

# **Potential Roles of Landscaping in Sustainable Tourism Development in Nigeria: A Multivariate Analysis**

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## **Abstract**

Tourism as widely acknowledged by various researchers has huge financial gains and several other benefits. These benefits notwithstanding, tourism potentials in Nigeria remain largely unexploited and unattractive. Research has shown that Nigeria is richly endowed with varieties of natural and cultural resources, ranging from natural scenery, historical relics and a diversity of cultural attractions; nevertheless, many of the attractions in Nigeria are faced with challenges of supporting and enhancing tourism infrastructure. Globally, tourist destinations with beautiful and attractive scenery are known to create pleasing experience for tourist. Thus landscaping plays a vital role in enhancing tourist destinations. Combining the review of relevant literature and quantitative method of data collection, the study discussed landscaping in relation to tourism development. It reports finding from a research on landscaping and developed a linear model through multiple regression analysis for the prediction of the role landscaping would play in sustainable tourism development in Nigeria. The finding also revealed the regression coefficient of the predictor variables which describes the values by which the dependent variable would change as a result of a unit change in any of the predictor variables. The study therefore concludes that landscaping would be of immense benefit in sustainable tourism development in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Landscaping, Multiple Regression, Nigeria, Sustainable Tourism

## **1. Introduction**

Tourism is fast growing globally and many nations in the world are beginning to recognise tourism as an important industry (Aniah et al, 2009; Tunde, 2012; Dwyer and Spurr, 2012) due to the numerous benefits. Although, with a higher proportion of growth in the developed countries; developing countries are also beginning to be aware of its importance (Ayeni and Ebohon, 2012). But tourism in Nigeria still remain largely untapped, undeveloped and leave much to be desired (Ovat, 2003; Tunde, 2012) with minimal supporting tourism infrastructure. Thus if tourism is to give its full benefits as suggested by Aniah et al (2009), infrastructure and services provisions for tourist must be promoted.

In line with the ethos of sustainable development which is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their needs as elaborated by WCED in 1987; Ayeni and Olalusi (2012) argued that sustainability in line with the environment must improve the environment and economy in order to provide a better place to live, work and play; now and in the future. Thus tourism environment in Nigeria must be improved in order to attract tourist worldwide.

Tourism as defined by World Tourism Organisation is an activity that involves temporary travel of persons to places outside their usual environment for leisure purposes. And achieving this is based on motivations categorised as pull and push factors. Push factor are the desires of the traveller to embark on the journey, and the pull factor, as the attractiveness and expectations of a destination (Mohammad and Som, 2010; Lubbe, 2005). Scenery and attractive destinations are further identified by Lubbe (2005) as pull factors; as such, a well landscaped tourist destination, apart from serving as a pull to tourists also play other important roles in tourism development as identified by this study. More so, landscaping as stated by WiseGEEK (2012) help to create functional and beautiful spaces and these are created in order to improve the visual perceptions, aesthetics and health of the individual (Ayeni, 2012).

Thus the main objective of the study is to investigate the role landscaping would play if tourism is developed in Nigeria; through developing a linear multiple regression model.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Tourism is a revenue earner as noted by Sevrani and Elmazi (2008), and one of the most important sectors for both developing as well as developed countries. And from time immemorial, increase in leisure time has geared people into travelling far and wide for tourism activities; and landscape play a motivating role in the choice of tourist destinations (Ayeni et al, 2011).

In Nigeria, the tourism sector has been neglected until recently as noted by Tunde (2012) and development still at a very slow pace; efforts by the government have been piecemeal and half hearted in nature as averred by Bankole and Odularu (2006). However, being one of the fastest growing industries in the world as argued by Odunsanwo (2010) is capable of transforming the Nigerian economy through job creation if well nurtured. More so, it is different from oil exportation in that consumer of tourism goods and services come to the tourism destinations rather than having the goods and services exported. Nevertheless, the overall infrastructure in Nigeria as affirmed by Arasi (2011) is extremely weak. Noting this, Saheed, (2012) argued that, the provision of tourism infrastructure are essentials for any meaningful tourism development; as such, Nigerian tourist environment need urgent transformation in order to make it attractive to yield the optimum benefits from tourism.

The environment as averred by Inskeep (1987) is very essential in planning tourism because the two are closely related. Going by this, Krippendorf (1982) noted that the scenic attractions of a tourist destination stand as the central focus and are the most important tourists' motivation, thus an attractive environment contributes to the progress of the tourism sector. By this reason, landscape is considered an essential part of tourism development.

Indeed, Knudsen, et al (2008) asserts that, landscape is not merely the lay of land, neither is it only a place but is also a way in which to conceive a place. It is not static, it changes and as such in an attempt to create landscapes, ideas and identity of a place is an important consideration. This in essence will keep a place going in terms of identifying it with its tourism potentials. Similarly, Sinha (2005) noted that landscape is a symbolic creation, designed with care, whose form reflects a set of human attitudes and preferences; in view of this, any change in the landscape reflects a changing view of man's relationship with nature. This is to say that, man's attitude and reactions to an environment largely depend on the appeal of the landscape.

Landscape provides tourists and the local population opportunities to explore and enjoy the natural and man-made features of a place. Simply looking at beautiful surroundings can be inspiring and delightful and the environment, as emphasised by Ozgen (2003), is one of the most important contributors to the desirability and attractiveness of a destination. This is why scenic sites, amendable climates and unique landscape features are considered important to development. Consequently, Lew, Hall and Williams (2004) stated that, in landscaping for tourism, everything visible within the environment in the destination constitutes what attracts and satisfies visitors. However, for landscaping to have the desired effects on tourism, it must be well planned and organised.

### **3. Relevance of Landscaping to Tourism**

Although, the term landscape has several connotations, however, the European Landscape Convention definition in Mikulec and Antouskova (2011) defines landscape to mean "an area as perceived by people, which character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and /or human factors" is widely accepted. Relating this to tourism, Zheng et al (2009) stated that landscapes can increase city amenities and serves as attractive attribute for beautification and tourism. Landscapes embraces all that is visible, looking across an area of land (Kokovkin, 1995; Consultation Draft (2000) and has always been one of the tourism industry's most important source of attracting tourist (Civilscape, 2012); in addition, the ability to view natural and man-made scenes that are interesting is an important part of tourism experience and a motivation for many visitor (Mikulec and Antouskova , 2011).

Landscaping as noted by Ayeni (2012) is the beautification or modification of the outdoor by man. This play an essential role as argued by Huda (2012) in the quality of the environment affecting the economic well being as well as the physical and psychological health. As such, suitable landscaping is an important component of any tourist facility development (Linkorish and Jenkins, 2012) and is essential in order to provide an attractive visitor environment.

Developing tourist attractions through landscaping helps improve the overall outlook and the aesthetics of a destination. The desire of every tourist is to enjoy beautiful landscape either natural or man-made which all come in a variety of forms and may be enjoyed in both passive and active ways as argued by Bell and Lyall (2002). Furthermore, it does not require the tourists to have knowledge of the area, local language, prior experience or spatial training. The environment must be a major consideration in any tourism development and through proper environmental planning tourism is enjoyed. As such Pigram and Jenkins (2006) noted that the environment is the aggregate of resources available to human beings, made up of the natural, socio-cultural and economic environments, which render tourism and the environment interdependent. In essence, the way it is being managed and planned for tourism purposes often determines the tourists and the local residents' enjoyment, gains and the tourists' decision to return.

Landscape and tourism have come a long way and people have always been attracted to beautiful places from time immemorial as noted by Aitcheson, Macleod and Shaw (2001). This infers that there has always been a link between humankind and particular landscape formation and shows that indeed beauty is embedded in nature. In the view of Holden (2000), tourism is a catalyst to environmental development as it aids urban regeneration and improves the quality of the environment. Consequently, tourist destinations that do not maintain a high quality environment will result in low tourist patronage. It therefore follows that a good tourism experience, apart from the tourist infrastructure depends on the environment and the planning; hence there is the need to conserve the natural environment, ecosystems and biodiversity.

In view of the above, Baharu (2009), argued that landscape planning, design and large scale development of parks are initiatives that need to be given serious attention; this is because 'It plays a dual role in that greenery is preserved and at the same time, attracts tourism revenue', as a result, efforts to preserve and improve the environment are very important in order to attract tourists to such destinations. Clivaz (2008), Lickorish and Jenkins (1997) highlights several roles landscaping play in tourist destinations and includes the improvement of environmental quality by giving the overall aesthetics scenery of the attraction; enhances environment through the general beautification of the environment; improves infrastructures such as roads, water and sewerage systems etc which provides economic as well as environmental benefits; conservation of important natural areas by preserving nature parks and other outdoor recreations, preventing them from deteriorating through neglect; as well as the conservation of archaeological and historic sites by protecting and preserving sites which might have being left to deteriorate or disappear.

Thus, good landscaping is very important to tourist destination as well as the individual tourist, as it contributes to marketing the tourist environment and improves the well being of the tourist. As such, unplanned growth and development of tourism especially in the area of landscaping will contribute to the hindrance of tourist activities and low patronage of tourist destinations.

#### **4. Study Area and Methodology**

This study is an abridged version of a larger research carried out in Nigeria; located in West Africa, on Latitude 9<sup>o</sup> 4' North of the equator and Longitude 7<sup>o</sup> 29' East of the Greenwich Meridian between 2010 and 2012. With Abuja as its capital, Nigeria comprises thirty-six states and Federal Capital Territory (Wikipedia, 2012) and has a population of about 167 million (National Population Commission, 2012).

The study was carried out within two geopolitical zones in Nigeria; the North Central and the South West, which were randomly selected from the six geopolitical zones which make up Nigeria (Ikein et al, 2008) and these two zones selected, made up the study population. The six zones as shown in Figure 1 include the North-west, North-east, North-central, South-west, South-east and South-south. These zones cut across different climates, including equatorial climate in the south, tropical in the central and arid in the north to provide unique landscape and ecological features, hence the different tourist attractions.

The study adopted the quantitative method of data collection combined with the review of literature in order to gauge the views of tourism stakeholders in Nigeria on the potential role of landscaping to tourism development. While the quantitative method allow the gauge of data in numerical terms, using closed ended questionnaires, the literature review allows an in-depth knowledge of factors underpinning their views to give a credible and valid results (Denzin and Lincoln,1998) using various publications. In this study, respondent opinions were measured on a Likert scale of 4 points, where 4 denotes strongly agree and 1 denotes strongly disagree.

Figure 1 Showing Map of Nigeria Showing the Six Geopolitical Zones



Sources: Ekong et al (2012)

From the study population, four states namely, Kogi, Ekiti, Ondo, the Federal Capital Territory- Abuja and an academic institution were selected using the simple random and convenience sampling methods to represent the sample frame from where samples were drawn. A stratified random sampling was then used in the selection of respondents from all stakeholders in the tourism industry, including staff of the Nigerian Tourism Board, hotels and travel agents, government employees, non-government employees and tourists. On whom eight hundred and fifty closed ended questionnaires were randomly administered by closely supervised trained research assistants between the months of March and June, 2010. The assistants were trained and initially used for pretesting of the questionnaire to check for possible problems. This helped to ascertain reliability, overall structure and verified that the questionnaire meets the expectation for usefulness.

A sample size of two hundred was estimated for each of the states selected and fifty academics, this was neither too small nor too large in order to achieve the objective. At the end of the survey, a total of seven hundred and forty-five questionnaires were returned completed, thus a response rate of eighty-seven percent were recorded and data analysed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSSx) and results expressed using the descriptive analysis to explore each variable for performance and multivariate analysis for regressions in order to determine the potential role of landscaping in sustainable tourism development, using the general linear equation for the multiple regression model:  $Y = A_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3... \beta_nX_n + E_t$

Where Y = dependent variable,  $A_0$  = Constant  $\beta$  = slope, X= independent variable and E regression residual.

## 5. Results and Discussion

### 5.1 Respondents Characteristics

From the descriptive analysis, the results for variable performance using the SPSS<sub>x</sub>, the characteristics of the respondents using the SPSS<sub>x</sub> showed that males predominate in the

sample, representing 63.4 per cent while female respondents were 36.6 per cent, which comes as no surprise given the over powering influence in the Nigerian culture, men tend to take important decisions concerning the households. It is not an overstatement to say that housewives would usually keep questionnaires of this nature for their husbands or ask the researcher to come back when their husbands are available. The predominance of men in the sample is reflected in the mode average, which is 1.

Most of the participants were within the age bracket of 20-50 years, accounting for 83.7 per cent of the total sample size while those above the age of 50 years accounted for 10.7 per cent with 5.6 per cent refusing to participate. Furthermore, majority of respondents which accounted for 49.3 per cent were government employees, 28.4 per cent are self-employed, 22.1 per cent are unemployed, while 0.1 of the total sample did not respond. The educational background of respondents was also surveyed, revealing that respondents are well educated with 65.8 per cent having had a tertiary education. Similarly, 12.6 are educated to secondary school level, and 12.2 per cent are educated to primary school level, while only 8.9 per cent had no formal education and needed assistance with the questionnaire.

Also, a total of 58.9 percent are married while 39.1 percent are single. About 1.6 per cent are widows while 0.4 did not respond. The range of income level was also ascertained with 48.1 earning between N7, 500 and N100, 000 per month, which is the equivalent of about 159 Naira to US\$1 current exchange rate; 41.1 per cent earn above N100, 000 per month; 25.1 percent earn between N100, 001 – N500, 000 monthly; 16.0 per cent earn above N500, 000 monthly while 10.2 per cent did not respond to this question.

The characteristics of respondents showed that all stakeholders are represented in the sample, these range from low income earners to high income earners, different age groups, and sufficiently educated to understand the questionnaire survey. The uneducated segment of respondents' population is assisted by trained field assistants. This degree of representation can only enhance the validity and credibility of results.

## 5.2 Potential Role of Landscaping in Sustainable Tourism using the Multiple Regressions

Using the multiple regression analysis to determine the potential role of landscaping in sustainable tourism, seventeen independent (predictor) variables were regressed on forced entry against the dependent (criterion) variable V31 (LANDSTD) *Landscape and sustainable tourism*. The predictor variables were:

- V28 CHLANDS *Changing attitude through landscaping;*
- V29 ITAD *Impact of tourist attractions on tourism demand;*
- V30 ATLOFOTO *Attracting local and foreign tourists through landscaping;*
- V32 ENWELL *Enhancing well-being through landscaping;*
- V33 LANDPHY *Landscaping and the physical environment;*
- V34 AESVALUE *Aesthetics value in design landscape;*
- V35 PHYDEV *Physical development and landscaping;*
- V36 LANDSHOL *Landscaping and attitude to holidaying;*
- V37 LANDNEGA *Landscaping as a negative attitude to tourism;*
- V38 LANDKEY *Landscaping as a key element towards tourism market;*
- V39 LANDINVE *Landscaping as an investment opportunity in tourism Industry;*
- V40 LANDINFR *Landscaping as tourism infrastructure;*
- V41 PROMOT *Promoting tourist attractions through landscaping;*
- V42 LANDDEV *Landscaping and development of tourism industry;*
- V49 STOLAND *Sustainable tourism through landscaping;*
- V51 IMPLAND *Implementing landscaping in tourist attractions and*
- V59 GUIDETO *Guidelines for tourism development in Nigeria*

Applying forced entry, the following variables were found to be significant; these are V30 (ATLOFOTO), V32 (ENWELL), V29 (ITAD), V36 (LANDSHOL), V36 (LANDSHOL) and V59 (GUIDETO). The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), a variation that can be accounted for by the criterion variable was 0.715 and signifies that the predictor variables collectively explained 71% of the residual variation in the criterion variable and show that the strength between the criterion variable and the predictor variables is relatively strong. The F ratio was 107.049 at 0.000 significant as shown by the analysis of variance (ANOVA) Table 1 and explains that the predictor variables have great influence on the criterion variable.

Table 1: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Forced Entry

ANOVA <sup>b</sup>						
Model	Sum of Squares	Degr ee of Freedom	Mean Square	F	ig.	
Re gression	459.228	17	27.013	107.049	0.000 <sup>a</sup>	
Res idual	183.456	72	2.548			
Tot al	642.685	74				

Using the Forced entry method, a significant model emerged with  $F=107.049$ ,  $P < 0.005$ , Adjusted R Square=.708 and showed that only six predictor variables significantly explained the residual variation in LANDSTD at  $\alpha = 0.05$  or 95% confidence level, the critical level adopted for this study. The significant variables are V28 (CHLANDS), V29 (ITAD), V30 (ATLOFOTO), V32 (ENWELL), V36 (LANDSHOL) and V59 (GUIDETO). These were further regressed step wisely with V31 (LANDSTD) as the criterion variable; and the six variables were entered into the model one after the other according to their ability, measured in Beta values, that is, the standardized coefficient; the highest value contributed the most in the prediction of the criterion variable. In this case variables V30 (ATLOFOTO) with .341 Beta value followed by V32 (ENWELL) .215, V29 (ITAD) .156 and V36 (LANDSHOL) .142, the four variables are significant at p-value of 0.000. The other variable V28 (CHLANDS) .116 was also significant at 0.001. The results of the stepwise regression show that the coefficient of determination  $R^2$  is .706 which implies that the predictor variables can account for 70.6 percent residual variation in the dependent variable (LANDSTD).

The ANOVA of the stepwise regression in Table 2 indicates that the regression sum of squares accounts for 70.5 percent of the total sum of square. The calculated value of F- ratio is 354.300 with absolute significance level of 0.000. This implies that the predictor variables have significant influence on the criterion variable.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Stepwise

ANOVA <sup>b</sup>						
Model	Sum of Squares	Degr ee of Freedom	Mean Square	F	ig.	
Re gression	453.501	5	90.700	354.300	0.000 <sup>a</sup>	
Res idual	189.183	73	2.592			
Tot al	642.685	74				

In predicting the criterion variable, the Independent variables were substituted into the equation of best regression as:  $Y = A_0 + \beta_1 (V30) + \beta_2 (V32) + \beta_3 (V29) + \beta_4 (V36) + \beta_5 (V28) + E_t$

The outcome of the model therefore gives the regression equation as:

$$V31 (LANDSTD) = 0.210 + 0.338 (ATLOFOTO) + 0.210 (ENWELL) + 0.157 (ITAD) + 0.131 (LANDSHOL) + 0.117 (CHLANDS) + E_t$$

The results from the stepwise regression therefore show the role landscaping will play in sustainable tourism. This had the following predictor variables in the model and in order of their importance to the Criterion variable: *ATLOFOTO: Attracting local and foreign tourists through landscaping; ENWELL: Enhancing well-being through landscaping; ITAD: Impact of tourist attractions on tourism demand; LANDSHOL: Landscaping and attitude to holidaying and CHLANDS: Changing attitude through landscaping.*

## 6. Policy Implication and Recommendation

The model has shown that in increasing the role of landscaping in tourism sustainable development, attention should be paid to the five variables as shown in the above equation. Conversely, if greater attention is paid to landscaping, tourism will improve in Nigeria. The potential roles landscaping will play are discussed in their order of importance as follows:

### 6.1 ATLOFOTO (*Attracting Local and Foreign Tourists through Landscaping*)

The predictor variable ATLOFOLO contributed most to the model and shows a high correlation coefficient of 0.780 and implies a high association with the dependent variable LANDSTD. The regression coefficient value was .338; and indicates that while holding the effect of the other variables constant LANDSTD will change by 33.8% given 100% change in ATLOFOTO. Going by this, if landscaping is improved upon in the Nigerian tourists' attractions, local and foreign tourists will be attracted. The Beta value is .341, with a significant at  $\alpha = 0.000$ , thus ATLOFOTO has much influence on LANDSTD. Nigeria is richly blessed with varieties of tourist attractions and lots of beautiful sceneries as previously discussed in the literature. However, most of the attractions are not fully developed while some are yet to be developed. This has made the patronage of both local and foreign tourists very low. From the foregoing, it is obvious that if landscaping is improved upon, local and foreign patronage will increase significantly, that is, efforts at developing these sites through landscaping would yield positive results of not only local but also international patronage.

### 6.2 ENWELL (*Enhancing Well-Being through Landscaping*)

ENWELL ranked second in the contribution to the criterion variable LANDSTD and correlates highly with it. The correlation coefficient of ENWELL is 0.723; the regression coefficient is .210 and the Beta coefficient is .215 at absolute significance. Giving ENWELL 100% change while holding the effects of other variables constant, LANDSTD will increase by 21.0%. In achieving a healthy state, conditions such as healthy and attractive environment must be met. Through landscaping, the beauty, scenic views and beauty will create an enabling environment of achieving relaxation and enhanced physical health.

### 6.3 ITAD: (*Impact of Tourist Attraction on Tourism Demand*)

Variable ITAD also contributed to the prediction of the model with a correlation of 0.743, a regression coefficient value of .157 and Beta value of .156 at absolute significance. Giving ITAD 100% increase and holding the effect of other variables constant, LANDSTD will change by 15.7%. If landscaping is improved, patronage will increase and if the tourist attraction is not well landscaped, patronage would be low as an attractive environment attracts

people to itself. Some reasons why there is low patronage are due to the unattractive nature of the tourists' environment as seen from the literature. From the model, landscaping, if introduced in the various tourist attractions across Nigeria will draw substantial proportion of tourists from all over the globe.

#### **6.4 LANDSHOL (Landscaping and Attitude to Holidaying)**

LANDSHOL is the fourth independent variable that contributed to the regression model. It exhibited a correlation coefficient of 0.617, regression coefficient value of .131 and Beta value of .142 at  $\alpha = 0.000$  significance. Giving LANDSHOL 100% increase and holding the effect of other variables constant, LANDSTD will change by 13.1%. This implies that the attitude to holidaying will improve if landscaping is increased in the Nigerian tourist attractions given the attractiveness of the natural environment. Some Nigerians prefer visiting their villages when on leave, while some travel to other countries; this is mainly due to the non availability of attractive places to visit within the country. Year in year out, most tourist attractions remain the same while some are faced with a state of deterioration. This model has proved that attitudes of people to holidaying will change if tourist attractions are improved upon through landscaping.

#### **6.5 CHLANDS (Changing Attitude through Landscaping)**

CHLANDS also contributed to the regression model with a high correlation coefficient of 0.700, a regression coefficient of .116 and Beta value of .117 at  $\alpha = 0.002$  significant level, that is, 99% confidence level. And indicates that it will exert 11.6% change in LANDSTD, given 100% change in CHLANDS provided the effect of other variables remain constant. Given the right environment, people's attitude towards tourism will change significantly. Presently, Nigerians are not inclined to tourism activities in the country due to the unattractive tourism environment. Government needs to create tourism awareness and simultaneously beautify these attractions to arouse people's interest. These can be done by public enlightenment, education using various modes.

### **7. Conclusion**

The study has shown that beautifying the tourist environment will not only enhance tourism activities in Nigeria, but will also boost tourist interest, encourage tourist visits and serve as a veritable means of various investment opportunities. The use of hard and soft landscape elements to beautify the tourist environments is important as these will help attract visitors to the tourists' centres. Both human made and natural elements can help improve tourist sites, and can be used in various ways to direct paths, provide shade and also add to the beauty, to mention but a few. As such landscaping should be made a part of developmental schemes used to improve the standard of tourist attractions in Nigeria. In doing so, the use of professionals in the field of landscaping becomes imperative for proper sustainable development

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