

Cultural diversity and identity in Samba dance of the Bajju people of Southern Kaduna and Brazil

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Abstract

Culture encompasses a rich tapestry of human creativity, continuously adapting to and modifying its environment. As a prominent cultural expression, it intricately shapes and mirrors cultural identity through its unique body movements, styles, and patterns, often symbolising the diversity and interaction of distinct cultural influences. This study examines cultural fusion through the lens of Samba dance, comparing its manifestations among the Bajju people of Southern Kaduna, Nigeria, and Brazil. Despite the absence of direct ethnographic connections, these two geographically and culturally distinct groups exhibit notable similarities in their dance traditions' nomenclature and movement forms. This study investigates how cultural diversity fosters identity, emphasising Samba as an embodiment of cross-cultural exchange and adaptation. The research traces the historical and cultural intersections of Bajju and Brazilian Samba dances using interviews, participatory observation, and ethnographic studies. Grounded in Cultural Studies Theory and the Theory of Cultural Relativism, the analysis highlights the interplay of cultural dominance and resistance while situating these dance traditions within their unique socio-historical contexts. The findings illuminate the dances' shared symbolic significance and rhythmic patterns, reflecting broader narratives of migration, cultural diffusion, and identity formation. While Brazilian Samba evolved as a national symbol shaped by the African diaspora's influence, Bajju Samba, rooted in local traditions, underscores the impact of cultural exchange within African communities. This comparative analysis enriches the understanding of how body movement articulates identity, history, and resilience. By exploring the dynamic interplay between preservation and innovation, this study emphasises the enduring power of dance to transcend geographic boundaries and assert cultural identity amidst evolving socio-historical realities.

Keywords: Cultural Identity, Samba Dance, Cultural Diffusion, Cross-cultural Exchange

Introduction

Culture is a complex concept encapsulating ideas, behaviours, and practices transmitted across generations. It is the foundation of human creativity, providing the means through which people express themselves and shape their environments. According to Mead (1935), culture encompasses "the whole complex of traditional behaviour which has been developed by the human race and is successively learned by each generation" (p. 5). This definition highlights culture's dynamic nature, as the activities, ideas, and material creations of people within a society continuously shape it. Cultural identity, therefore, is forged through a continuous process of learning, transmission, and transformation. One of the most potent forms of cultural expression is dance. Dance physically manifests cultural values, enabling individuals and communities to express identity, emotions, and societal roles. As Kim (2011) argues, dance converts movement into a form of language, revealing how different cultures conceptualise and communicate body movement (p. 4). This study focuses on Samba dance, a vibrant cultural phenomenon shared by two seemingly unrelated groups: the Bajju people of Southern Kaduna and Brazilians. Despite their vast geographic and cultural distance, both groups have developed a dance form known as Samba, characterised by similar movement patterns and shared nomenclature. The objective of this paper is to explore the historical and cultural connections between the Samba dance of the Bajju people and that of Brazil. By doing so, it seeks to understand how cultural diversity and migration have contributed to the evolution of dance forms across distant regions. Furthermore, the study aims to illuminate how Samba dance has evolved within these two cultures, reflecting broader patterns of cultural exchange, identity formation, and social cohesion. Through a comparative analysis, this research will trace the historical roots of Samba in both contexts and examine the similarities and differences in how the dance is performed and understood in each culture.

The Concept of Culture and Dance

Culture is a foundational concept in the study of human societies, encompassing a wide array of beliefs, practices, values, and artefacts that shape human behaviour and social organisation. Anthropologically, culture refers to the learned behaviours and symbolic systems shared among society and transmitted from generation to generation. As Bodley (1994) explains, culture comprises three fundamental elements: (i) what people think, (ii) what people do, and (iii) the material products they create (p. 2). These elements form the basis of societal structures, shaping how people interact with each other and how they interpret and engage with the world around them. Culture is dynamic and constantly evolving as societies change in response to internal developments and external influences. Through this process of cultural evolution, art forms like dance emerge, adapt, and flourish. As an intrinsic part of culture, dance is a form of non-verbal communication that expresses a society's values, beliefs, and emotions through movement. It is a physical manifestation of culture that reveals much about a person's way of life, social structure, and historical context. According to Cottam and Jefferson-Buchanan (2008), dance is a concentrated form of physical behaviour that embodies the cultural values of a group. In this sense, dance is an artistic endeavour and a social activity that reinforces cultural identity and fosters community cohesion. For example, specific dance movements may symbolise critical historical events, religious beliefs, or social hierarchies within a given culture.

In many societies, dance is central to communal life and serves various functions, from religious rituals to social celebrations and political events. It is both a form of entertainment and a medium for conveying complex cultural narratives. The anthropological study of dance, often referred to as dance ethnography, seeks to understand how dance reflects and influences the cultural dynamics of a society. By analysing dance movements, rhythms, and contexts, researchers can gain insights into how a culture conceptualises body movement, space, and time and how it

negotiates identity, power, and social order issues. The Samba dance, which is the focus of this paper, provides a compelling example of how dance can function as a cultural identifier and a vehicle for expressing social values. Samba is a highly rhythmic and energetic dance form with roots in the African diaspora, particularly in Brazil, where it has evolved into a national symbol. However, the Bajju people of Southern Kaduna, Nigeria, also have a tradition of Samba dance, which shares similarities in movement patterns and social significance with its Brazilian counterpart. This study explores how these two distinct yet related traditions of Samba have developed in different cultural and historical contexts, illustrating the role of cultural diffusion in shaping dance forms.

Theories of Cultural Identity and Relativism

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in two key concepts: cultural studies theory and cultural relativism theory. Both theories offer critical insights into how broader cultural, social, political, and historical forces shape practices like dance. Cultural Studies Theory, developed by scholars such as Stuart Hall, emphasises the role of power and hegemony in shaping cultural practices. According to Hall (2020), culture is not a static or neutral entity but rather a site of struggle, where dominant groups seek to impose their values and norms on subordinate groups. Culture becomes a battleground for expressing identity, resistance, and social change in this context. Dominant cultural groups, often associated with political or economic power, attempt to control cultural production and marginalise the practices of less powerful groups. However, marginalised groups usually resist this domination by creating artistic forms reflecting their unique experiences and perspectives.

In the context of Samba dance, Cultural Studies Theory helps explain how African-descended communities in Brazil, historically marginalised by European colonial powers, used dance to assert their identity and resist cultural assimilation. As Chasteen (1996) notes, Samba evolved in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as Afro-Brazilians integrated African rhythms and dance forms with European and indigenous Brazilian cultural elements. This process of cultural fusion allowed Afro-Brazilians to carve out a space for their artistic expression in a society that sought to erase their African heritage. With its vibrant rhythms and expressive movements, the Samba dance symbolised Afro-Brazilian resilience and creativity, eventually gaining national and international recognition as a quintessential part of Brazilian culture. Similarly, the Bajju people of Southern Kaduna have used Samba dance to preserve and express their cultural identity. Despite the influence of external forces, including colonialism and globalisation, the Bajju have maintained their traditional dance forms, adapting them to new social contexts while retaining their core elements. The adoption of the name "Samba" by both the Bajju and Brazilian communities reflects the broader patterns of cultural diffusion and resistance that characterise the history of marginalised groups worldwide.

The Theory of Cultural Relativism, first articulated by Franz Boas, complements Cultural Studies Theory by emphasising that all cultural practices should be understood within their own social and historical contexts. Boas (1911) argued that no culture is intrinsically superior or inferior to another; each culture develops in response to its environment's specific challenges and opportunities. Cultural relativism calls for a non-judgmental approach to studying artistic practices, recognising that what may seem unusual or unfamiliar in one culture may be entirely rational and meaningful within another. In the case of Samba dance, cultural relativism allows us to appreciate the differences between the Brazilian and Bajju traditions without viewing one as more "authentic" or "advanced" than the other. While the two forms of Samba share certain similarities, they have also developed in response to their regions' unique social, political, and historical conditions. For the Bajju people, Samba is deeply connected to

their agricultural lifestyle and communal values, while in Brazil, Samba has become a symbol of national identity, reflecting the country's diverse cultural heritage. By applying a relativist lens, we can better understand how these two traditions have evolved independently, yet parallel, as expressions of cultural identity.

Studies on Samba Dance

A substantial body of research has been devoted to studying Samba dance in Brazil, widely regarded as a national symbol and an integral part of the country's cultural heritage. Scholars such as Chasteen (1996) have traced the origins of Samba to the African diaspora, particularly the influence of West African and Angolan dance traditions brought to Brazil by enslaved Africans during the transatlantic slave trade. According to Chasteen, Samba began as a form of resistance among Afro-Brazilian communities in Rio de Janeiro, where it served as a way for enslaved and freed Africans to preserve their cultural heritage in the face of European cultural domination. Over time, Samba evolved into a popular dance form performed in Carnival celebrations and social gatherings, eventually becoming a national symbol of Brazilian identity. Despite its widespread popularity in Brazil, Samba has also been the subject of scholarly debate, particularly regarding its commercialisation and globalisation. Some scholars argue that the global success of Brazilian Samba has led to its commodification, with the dance being stripped of its original cultural significance and transformed into a spectacle for international tourists and audiences. Others contend that Samba remains a powerful symbol of Afro-Brazilian identity, even in its commercialised form, as it continues to represent the resilience and creativity of marginalised communities.

In contrast, the study of Samba dance among the Bajju people has received relatively little scholarly attention. The Bajju, a predominantly agricultural ethnic group in Southern Kaduna, Nigeria, have practised Samba as part of their traditional maiden dance known as Song Bvin. This dance, performed during festivals and social ceremonies, is characterised by coordinated waist movements and rapid leg actions, similar to the Brazilian Samba. While the origins of the Bajju Samba are less well-documented than its Brazilian counterpart, the dance likely developed through cultural diffusion, facilitated by migration and trade between different ethnic groups in West Africa. Blench (2018) suggests that the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Plateau region, where the Bajju people are located, has contributed to the development of unique dance traditions that reflect a fusion of influences from neighbouring communities. Therefore, the similarities between the Bajju and Brazilian Sambas may be evidence of the broader patterns of cultural exchange that have shaped the development of dance forms across the African diaspora.

Migration has long been recognised as a critical driver of cultural exchange, facilitating the transmission of ideas, beliefs, and artistic expressions across geographic boundaries. In the case of Samba, the transatlantic slave trade played a crucial role in shaping the cultural landscape of both Africa and the Americas, particularly in Brazil, where African cultural traditions were integrated into the local culture. According to Oliviera and Campos (2021), enslaved Africans brought a rich heritage of dance, music, and religious practices, which were gradually incorporated into the fabric of Brazilian society. As it is known today, Samba is the product of this cultural fusion, combining elements of African, indigenous Brazilian, and European traditions. The influence of migration on the development of Samba is not limited to Brazil, however. In West Africa, where the Bajju people are located, migration has also significantly shaped cultural practices. As Blench (2018) notes, the Plateau region of Nigeria is home to a diverse array of ethnic groups, each with its unique cultural traditions. Over the centuries, these groups have engaged in extensive trade, intermarriage, and cultural exchange, developing shared practices, including dance. The similarity between the Bajju and Brazilian Sambas may, therefore, be seen as a reflection of the

broader patterns of cultural diffusion that have characterised the history of the African diaspora.

The transatlantic slave trade, which forcibly displaced millions of Africans to the Americas between the 16th and 19th centuries, played a pivotal role in shaping the cultural connections between Africa and the New World. Khan (2016) emphasises that enslaved Africans brought with them not only physical labour but also cultural practices, including dance, music, and religious traditions. These practices were transplanted into new environments, where they blended with local customs and adapted to new social realities. As it evolved in Brazil, Samba represents one of the most prominent examples of this cultural blending, combining African rhythms and movements with elements of European and indigenous Brazilian dance forms. In addition to the forced migrations of the slave trade, voluntary migration within Africa also contributed to the diffusion of cultural practices such as dance. The Bajju people, for example, migrated from the Congo Basin to the savanna plains of present-day Bauchi State in Nigeria before settling in Southern Kaduna. This history of migration, coupled with interactions with neighbouring ethnic groups, facilitated the exchange of cultural ideas, including dance traditions. The similarities between the Samba of the Bajju people and the Brazilian Samba can be understood as part of a larger pattern of cross-cultural influence that has shaped the development of dance forms across the African diaspora.

Migration facilitated the exchange of cultural practices and influenced how these practices were adapted and transformed in new contexts. In Brazil, the Afro-Brazilian population used Samba as a means of preserving their African heritage while also negotiating their place within a racially and culturally diverse society. Samba became a symbol of resistance and resilience, embodying the experiences of enslaved Africans and their descendants as they navigated the complexities of Brazilian culture. Similarly, the Bajju people adapted their traditional dance forms to reflect their evolving social and cultural realities, incorporating new movements and influences while maintaining the core elements of their cultural heritage. The cultural diffusion that resulted from migration is evident in the similarities between the Bajju and Brazilian Sambas and the broader patterns of cultural exchange that have shaped the development of dance forms across Africa and the Americas. As Dietz (2007) notes, cultural diversity is often the product of historical processes that blend multiple cultural traditions. In the case of Samba, the dance represents a fusion of African, European, and Indigenous influences, reflecting the complex histories of migration, colonisation, and cultural exchange that have shaped the regions in which it is performed. In sum, studying migration and cross-cultural influence provides essential insights into the development of Samba as a dance form in Nigeria and Brazil. The similarities between the two traditions highlight how cultural practices can transcend geographic boundaries and evolve in response to new social and historical contexts. At the same time, the differences between the Bajju and Brazilian Sambas underscore the importance of understanding cultural practices within their specific local contexts, as each tradition reflects the unique experiences and histories of the communities that perform it.



Plate 1: Samba Dance of the Bajju People of Southern Kaduna

Methodology

This study's methodological approach draws on qualitative research methods, including interviews, participatory observation, and ethnographic studies. These methods are complemented by content analysis of relevant literature and historical evidence to explore the cross-cultural links between the Samba dance of the Bajju people in Southern Kaduna and the Afro-Brazilian Samba tradition.

1. Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including elders and leaders of dance troupes from the Bajju community. The interviews aimed to collect oral histories about the origin and evolution of the Samba dance within the Bajju culture, its role in community life, and the significance of its nomenclature. Participants were asked to describe the dance movements, the social contexts in which Samba is performed, and their views on the similarities between Bajju Samba and Brazilian Samba.

2. Participant Observation: Fieldwork was conducted in several Bajju communities, including Zonkwa, Tsoriyang, Tabak, Madakiya, and Kamrum Bajju, where Samba dances are still performed during festivals and social gatherings. The researcher observed the choreography, props, costumes, and overall structure of Samba performances. This method allowed for a deeper understanding of the dance as a lived cultural practice.

3. **Ethnographic Study:** A comparative ethnographic study was conducted to analyse the shared characteristics between the Samba of Southern Kaduna and that of Brazil. This involved reviewing historical documents and academic literature on the evolution of Samba in both regions and investigating the broader social, economic, and cultural contexts that may have contributed to the development of similar dance traditions.

4. **Content Analysis:** Secondary data, including journal articles, books, and online sources, were reviewed to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the cultural dynamics that influence dance creation and diffusion. The content analysis focused on identifying cultural, historical, and social factors that may have shaped the Samba dance in Nigeria and Brazil.

Plate 2: Brazilian Samba Dancers

Results

This research revealed several key insights into the cultural and historical connections between the Samba dances of the Bajju people and Brazil. These findings are presented in three categories: historical linkages, similarities in dance form, and the role of cultural diffusion.

1. **Historical Linkages:** The research confirmed that the historical trajectory of migration and cultural exchange between Africa and Brazil, mainly through the transatlantic slave trade, played a significant role in shaping the dance traditions of both regions. Oral histories from the Bajju community suggest that the term "Samba" may have been introduced to the Bajju people through interactions with Afro-Brazilians who returned to West Africa after the abolition of slavery. This supports existing literature, such as the work of Khan (2016), which emphasises the role of the slave trade in facilitating cross-cultural exchange between Africa and the Americas.



2. Similarities in Dance Form: The comparison of the dance forms revealed notable similarities between the Bajju and Brazilian Samba dances. Both dances emphasise rhythmic body movements, particularly the waist wriggling, a central choreography feature. In both traditions, Samba is performed in processions, with the dancers moving in a coordinated line or circle, accompanied by drums and other percussion instruments. However, while the Brazilian Samba is often more fluid and improvisational, the Bajju Samba tends to be more structured, with specific movements passed down through generations.

3. Cultural Diffusion and Identity Formation: The research identified cultural diffusion as a critical factor in the development of the Samba dance. The adoption of the name "Samba" by the Bajju and Brazilian communities reflects a shared cultural heritage despite the lack of direct contact between the two groups. This finding aligns with the theory of cultural relativism, which suggests that cultural practices develop in response to local social and historical conditions but may share standard features due to broader patterns of human interaction (Hall, 2020). The use of Samba as a cultural identifier in both regions underscores the role of dance in expressing and preserving cultural identity.

Additionally, the study highlighted the role of cultural dynamism in the evolution of Samba. In Brazil and Southern Kaduna, Samba has evolved from a traditional folk dance into a more modern performance art, influenced by external cultural forces such as Western media and global tourism. The Bajju Samba, in particular, has changed choreography, costumes, and performance settings, reflecting the community's adaptation to contemporary cultural trends. The results of this study support the hypothesis that cultural migration and diffusion played a central role in shaping the Samba dance tradition in Brazil and Nigeria. The dance form and nomenclature similarities between the Bajju and Brazilian Sambas provide strong evidence of cross-cultural exchange, likely facilitated by the transatlantic slave trade. However, it is also clear that the two dance traditions have developed independently, shaped by their respective regions' unique social and historical contexts. (The findings further demonstrate that dance is a powerful tool for cultural identity formation. In both the Bajju and Brazilian contexts, Samba is more than just a dance; it symbolises communal heritage, social cohesion, and resistance to cultural domination. As noted by Ojuade (2007), dance is often used to "portray the cultural interpretations of history and reality," and this is evident in the way Samba has evolved to reflect the lived experiences of both Afro-Brazilians and the Bajju people (p. 2). The following section will further explore the implications of these findings and discuss the broader cultural significance of Samba in both regions.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study demonstrate that cultural exchange, mainly through migration, played a crucial role in the development of the Samba dance among both the Bajju people of Southern Kaduna and the Afro-Brazilian population. The dance's shared nomenclature, movement forms, and symbolic significance suggest that Samba is a product of cultural fusion shaped by historical and social contexts. This supports existing research on the influence of the transatlantic slave trade on cultural development in the Americas, particularly in Brazil, where African cultural traditions were absorbed and transformed into new expressions of identity (Chasteen, 1996). In the case of the Bajju people, the introduction of the name "Samba" may have been influenced by returning Afro-Brazilian communities who resettled in West Africa after the abolition of slavery. These communities likely brought elements of Brazilian culture, including music, dance, and religious practices. Adopting Samba as a dance name in Southern Kaduna reflects the dynamic nature of cultural exchange, where ideas, customs, and artistic expressions cross geographic and cultural boundaries. Such cultural fluidity is not unique to the Bajju and Brazilian contexts; it is a common

feature of human societies where migration and trade have historically facilitated the blending of cultural practices.

Cultural Studies Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how marginalised groups, such as enslaved Africans and their descendants in Brazil, resisted the cultural domination of European colonial powers by maintaining and adapting their traditional practices. The evolution of Samba in Brazil, for example, reflects how Afro-Brazilians used dance as a form of cultural resistance, asserting their identity in the face of oppression (Hall, 2020). Similarly, the Bajju people's adoption and adaptation of Samba underscores the importance of cultural dynamism in preserving and transforming identity. The study highlights the role of dance as a critical cultural identifier. In Southern Kaduna and Brazil, Samba is an art form and a medium through which communities express and preserve their cultural heritage. As argued by Cottam and Jefferson-Buchanan (2008), dance is a concentrated form of physical behaviour communicating a community's values and social structures (p. 1). In both the Bajju and Brazilian contexts, Samba provides a platform for communal expression, reinforcing social cohesion and shared identity.

The specific movements of Samba, characterised by rapid hip rotations and rhythmic footwork, embody cultural narratives and historical experiences. Among the Bajju people, Samba has evolved from a traditional maiden dance, Song Bvin, into a broader cultural practice incorporating traditional and contemporary dance forms. The continued performance of Samba in festivals and ceremonies reflects its enduring role in the social and cultural life of the Bajju people. Similarly, in Brazil, Samba has transitioned from a folk dance rooted in Afro-Brazilian communities to a symbol of national identity, celebrated during Carnival and other public events. This evolution illustrates the flexibility of dance as a cultural form, capable of adapting to new social and historical contexts while retaining its core significance as a marker of identity.

Cultural Relativism and the Interpretation of Samba

One of the critical contributions of this study is its application of the Theory of Cultural Relativism to the interpretation of Samba in Nigeria and Brazil. As Boas (1911) articulates, cultural relativism emphasises that cultural practices should be understood in the context of their specific social and historical conditions. This perspective is beneficial for analysing the similarities and differences between the Samba dances of the Bajju people and Brazil. While the two dance traditions share standard features, including nomenclature and movement patterns, they also reflect the unique cultural dynamics of their respective regions. For the Bajju people, Samba is deeply tied to their agricultural lifestyle and communal values. The dance is often performed during festivals celebrating the harvest or marking significant social events, such as weddings or religious ceremonies. The structured nature of the dance, with its emphasis on coordinated group movements, reflects the collectivist ethos of Bajju society. In contrast, while rooted in Afro-Brazilian cultural traditions, the Brazilian Samba has evolved into a more fluid and improvisational form, reflecting the diverse cultural influences that have shaped Brazilian society. By applying a relativist lens, this study avoids the pitfall of viewing one Samba tradition as a derivative of the other. Instead, it recognises that the Bajju and Brazilian Sambas developed independently in response to local cultural conditions. This approach aligns with the broader goals of cultural relativism, which seeks to understand cultural practices on their terms without imposing external value judgments (Ferraro & Briody, 2017). The cross-cultural analysis presented in this study thus contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how dance functions as a product and a driver of cultural identity.

Modern Adaptations and Global Influence

One of the study's more contemporary findings is the influence of modernity and globalisation on the evolution of Samba in Nigeria and Brazil. As globalisation has increased cultural exchange between nations, Samba has been increasingly performed in international settings, particularly Brazilian Samba, and is showcased during Carnival and in global dance competitions. This globalisation of Samba has had a reciprocal influence, with modern dance styles and aesthetics being incorporated into the traditional forms of Samba in both regions. In the Bajju context, younger generations have integrated contemporary music and movement into the traditional Samba dance, transforming it into a hybrid expression that resonates with global cultural trends. This transformation is similar to how Samba in Brazil has incorporated elements of modern dance styles, blending traditional Afro-Brazilian movements with contemporary jazz, ballet, and hip-hop influences. While these adaptations reflect the global impact on local cultural practices, they also highlight the importance of maintaining a connection to the traditional roots of the dance.

The role of globalisation in shaping cultural practices, including dance, raises important questions about the future of traditional art forms in a rapidly changing world. As more cultural practices become globalised, the challenge for communities like the Bajju and Afro-Brazilians is to preserve the integrity of their cultural heritage while embracing new influences. This delicate balance is critical for ensuring that Samba remains a meaningful expression of cultural identity for future generations. The findings of this study suggest several avenues for future research. First, further comparative studies of dance traditions in other African and Latin American cultures could shed light on the broader cultural diffusion and migration patterns that have shaped these art forms. Additionally, research into the role of media and popular culture in shaping modern adaptations of traditional dance would provide valuable insights into how globalisation affects cultural practices. Finally, studying gender dynamics in Samba, particularly the role of women in both the Bajju and Brazilian Samba traditions, could offer essential perspectives on the social significance of dance in different cultural contexts.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has explored the cultural and historical connections between the Samba dance of the Bajju people in Southern Kaduna, Nigeria, and that of Brazil, highlighting the role of migration, cultural exchange, and identity formation in shaping these dance traditions. Through a comparative analysis, the research has demonstrated that despite the vast geographical distance and distinct social contexts, the two forms of Samba share significant similarities in movement patterns and nomenclature. These similarities suggest that cultural diffusion, mainly through the transatlantic slave trade and other migratory patterns, played a crucial role in transmitting and transforming cultural practices across continents. The study's application of Cultural Studies Theory and Cultural Relativism has further enhanced the understanding of how dance functions as both a product and an agent of cultural identity. In both the Bajju and Brazilian contexts, Samba is more than a dance; it is a powerful medium for expressing collective memory, social values, and resistance to cultural domination. The research findings underscore the dynamic nature of culture, illustrating how traditional practices like Samba evolve in response to new social and historical circumstances while retaining their core significance as markers of identity.

This study's comparative approach also reveals the importance of viewing cultural practices through a relativist lens, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of how cultural expressions develop independently in different contexts. By recognising the unique social, historical, and geographical factors that shaped the Bajju and Brazilian Samba traditions, this study contributes to a broader understanding of how migration

and cultural exchange shape the evolution of cultural practices worldwide. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to ensure the preservation and further understanding of the Samba dance in both the Bajju and Brazilian contexts:

1. **Increased Scholarly Attention on Bajju Samba:** The literature concerning the Bajju people's Samba dance is significantly lacking. Scholars in African dance studies should focus on conducting more in-depth research into the history, evolution, and cultural significance of Bajju Samba. Such research would contribute to the academic understanding of African dance and enhance the visibility of the Bajju people's cultural heritage in the broader discourse on global dance traditions.
2. **Creation of an African Dance Dictionary:** A comprehensive African Dance Dictionary should be developed to preserve and promote African dance traditions. This resource would document various dance forms across the continent, including the Bajju Samba, ensuring that future generations can access accurate and detailed information about these cultural expressions.
3. **National Recognition of Samba in Nigeria:** In collaboration with cultural and artistic bodies, the Nigerian government should recognise the significance of Samba as a national cultural asset. This recognition would involve promoting the Bajju Samba through national dance festivals, artistic exhibitions, and international collaborations with countries like Brazil, where Samba is already a well-established national symbol. Such initiatives would preserve and position the tradition as a cultural bridge between Nigeria and the broader global community.
4. **Support for Samba Dance Schools and Cultural Institutions:** In Nigeria and Brazil, dedicated institutions, such as Samba dance schools, that focus on preserving and teaching the traditional and modern forms of Samba are needed. These schools would serve as centres for cultural exchange, where dancers and researchers from different countries can collaborate, share knowledge, and promote the art form globally. Governments and cultural organisations should provide funding and support for establishing these institutions.
5. **Encouragement of International Cultural Exchange Programs:** To strengthen the cultural ties between Nigeria and Brazil, international cultural exchange programs should be encouraged. These programs would allow dancers, choreographers, and scholars from both countries to collaborate on projects, attend festivals, and share their traditions. Such exchanges would enrich both countries' cultural landscapes and promote mutual understanding and appreciation of their shared heritage.
6. **Further Research on Gender Dynamics in Samba:** This study has highlighted the importance of dance in expressing cultural identity but has not fully explored the role of gender in shaping these dance traditions. Future research should examine the gender dynamics within the Samba dance traditions of both the Bajju and Brazil. Understanding the roles that men and women play in these cultural practices would provide valuable insights into the social significance of dance in each region and how it reflects broader patterns of gender relations.

In sum, this study has provided insights into the cultural connections between the Bajju people's and Brazil's samba dance traditions, emphasising the role of migration, cultural exchange, and identity formation in shaping these practices. By recognising the value of Samba as an artistic expression and promoting its preservation, Nigeria and Brazil can continue to celebrate their shared heritage and strengthen the bonds between their peoples.

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