

Reflections on International Carnivals as a Destination Recovery Strategy: The Case of Zimbabwe

Introduction

International carnivals are creative art forms in which revellers, spectators and participants are treated to aesthetic and dramatic presentations at a mass level (Oluwatoyin, 2011). Through these events, each individual country is afforded an opportunity to celebrate its totality and diversity in terms of its people, food, drink, music, colour, creed, dress and culture among other things. The celebrations involve a public parade, combining elements of circus, masques and a street party (Getz, 2008). Carnivals offer a dynamic tool for self-expression and exploration, and an opportunity to understand and appreciate other cultures. They provide enjoyment and entertainment to millions of people across the globe and hence contribute significantly to the gross national happiness of the countries involved. In relation to tourism development, carnivals play a pivotal role in profiling destinations and provide a platform for managing perceptions. Today, carnivals are celebrated annually in many countries across the globe and they are considered big business in countries such as Brazil, the United Kingdom, Nigeria and many others where they have become a tradition.