pegged by some states at N27,000 in January, 2019. Hence, if costume enterprise is accorded more attention, it can provide income for the unemployed in the country, of which the youth constitutes a greater percentage.

This corroborates the earlier report that economic impact studies have identified the entertainment industry, which embraces the performance arts, the cinema and activities like sports in the USA, as the most important aspects after aerospace (Frank 2016). This implies that the entertainment industry (of which costume design is an integral part), has been an appreciable revenue generating stream in developed countries. Before this time, Lories (2000) had opined that nations of the world that have acknowledged the relevance of cultural and creative arts are benefiting from it in terms of economic returns. On the other hand, countries that have ignored them, have deprived themselves of the opportunity to increase their alternative stream of income.

This can also be the template for Nigeria in employment creation, income generation, and the promotion of her diverse culture heritage.

**4.2 Research Question 2:** What is the variation in the average monthly income of retail costume entrepreneurs across the six geo-political zones in the country?

Table 1 above also captures the average monthly income of the entrepreneurs based on the geo-political zone in which their business is domiciled. From the result, the costume entrepreneurs based in the South-South rank topmost, with an average monthly income of N39,750. This is followed by the South East, with an average of N36,750 (a variation of N3,000). The North-Central is at the bottom of the ladder with an average monthly income of 24,000 (a variation of N15,750 relative to the South-South). From the findings of the study as summarized in Table 1, the income recorded by retail costume entrepreneurs in the southern region of Nigeria; (the South-East, South-West and South-South) varies from those recorded in Northern Nigeria (North-East, North-West and North Central), in a region close to N10,000. This is occasioned by the fact that northern Nigeria, is yet to harness the art of costume entrepreneurship as a business opportunity, as much as the south. This is likely due to sociological factors, but with the high poverty level prevalent in the region, costume entrepreneurship could be given more attention (especially merchandising).

Greater income is recorded in the South-South of Nigeria, largely due to the carnivals held annually, with the state's government support. On an annual basis, Cross Rivers, as well as the Akwa Ibom States, hold carnivals that have opened up very lucrative businesses for the people in the region. The South-East also records appreciable income from costume entrepreneurship. This could be attributed to the several traditional events that are prodigious among the people in that region. In the Eastern part of Nigeria, traditional marriages, new yam

festivals, masquerade dance, age-grade dance and many other festivals are common events that favour costume enterprise, especially, merchandising, designing, tailoring, construction and accentuation.

Despite topping the chart, the two regions are still a far-cry from attaining the potentials that are embedded in the enterprise of costume arts. The income is low relative to what obtains in other parts of the world. Nigeria has a great edge of potentials for thriving in this enterprise, by virtue of her endowment with diverse cultural heritage and human resources. Corroborating, Adeleke (2017) submits that Nigeria is Africa's largest country, with over 370 ethnic groups, 400 dialects, and over 140 million people. These diverse ethnic groups have their peculiar costumes and crafts which have not really been taken advantage of. The diverse and abundant cultural practices in Nigeria creates several opportunities for expression in dance, music, drama, films festivals etc and hence, an opportunity for costume enterprise to thrive.

The various states belonging to each geopolitical zone are shown in the map in figure 1

**Figure 1: Distribution of States in Nigerian Geo-Political Zones**



**Source: Bakare, M.O (2015)**

**4.3 Research Question 3:** Do indigenous costume entrepreneurs transact their business beyond Nigeria?

Table 2 presents the result for the assessment of the extent to which indigenous costume entrepreneurs transact their business beyond the shores of the country.

**Table 2: Extent to which indigenous costume entrepreneurs transact their business beyond the shores of the country. ( Same Aspects of Costume Arts in Table 1)**

S/N	Extent of Transaction Beyond Nigeria	Mean (X)	Rank	Remark

1	Renting Services	1.30	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Very Poor
2	Merchandizing	1.92	1 <sup>st</sup>	Poor
3	Designing Products	1.32	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Very Poor
4	Costumer Services	1.11	4 <sup>th</sup>	Very Poor

From the result above, costume enterprise businesses from Nigerians are yet to get a meaningful standing across the globe, thereby revealing that opportunities to expand still abounds. The market outside the shores of the country is yet to be adequately penetrated as revealed in table 2. Costumer service is least, with a mean value of 1.11. This shows that currently, their services have not really penetrated the foreign market. The same applies to renting services and designing services; with a mean value of 1.30 and 1.32 respectively. Merchandizing, which tops the table with a mean coefficient of 1.92 is still very low. From interviews conducted, shop owners in the market, selling costume design products, hardly merchandise them beyond Nigerian border for export due to the belief that patronage would be low. Hence, they restrict themselves to local demand and hope that relatives, friends or home-based customers who travel abroad will someday patronize them by purchasing their products.

## **5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

Since the findings of this study reveals that the average monthly income of retail costume enterprise in Nigeria is N30,666; this study, therefore, concludes that costume enterprise is a viable venture capable of reducing poverty. The teeming population of jobless citizens can consider delving into this area of business endeavour, either as a permanent career or as a temporal one, as a means of holding a brief for their chosen career. Additionally, this study

concludes that Northern Nigeria (the North Central, North East and North West), are still lagging behind in harnessing costuming arts potentials in the region, for revenue earnings. This is obvious, considering that the highest average monthly income recorded in the region is N27,500; as against N39,750 recorded in the southern region. Furthermore, it is concluded from the study that costume enterprise is not only nascent in Nigeria but highly under-utilized. This is because the indigenous products and services of retail costume arts entrepreneurs are yet to make meaningful impact in the global market. Hence, there is the opportunity to grow costume businesses for greater income generation.

Based on the findings made and the conclusions reached, the following are recommended:

1. The government should establish costume arts entrepreneurial development centres, to provide requisite training to unemployed youths who are talented or interested in costume enterprise businesses.
2. The government should create an enabling environment for foreign earnings through costume entrepreneurship.
3. Department of theatre arts and closely related fields in tertiary institutions of learning should teach costume arts as a gainful enterprise for job creators rather than job seekers'
4. The government should partner organizations for research into local costume raw materials, suitable for export to earn foreign exchange
5. The government should provide tax incentives to costume related business, in order to encourage more participation in this field of endeavour.

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