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PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF URBAN LANDSCAPE PLANNING IN BIDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the public perception of urban landscape planning in the Bida Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State, Nigeria. Rapid urbanization in Bida has led to significant challenges, including infrastructural deficits and environmental degradation, underscoring the critical need for effective urban landscape planning. However, a notable gap exists in understanding how residents perceive and engage with these planning initiatives. Employing a quantitative research design, a descriptive survey was conducted using questionnaires administered to 350 respondents across five randomly selected wards in Bida LGA. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics and correlation analyses using SPSS. Key findings revealed that, while gender differences exist in some perceptions, location is the dominant factor influencing public perception, satisfaction, and involvement in urban landscape planning. Specifically, significant spatial variations were observed in gender distribution, occupational distribution, income, perception of importance, valued aspects of urban landscape, civic involvement, community suggestions, participation in decision-making, awareness of issues, and perceived benefits. The study concludes that effective urban landscape planning in Bida requires localized strategies that address the unique needs and aspirations of each community, alongside gender-inclusive engagement and targeted awareness campaigns to foster greater civic involvement and ensure sustainable urban development. This research provides an evidence-based foundation for policymakers and urban planners to create more inclusive and effective urban landscapes that align with local needs and aspirations.

1. Introduction

Urban landscapes are integral to the quality of life in cities, offering a myriad of environmental, social, aesthetic, and economic benefits (Bavili *et al*., 2024). However, the rapid pace of urbanization, particularly in developing nations like Nigeria, has increasingly limited human interaction with natural elements within residential areas (Auwalu and Bello, 2023). In cities such as Bida, Niger State, which is experiencing significant urban growth, effective urban landscape planning is crucial for sustainable development and addressing associated challenges (Unegbua *et al*., 2024). Well-executed urban landscape planning can enhance residents' quality of life by providing access to green spaces, fostering social interactions, and promoting healthier lifestyles (Rocco, 2026). Economically, it can stimulate job creation in sectors like construction and landscaping, and increase property values, thereby boosting local government revenue through property taxes (Turok, 1992). Furthermore, accessible green spaces and walkable neighborhoods contribute to physical and psychological well-being, reducing negative health outcomes associated with sedentary living (Zumelzu and Herrmann-Lunecke, 2021). The inclusion of community engagement and the integration of local cultural heritage are vital for successful urban planning. Participatory approaches ensure that local needs and priorities are incorporated, leading to more widely accepted and effective outcomes (Selman, 2004). Preserving and integrating cultural heritage into planning frameworks can also strengthen community identity and pride, fostering social cohesion. Despite these benefits, Nigerian cities, including Bida, grapple with infrastructure deficiencies, housing crises, ineffective waste management, and environmental degradation stemming from rapid

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urbanization (Adamu, 2025). Strategic urban landscape planning can mitigate these issues by guiding the development of transportation networks, utilities, and public facilities, and by promoting sustainable development frameworks that integrate green building materials and energy-efficient designs (Umoh *et al*., 2024). The significance of urban landscape planning in Bida, Niger State, is therefore paramount, given its role in addressing urbanization challenges, improving quality of life, fostering socio-economic development, engaging communities, and building resilience against disasters (Muoghalu, 2025). The primary research problem addressed in this study is the insufficient understanding of public perceptions regarding urban landscape planning in the Bida Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State, Nigeria. The rapid urbanization in Bida has led to significant challenges, including infrastructure deficits and environmental degradation, highlighting the urgent need for effective urban landscape planning. However, there is a critical gap in comprehending how residents perceive and engage with these planning initiatives, which complicates policymaking and hinders community involvement essential for creating sustainable urban environments. A significant issue is limited community participation in the urban planning process, with little research examining how residents engage in discussions and decision-making regarding these initiatives. Identifying barriers to participation and assessing public awareness of existing planning efforts are crucial for enhancing community engagement. Without this understanding, efforts to involve residents may be ineffective, further alienating them from planning processes. Many residents also lack awareness of the benefits associated with urban landscape planning, potentially stemming from inadequate educational outreach or communication efforts, which can lead to apathy or resistance towards urban planning projects. The diversity of public preferences and perceptions among various community groups, influenced by socio-economic status, age, and cultural background, remains largely underexplored in the literature. Exploring these variations in public sentiment is vital for developing urban landscape plans that are relevant to the unique context of Bida. Addressing these gaps in public perception is essential for enhancing community engagement and improving planning outcomes. Expanding research to examine residents' views will provide critical data for policymakers and urban planners, ensuring that urban development aligns with local needs and aspirations. By considering Bida's specific historical, cultural, and social dynamics, planners can create more inclusive and effective urban landscapes that promote community well-being. This study aims to investigate the public perception of urban landscape planning in the Bida Local Government Area of Niger State, with the following specific objectives:

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Study Area

This research was conducted in Bida, a prominent town in Niger State, Nigeria. Bida serves as the headquarters of the Bida Local Government Area (LGA) and is recognized for its rich history, vibrant culture, and strategic significance within the region. Geographically, Bida is situated along the banks of the River Niger, approximately 160 kilometers southwest of Minna, the capital of Niger State. It is connected by major roads, facilitating trade and transportation. Bida lies within a latitude of 9°08′N and 7°15′N of the equator and a longitude 6°01′E and 6°12′E of the Greenwich Meridian. The land area of Bida is 1,698 km² [10]. The Bida LGA is located in a tropical region, characterized by a tropical continental climate with two distinct seasons: a wet season from April to October and a dry season from November to March. The average minimum and maximum monthly temperatures are 21.9°C and 24.9°C, respectively, with an average annual rainfall of 1,490mm (Mohammed and Sulyman, 2021). The residential areas of Bida are characterized by a relatively flat topography with undulating terrain in various parts of the town. Rocky hills are present approximately 2-3km from the built-up area, almost forming a ring around the town. The land in the built-up area gently slopes inwards towards the streams and the river. Excess rainwater runoff is drained by the Ceikan and Musa streams, while the Landzun River flows through the heart of the town, along with its seasonal tributaries, which are now gullies or streams. The general drainage pattern in Bida is towards the north-east direction. Bida has a heterogeneous population comprising various tribes from across Nigeria. Based on the 2006 census, the population was 188,181, with an annual growth rate of 3.2%. The population was projected to reach 334,757 persons in 2024, with a significant proportion of youth contributing to vibrant community dynamics and cultural expressions. Bida is also home to several educational institutions, including the Federal Polytechnic Bida, which attracts students and professionals from different parts of Nigeria. Culturally, Bida is rich in traditions and customs, particularly those of the Nupe people. The town is renowned for its vibrant festivals, arts, and craftsmanship, including traditional music, dance, and textiles. The Nupe Cultural Festival is a notable event that showcases the region's heritage through performances and exhibitions. Bida holds historical significance as a center of Islamic scholarship, with numerous mosques reflecting the influence of the Islamic faith on the town's culture. While many inhabitants are civil servants, Bida is well-known for its crafts, notably brass and copper goblets, other metal products, glass, beads, bangles, raffia hats and mats, and locally dyed cotton and silk cloth. Craftsmen work by hand in distinctive wards and are organized into close-knit guilds. Bida also engages in agriculture, relying on surrounding agrarian communities for its economy

and social life, trading in yams, millet, cotton, tobacco, peanuts (groundnuts), palm oil and kernels, onions, sugarcane, fruits, goats, and pottery.

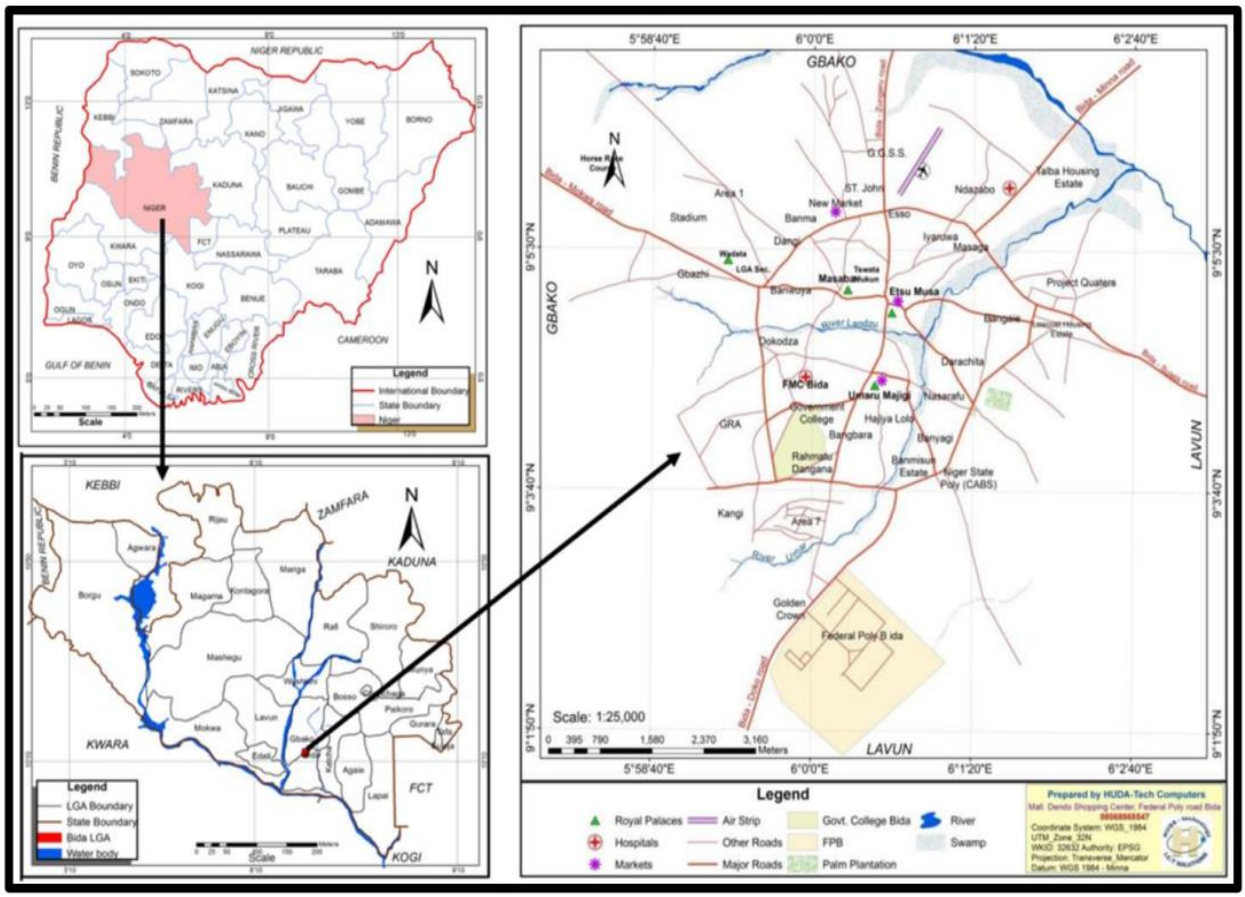

Figure 1: Map of Bida LGA (source, Mohammed and Sulyman, 2021)

2.2 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research design to explore public perceptions of landscape planning in Bida. A descriptive survey design was employed to systematically assess residents' attitudes and opinions regarding urban landscape planning. The research methodology encompassed various empirical activities, including the administration of questionnaires and reconnaissance surveys to gather relevant data (Ojobo *et al*., 2024).

2.3 Data Sources

The research utilized both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected through the administration of questionnaires, covering educational backgrounds, socioeconomic characteristics, residents' perceptions of urban landscape planning, perceived benefits of such initiatives, and factors influencing public opinion on urban planning in the region. Secondary data were sourced from the internet, academic journals, textbooks, newspapers, and other credible materials.

2.4 Instruments for Data Collection

Data collection was conducted using structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was divided into two main parts: the first gathered demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, while the second focused on their perceptions of the landscape in the study area. Socio-demographic variables included gender, age (18-22, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56 and above), education level (primary, secondary, tertiary, Arabic, and no school), occupation (student, self-employed formal, self-employed informal trading, self-employed informal farming, self-employed informal manufacturing, employed civil servant, and retired), income level (70,000-99,000, 100,000-129,000, 130,000-159,000, 160,000-180,000, and 190,000 and above), and length of residence. Perception of landscape was assessed based on satisfaction with the current state of urban landscape (parks, gardens, and recreational areas) using a 5-point Likert scale (very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied), importance of landscape (very important, important, neutral, unimportant, and very unimportant), valued urban landscape aspects (green spaces, accessibility, cleanliness, safety & security, and aesthetics), and improvement suggestions.

2.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Bida Local Government Area comprises fourteen political wards. Due to the absence of neighborhood population figures from the 2006 census, a cluster sampling strategy was implemented to select wards for questionnaire distribution, as wards have similar demographic characteristics. The total population of Bida was estimated at 334,757 in 2024. Five wards were randomly selected: Wadata, Dokoza, Masaba (A&B), Masaga (A&B), and Barki, allowing for equal representation. To determine the appropriate sample size, the Taro Yamane (1967) formula was utilized, resulting in a total sample size of four hundred (400) respondents. Equal distribution of questionnaires led to eighty (80) questionnaires per selected ward, with participants within households randomly selected for participation. Questionnaire administration was conducted face-to-face by trained enumerators to ensure data accuracy.

2.6 Sampling Frame and Techniques

The sampling frame for this research consisted of households within the selected wards of Bida. A random sampling technique was employed to select respondents from each household, ensuring equitable dispersion of questionnaires despite the lack of specific household population figures.

2.7 Data Analysis

Out of the 400 distributed questionnaires, 350 were completed and deemed usable for analysis, while 50 were returned unfilled. The completed questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including tables, frequency distributions, average scores, and correlation analyses, were employed to present the analyzed data in tabular format, summarizing key variables such as respondent demographics and percentage distributions to enhance clarity and facilitate comprehension of the findings.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Age and Gender Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	*p*-value
18-25	19	19.09	7	6.91	26		
26-35	38	35.98	11	13.02	49		
36-45	56	60.95	27	22.05	83	2.18	0.70
46-55	63	61.68	21	22.32	84		
56 and above	81	79.3	27	28.7	108		
Total	**257**		**93**		**350**		

Table 1 presents the age and gender distribution of the respondents. The analysis indicates no statistically significant association between age group and gender ($p = 0.702$), suggesting a balanced representation of both genders across different age categories within the sample. This implies that the age demographic of participants does not significantly influence their gender distribution in the study population.

Table 2: Age, Location, and Gender Distribution of Respondents

Location	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	P-value
Bariki	51	47.73	14	17.27	65		
Dokoza	38	47.73	27	17.27	65		
Masaba	57	55.07	18	19.93	75	20.64	0.000
Masaga	61	49.93	7	18.07	68		
Wadata	50	56.54	27	20.46	77		
Total	**257**		**93**		**350**		

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of respondents by location and gender. A highly significant variation ($p = 0.000$) is observed, indicating a gendered spatial distribution within the Bida LGA. This suggests that the proportion of males and females varies significantly across the different wards, which could have implications for localized planning and community engagement strategies.

Table 3: Education and Gender Distribution of Respondents

Education	Female	Expected Female	Male	Expected Male	Total	χ^2	P-Value
Arabic	19	19.57	45	44.43	64		
No Info	16	14.37	31	32.63	47		
Primary	13	9.78	19	22.21	32	3.77	0.438
Secondary	19	16.5	35	37.49	54		
Tertiary	40	46.77	113	106.22	153		
Total	**107**		**243**		**350**		

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of educational attainment by gender. The analysis reveals no statistically significant gender-based differences in educational attainment (p = 0.438). This suggests that, within the surveyed population, males and females have similar distributions across various educational levels.

Table 4: Education, Location, and Gender Distribution of Respondents

Education	Arabic Expected	No Info Expected	Primary Expected	Secondary Expected	Tertiary Expected	Total	χ^2	p-value
Bariki	12	11.88	16	8.72	6	5.94	4	10.02
Dokoza	10	11.88	6	8.72	4	5.94	16	10.02
Masaba(A&B)	12	13.71	5	10.07	10	6.85	15	11.57
Masaga (A&B)	15	12.43	10	9.13	7	6.21	7	10.49
Wadata	15	14.08	10	10.34	5	7.04	12	11.88
Total	**64**	**47**	**32**	**54**	**153**	**350**	**22.94**	**0.115**

Table 4 presents the distribution of education levels across different locations and by gender. While there are observable differences in educational attainment across locations, these differences are not statistically significant (p = 0.115). This suggests that while some variations exist, they are not strong enough to conclude a significant association between location and educational distribution within the context of gender.

Table 5: Length of Residence and Gender Distribution of Respondents

Residence	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	P-value
< 1 Year	31	29.6	12	13.39	43		
> 10 Years	91	94.33	46	42.66	137	0.73	0.87
1-5 Years	51	49.57	21	22.42	72		
6-10 Years	68	67.48	30	30.52	98		
Total	**241**		**109**		**350**		

Table 5 presents the length of residence by gender. The analysis indicates no statistically significant differences in the length of residence by gender (p = 0.865). This suggests that both males and females in the sample have similar patterns of residential stability within Bida LGA.

Table 6: Satisfaction with Urban Landscape Planning by Gender

Satisfaction	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	P-Value
Dissatisfied	26	25.8	16	16.2	42		
Neutral	72	79.24	57	49.75	129		
Satisfied	38	33.17	16	20.82	54	6.65	0.155
Very Dissatisfied	32	35.62	26	22.37	58		
Very Satisfied	47	41.15	20	25.84	67		
Total	**215**		**135**		**350**		

Table 6 presents the satisfaction levels with urban landscape planning by gender. The analysis indicates no statistically significant gender differences in satisfaction levels (p = 0.155). This suggests that both males and females in the sample exhibit similar levels of satisfaction with the current state of urban landscape planning initiatives.

Table 7: Satisfaction with Urban Landscape Planning by Location and Gender

Location	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	p-value
Bariki	43	39.92	22	25.07	65		
Dokoza	38	39.92	27	25.07	65		
Masaba	43	46.07	32	28.92	75	3.67	0.451
Masaga	47	41.77	21	26.22	68		
Wadata	44	47.3	33	29.7	77		
Total	**215**		**135**		**350**		

Table 7 shows the satisfaction levels with urban landscape planning by location and gender. The analysis reveals no statistically significant spatial variation in satisfaction levels (p = 0.451). This indicates that residents across different locations within Bida LGA generally share similar levels of satisfaction with urban planning initiatives, irrespective of their specific ward.

Table 8: Perception of Importance of Urban Landscape Planning by Gender

Perception	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	p-value
Important	40	34.4	14	19.59	54		
Neutral	90	82.19	39	46.8	129		
Unimportant	25	26.76	17	15.24	42	9.6033	0.0477
Very Important	37	42.68	30	24.31	67		
Very Unimportant	31	36.95	27	21.04	58		
Total	**223**		**127**		**350**		

Table 8 illustrates the perception of the importance of urban landscape planning by gender. A statistically significant gender difference is observed (p = 0.047), suggesting that males and females differ in their valuation of urban landscape planning. This could imply varying priorities or understandings of the benefits of such initiatives between genders.

Table 9: Perception of Importance of Urban Landscape Planning by Location and Gender

Location	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	p-value
Bariki	38	41.41	27	23.58	65		
Dokoza	34	41.41	31	23.58	65		
Masaba	60	47.78	15	27.21	75	19.5206	0.0006
Masaga	50	43.32	18	24.67	68		
Wadata	41	49.06	36	27.94	77		
Total	**223**		**127**		**350**		

Table 9 shows the perception of the importance of urban landscape planning by location and gender. A strong spatial variation is observed (p = 0.0006), indicating that residents in different locations hold significantly different views on the importance of urban landscape planning. This disparity could be attributed to uneven implementation of planning initiatives or varying local needs and priorities across the wards.

Table 10: Opinion on Involvement in Urban Planning by Gender

Opinion	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	p-value
Neutral	84	83.7	30	30.29	114		
Not At All Involved	101	101.33	37	36.66	138	1.336	0.855
Not Very Involved	30	31.57	13	11.42	43		
Somewhat Involved	23	23.49	9	8.5	32		
Very Involved	19	16.88	4	6.11	23		
Total	**257**		**93**		**350**		

Table 10 presents the respondents' opinions on their involvement in urban planning, disaggregated by gender. The analysis indicates no statistically significant difference in opinion on involvement by gender ($p = 0.855$). This suggests that both males and females perceive their level of involvement in urban planning processes similarly.

Table 11: Opinion on Involvement in Urban Planning by Location and Gender

Location	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	P-Value
Bariki	52	47.72	13	17.27	65		
Dokoza	37	47.72	28	17.27	65		
Masaba	67	55.07	8	19.92	75	22.09	0.000
Masaga	45	49.93	23	18.06	68		
Wadata	56	56.54	21	20.46	77		
Total	**257**		**93**		**350**		

Table 11 shows the opinion on involvement in urban planning by location and gender. A statistically significant spatial disparity is observed (p = 0.0001), indicating that residents in different locations perceive their involvement in urban planning processes differently. This highlights the need for targeted community engagement strategies that are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of each ward.

Table 12: Awareness of Urban Landscape Issues by Gender

Awareness	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	*p*-value
Not Aware at All	160	161.32	58	56.68	218	1.594	0.451
Somewhat Aware	57	59.2	23	20.8	80		
Very Aware	42	38.48	10	13.52	52		
Total	**259**		**91**		**350**		

Table 12 assesses the awareness levels of urban landscape issues by gender. The analysis indicates no statistically significant difference in awareness by gender ($p = 0.4505$). This suggests that both males and females in the sample exhibit similar levels of awareness regarding urban landscape issues.

Table 13: Awareness of Urban Landscape Issues by Location and Gender

Location	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	*p*-value
Bariki	61	48.1	4	16.9	65		
Dokoza	30	48.1	35	16.9	65		
Masaba	75	55.5	0	19.5	75	77.35	< 0.000
Masaga	49	50.32	19	17.68	68		
Wadata	44	56.98	33	20.02	77		
Total	**259**		**91**		**350**		

Table 13 shows the awareness of urban landscape issues by location and gender. A highly significant spatial variation is observed ($p = 0.0001$), indicating that awareness levels differ significantly across the various wards. This warrants area-specific awareness campaigns to ensure that all residents are adequately informed about urban landscape issues.

Table 14: Perceived Benefits of Urban Landscape Planning by Gender

Landscape Benefit	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	*p*-value
Enhanced Quality of Life	60	54.64	25	30.35	85		
Environmental Sustainability	60	52.07	21	28.92	81		
I Do Not See Any Benefits	27	57.21	62	31.78	89	62.68	< 0.001
Improved Infrastructures	52	40.5	11	22.5	63		
Increased Property Value	26	20.57	6	11.42	32		
Total	**225**		**125**		**350**		

Table 14 examines the perceived benefits of urban landscape planning by gender. A strongly significant difference is observed ($p = 0.001$), suggesting gendered differences in the perception of benefits. This indicates that males and females may prioritize or recognize different advantages stemming from urban landscape initiatives.

Table 15: Perceived Benefits of Urban Landscape Planning by Location and Gender

Location	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	*p*-value
Bariki	51	41.78	14	23.21	65		
Dokoza	35	41.78	30	23.21	65		
Masaba	43	48.21	32	26.78	75	12.536	0.014
Masaga	41	43.71	27	24.28	68		
Wadata	55	49.5	22	27.5	77		
Total	**225**		**125**		**350**		

Table 15 shows the perceived benefits of urban landscape planning by location and gender. A statistically significant difference is observed (p = 0.014), indicating that the perception of benefits varies across different locations. This suggests that the impact and recognition of urban landscape planning benefits are spatially dependent.

Table 16: Factors Influencing Public Perception by Gender

Influence	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	*p*-value
Communication From Local Authorities	27	25.1	8	9.9	35		
Cultural Background	75	78.88	35	31.11	110		
Education And Awareness of Planning Issues	38	35.14	11	13.86	49	5.860	0.210
Personal Experiences with Urban Planning	56	50.91	15	20.08	71		
Socio-Economic Status	55	60.95	30	24.04	85		
Total	**251**		**99**		**350**		

Table 16 explores the external factors influencing public perception, disaggregated by gender. The analysis indicates no statistically significant differences in influencing factors by gender (p = 0.210). This suggests that both males and females are similarly influenced by factors such as communication from local authorities, cultural background, education, personal experiences, and socioeconomic status when forming perceptions about urban landscape planning.

Table 17: Factors Influencing Public Perception by Location and Gender

Location	Male	Expected Male	Female	Expected Female	Total	χ^2	*p*-value
Bariki	50	46.61	15	18.38	65		
Dokoza	31	46.61	34	18.38	65		
Masaba	75	53.78	0	21.21	75	66.60	< 0.001
Masaga	55	48.76	13	19.23	68		
Wadata	40	55.22	37	21.78	77		
Total	**251**		**99**		**350**		

Table 17 shows the factors influencing public perception by location and gender. A highly significant spatial variation is observed (p = 0.00), indicating that influencing factors such as local communication, cultural background, and personal experiences are spatially variable. This suggests that the drivers of public perception differ significantly across the various wards within Bida LGA.

Discussion

This study provides a nuanced and empirically grounded understanding of public perception of urban landscape planning in Bida Local Government Area (LGA), revealing that spatial heterogeneity, rather than gender alone, constitutes the most significant determinant of perception, awareness, participation, and valuation of urban landscape initiatives (Echendu, 2023). The findings contribute to the growing body of literature emphasizing the importance of place-based urbanism, socio-spatial inequality, and participatory governance in rapidly urbanizing regions of the Global South (Quintana-Vigiola, 2022).

One of the most compelling findings of this study is the consistent statistical significance of location across nearly all perceptual and participatory variables, including perceived importance, valued landscape elements, civic involvement, awareness, perceived benefits, and influencing factors (Brown and Reed, 2012). This strongly reinforces the argument that urban perception is inherently spatial and context-dependent, shaped by localized environmental conditions, infrastructural development, and socio-economic realities.

This finding aligns with the theoretical framework of "spatial justice," which posits that inequalities in urban space distribution directly influence social outcomes and lived experiences (Frenkel 2018; Guevara-Cue, 2024). Disparities in access to green infrastructure and environmental amenities produce differentiated perceptions of urban quality and planning effectiveness. In the context of Bida, wards such as Wadata and Masaba, likely characterized by relatively better infrastructure or visibility of planning interventions, may foster more positive perceptions compared to underserved areas (Farooq, 2022). Moreover, the results corroborate findings from Chen and Ameen (2019), who argue that urban green space perception is significantly mediated by local environmental quality and neighborhood characteristics. This suggests that residents do not evaluate urban landscape planning in abstraction, but rather through immediate, lived spatial realities, thereby necessitating micro-scale planning approaches. While the study finds no statistically significant gender differences in education, income, occupation, and awareness, significant differences emerge in perception of importance ($p = 0.048$) and interest in decision-making processes ($p = 0.001$). This indicates that although structural socioeconomic parity may exist, gendered disparities persist in civic engagement and planning agencies. This duality reflects broader patterns in urban governance across Sub-Saharan Africa, where women's access to education and economic participation has improved, yet their representation in decision-making processes remains limited (Echendu, 2023). Participation is often structured in ways that inadvertently exclude marginalized groups, including women (Akerkar, 2001).

Furthermore, the observed gender gap in participation shows the importance of gender-sensitive urban planning frameworks, which emphasize inclusive engagement mechanisms that account for socio-cultural constraints on women's participation. Failure to address these disparities risks producing urban landscapes that are gender-blind, potentially neglecting issues such as safety, accessibility, and caregiving infrastructure.

The significant spatial variation in occupation and income highlights the presence of intra-urban socioeconomic stratification, a defining characteristic of many rapidly urbanizing cities (Kilroy, 2012). This stratification has direct implications for urban landscape perception, as economic capacity shapes both expectations and priorities.

Empirical studies have shown that higher-income groups tend to prioritize aesthetic quality, recreational amenities, and property value enhancement, whereas lower-income populations focus on basic infrastructure, sanitation, and (Kilroy, 2012). The variation observed in Bida's wards thus reflects differential needs and valuation frameworks, reinforcing the inadequacy of uniform planning strategies (Mohammed, 2021). Importantly, this finding aligns with the concept of "environmental inequality", which highlights the uneven distribution of environmental benefits and burdens across socioeconomic groups (Carmichael, 2023). In Bida, such inequalities likely manifest in disparities in green space access, environmental quality, and infrastructural provision. A particularly intriguing finding is the coexistence of moderate satisfaction levels with low awareness of urban landscape planning initiatives (Mohammed, 2021). This paradox suggests that residents may evaluate their environment based on relative expectations rather than objective standards. This phenomenon has been documented in environmental psychology, where perception of environmental quality is often shaped by adaptation, familiarity, and socio-cultural norms (Moser & Uzzell, 2003). In contexts with historically limited infrastructure development, residents may express satisfaction with incremental improvements, even in the absence of comprehensive planning. This suggests that individuals derive satisfaction from environments that meet basic cognitive and functional needs, even if these environments fall short of optimal design standards. Thus, satisfaction in Bida may reflect baseline adequacy rather than planning excellence. The study reveals a pronounced lack of civic involvement in urban planning processes, with most respondents indicating minimal or no participation. This finding is consistent with broader critiques of urban governance in developing countries, where planning processes are often top-down, technocratic, and exclusionary (Raco and Freire-Trigo, 2019). The low levels of engagement observed in Bida suggest that participation is likely confined to the lower rungs of the ladder, such as informing or consultation, rather than genuine citizen power.

The spatial variation in participation further indicates that engagement opportunities are unevenly distributed, possibly due to differences in institutional presence, communication strategies, or community organization. This aligns emphasize that participatory processes often fail when they are not context-sensitive or inclusively designed. The significant proportion of respondents who perceive no benefits from urban landscape planning, alongside strong gender and spatial disparities, highlights a critical communication and visibility gap. However, these benefits are often indirect, long-term, or poorly communicated, leading to under-recognition by the public. The success of landscape interventions depends not only on ecological functionality but also on perceptibility and public understanding. In Bida, the disconnect between planning outcomes and public perception suggests that urban interventions may not be sufficiently visible, accessible, or effectively communicated. The influence of cultural background and personal experience, particularly across locations, underscores the role of cultural landscape theory, which views urban spaces as socially constructed and symbolically meaningful (Borer, 2006). Bida's rich cultural heritage, including traditional crafts and festivals, likely shapes residents' expectations of urban landscapes, particularly in relation to Heritage preservation, Aesthetic identity, and social cohesion (Rodrigues *et al*., 2025). This aligns with the concept of "place

identity", where attachment to place influences perception and valuation of the environment. Urban planning that fails to integrate cultural elements risks alienating local communities and undermining social sustainability (Borrup, 2024).

4. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of public perception regarding urban landscape planning in the Bida Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State. The critical role of location as the dominant factor shaping public perception, satisfaction, and involvement in urban landscape planning, even more so than gender, in many aspects. While some gender differences were observed, particularly in the perception of the importance of urban landscape planning and interest in decision-making processes, the spatial variations across the wards were consistently more pronounced and statistically significant. Specifically, the research revealed significant spatial disparities in gender distribution, perceived importance of urban landscape planning, valued aspects of urban landscape, civic involvement, community suggestions for improvement, participation in decision-making, awareness of urban landscape issues, and perceived benefits of urban landscape planning. A one-size-fits-all approach to urban planning in Bida LGA is unlikely to be effective. Instead, strategies must be tailored to the unique socio-economic and cultural contexts of each community within the LGA. This report offers an evidence-based foundation for urban landscape planning in Bida LGA, advocating for responsive strategies that acknowledge and integrate the diverse needs and perceptions of its inhabitants. By implementing these recommendations, urban planners and policymakers can work towards creating more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient urban environments that truly reflect the values and aspirations of the communities they serve.

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