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Achieving Aesthetics using Landscape Design in Resort Environment

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Abstract: Resort is a full-service lodging facility that provides access to recreation facilities in a conducive environment in order to emphasize a leisure experience.
The problems of the tourism industry have been well documented over the last two decades,
having both negative as well as positive impacts upon the social economic and physical environments of receiving areas. The review of literature and case study of Whispering Palm Resort, La Campagne Tropicana Beach and Dead sea resort were employed to address the study objectives in order to supplement and enhance the industry data. And the extensive field work undertaken helps in the interpretation of the mechanisms of development and control in operation at the destination areas. It considered the extent to which the aim which presented in planning documentation for the area have been met in term of visitor, resident, business success and the tourist.
The findings shows that the green initiatives of the landscape design helps to cut down the running cost especially at the La Campaign Tropical Beach and Dead Sea Resort where the natural environments are modified for the aesthetics; each resort adopted differs best practice suit its operation and the environment with soft and hard landscape for aesthetics. The study concludes that the aesthetics of the resort environment could be achieved via the use of natural and man – made features for the landscaping. Moreso, the study highlight and discussed the aesthetic value and the importance of landscape in the environment.
Keywords: Aesthetics, Environment. Resort, Landscape and Tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

Resort is a full-service lodging facility that provides access to or offers a range of amenities and recreation facilities to emphasize a leisure experience (Bray, 2011). Resorts serve as the primary provider of the
guests' experience, often provide services for business or meetings, and are characteristically located in vacation-oriented settings (Eric, 2009). During difficult economic times, vacationers are more discriminating when choosing a resort destination and its amenities often defines resort (Mill, 2001; Schwanke, 1997). When making a vacation decision, tourism experts will cite resort offerings and amenities as one of the key deciding factors (Brey, 2010). The problems of the tourism industry have been well documented over the last two decades.

As recently as the tourist industry was seen as a 'panacea to all ills' because of its considerable economic potential, but recent experiences have illustrated that tourism has negative as well as positive impacts upon the social, economic and physical environments of receiving areas, These negative impacts have been highlighted by recent media concern about a number of issues of global significance (Young, 1973).

Nigeria's tourism industry is rudimentary, undeveloped, and suffers from chronic shortages of infrastructure as well as supporting and enhancing institutions (Ayeni,2012))

The country has the potentialities required for tourism development such as natural features and land formations, historic significance, diverse landscape, beautiful scenery, man-made creativities and artifacts and divergent heterogeneous culture, yet the industry has not grown and developed (Ndanusa, Mohammed, Yoshifumi & Aminu, 2014 and Nwamanah ,2018). Most of the tourist destinations are poorly managed. The beaches are overcrowded and other sites lack basic necessities to ensure the comfort and satisfaction of the visit (Stephanie,2017) moreso, the lack of awareness and appreciation for landscaping in particular, and the environment in general, has compounded the problems of tourism development in Nigeria (Ayeni,2012). Two methods will be employed to address the study objectives. First, a review of the literature will be used to identify the resort environment and second, case study of resorts will be implemented to supplement and enhance the industry data. Findings from both methods utilized in this report are being examined and presented together for this research work. Hence, this paper focuses on achieving aesthetics using landscape design in resort environment and will be achieved by evaluating the aesthetics value of the environment and examining the importance of landscape to the environment.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Aesthetics* Value of the Environment.

Natural outdoor environment that is pleasing, flexible, functional and aesthetic motivates people to a place and the visiting performance to the place is supported by landscape aesthetic values that can promote better participation and social engagement among visitors (Tsunetsugu,2010,Thalany and Radam,2013, Isabelle and Teresa,2013, Noriah,2014). Aesthetic values of the environment are due to a range of landscape attributes; Natural elements are known to function as "natural tranquillizers" that is beneficial in urban areas where stress is a common in daily living (Noriah, Norizawati & Mohd, 2014).

Aesthetics value of the landscaping plays a pertinent roles in influencing visiting to a place (Pfluger ,2011) Landscape must be able to affect the human's visual in a positive way and a highly aesthetic landscape usually would affect human psychology and behaviour as well, thus the aesthetic value of the environment can be referred to as human sensation and individual judgment about the environment. Hence, this can be deduced from many recreational and nature setting studies report by the public which concluded with high ratings and positive reaction to the scenes. Also, the people liked to see scene such as native vegetations, mountains and while they rated low and reacted to scenes that they disliked to see such as bushes and scenes that appeared frightening (Todorova, 2004) . Human preference through the five human senses- visual, olfactory, auditory, tactile and taste could affect their preference in natural settings environment positively (sunetsugu,2010) , besides visitors are also motivated to explore the natural environment that will offer opportunity for mental relaxation and clarity. Previous research found that the closer people live to a recreational park, the more frequently they engage with physical activities in the park (Mohd,2012; Noriah Norazawati & Mohdal, 2014), also the study revealed that the interest of people is boiled down to their proximity to the beautiful and the natural environment (Katrin , verena and Susannel, 2011). Furthermore, the Visiting performance and feeling belonging to places are supported by visual quality attributes that would promote better participation and social engagement among visitors. It is believed that the natural outdoor environment is aesthetically pleasing, flexible and functional for people to visit and explore (Tsunetsugu , 2010;Thalany and Radam, 2013; Isabelle and Teresa; 2014; Noriah , 2014). According to the studies of Yang and Brown (1992), 'soft' landscape elements like water or vegetations are usually preferred over 'hard' landscape elements like stones and rocks. Previous studies have shown that the degree of motivation for visitation are found to be related to the landscape aesthetic attributes such as undulating topography (Oguz and Cakci, 2010; Katrin , 2011;), plant species (Normiadilah and Noriah, 2010; Chavez and Sharrock, 2013; Lene, 2013), wild life (Sabrina and Nik Hanita, 2012) and water bodies (Noralizawati, 2012).

Nordh , (2011) conducted a study on visitation motivation of small parks and open spaces in Oslo, Norway and they have concluded that attributes that affect visitor motivation when seeking psychological restoration were water elements, trees, ground cover such as grasses. Other studies on visitor motivations have shown that in reality, botanic garden visitors are often motivated to pursue a wide range of leisure activities outside of horticultural interests. These activities included spending social time with friends and family, physical and mental relaxation, or other hobbies (Ballantyne., 2008; Ward., 2010),most of research on park and recreation area to date has investigated whether the visiting performance are associated with landscape visuals and facilities offered (Ward et al, 2010; Thalany and Radam,2013). In contrast, few studies have focused on the visiting performance associated with landscape aesthetic parameters especially in botanic garden.

The roles of botanic gardens in preserving the existing vegetation and improving natural environment have long been widely appreciated in both developing and developed countries. Nowadays, the roles have been expanded to provide social and psychological services to urban inhabitants thereby improving the likeability and quality of cities and towns (Murray, 2007; Ward, 2010). The roles of botanical gardens are more inclusive from conservation to prepare public needs such as education and research purposes. Previous research findings underlined that the landscape aesthetic parameters would be useful to measure public attachment in open green spaces in related to factor that motivate them to visit and their visiting performance (Gailbraith.,2010) . It is also found that although the botanic gardens are known to be a place to reduce stress among urban citizens, provide opportunity for people to socialize and close with nature, there is minimal research investigating on the landscape attributes and aesthetic values around the garden. Visiting and experiencing a quality landscape design in the botanic gardens could be the main reason why people would love to go to the garden thus increases their visiting performance (Noriah and Othman , 2014)

Aesthetic values of landscape are due to a range of landscape attributes and landscape character, or due to a combination of these attributes. Landscape that attracts the observer with a legible and memorable structure or with its unusual character, its appearance, its smell, the sound of natural or artificial attributes is usually assessed having a high level of aesthetic values. There is also a need to better understand attributes related to the landscape for people's health. As for example, an assessment of health in natural area found the importance of nature attributes in promoting healthy lifestyle for human (Wolf and Wohlfart, 2014)

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Nature and value in aesthetics: Visual beauty, especially of landscape, is often where aesthetic valuing begins but this narrow conception is also critiqued (Brady,2003; Carlson, 2000, 2010; Saito,1998). The visual approach is the natural outcome of the interaction of pictorial studies with the direct appreciation of nature senso lato. This 'scenery model', a legacy of the picturesque movement, is problematized by Carlson (2000, 2010). Aesthetics as a discipline is greatly influenced by reflection on human art works because these visual representations and interpretations of life may communicate beauty more deeply than can language. The common term 'landscape' is derived from painterly studies 'land skips' (Hutcheson, 2004; Wylie, 1998). The view from a particular vantage point and framed as a scene, at least mentally, is what is assessed for scenic aesthetic value of the environment. This conception shares with 'ecosystems' a distancing of the human subject from the environmental object that is under scrutiny. Moreso the aesthetic experience of nature offers opportunities for reflexivity; we are 'involved in the natural situation itself … both actor and spectator, ingredient in the landscape ….we are in nature and a part of nature; we do not stand over against it as over against a painting on a wall.' Nature is a co-production of non-human happenings, from geological processes to seed germination, and the long history of human culture (Fish, 2016), especially 'agri-culture' (Pretty,2002). The aesthetic shaping of nature by humans arises not merely from the practical, but involves moulding nature to an aesthetic. Cooper and Lonsdale (2004) provide an example of how observations of ancient trees lead to a cultural image of an ideal 'ancient (or veteran) tree' that is then put into effect through arboricultural practices that shape real trees to meet the ideal. The present relationships of humans and the rest of natural environment generate structures, products and, significantly, meaning (Fischer and Eastwood, 2016), humans are no longer set apart as engineers and consumers.

Man derives benefits from its immediate environment and therefore owns the responsibility for the life worth living; the beauty around us brings joy, solace and inspiration; which is life-enhancing (Brady, 2006). At times we seek this out in special landscapes that have been accorded the status of being note worthily pretty (such places may have official designations in Britain such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty). We are prepared to spend money and effort on going on holiday We are prepared to spend money and effort holiday to such places. Policy makers are interested in this and commission studies (Swanwick, 2006). These may identify widely-shared subjective preferences that are temporally stable, such as for openness and remoteness (Daniel et al., 2012; Natural England, 2009).

These preferences can be subsumed into the VES paradigm so readily subsumed is the beauty of the unpretty and the daily- falling of dying leaves, the miniscule symmetry of a flower of a common weed, perhaps, conceptual attention here is shifting away from benefits-to-the-observer to something less dependent on the individual pleasure seeker. Enlightenment philosophers such as Kant and Hutcheson used the concept of disinterestedness in their analysis of aesthetics, and this was not indifference to beauty. Disinterestedness referred to a separation of aesthetic value from both an interest in an object as a means of sensory gratification and from an interest in using it as a means to some utilitarian end (Kant, 2000: 91ff). Kant also distinguished what he called judgments of the agreeable from judgments of taste (or beauty).

A common approach argues that the aesthetic response (which underlies ascriptions of aesthetic value) is correctly characterized as involving attention to the qualities of the object for their own sake (Carroll, 2012; Iseminger, 2006). For example, aesthetically appreciating swans in a tree-lined lake on a summer's day rests on its aesthetic qualities, perhaps the snowy white feathers, graceful forms and elegant display of the swans within an attractive setting. This illustrates how aesthetic appreciation is not concerned with valuing the birds and lake as a kind of resource, where they serve some instrumental end. Pleasure arises secondarily from that engagement with those qualities which are appreciated for their individual distinctiveness. In this respect, the interest we take from an aesthetic perspective is focused on the natural thing in question, rather than on our own satisfaction (Stecker, 2003).

Lastly, the aesthetics value of the environment is traceable to at least three different areas: philosophical discussions of aesthetic appreciation of nature, theoretical and practical discussions (Brady, 2009) of landscape design and landscape tastes (including romantic literature and poetry), and early conservation thought and nature writing. Although significant philosophical discussions of aesthetics of nature emerged only in the eighteenth century, the aesthetic appreciation of nature and landscape would probably have played an important role across cultures throughout human history.

B. Importance of Landscaping to the Environment

Planning of resort begins from the planning of its environment, thus landscaping is more important in order to keep the connection with nature and for people health. Often we see rapid destruction of Daily,(Duarte, & Mooney, 2007; Pickett , 2001 describes ecosystem services in ways that may seem irrelevant to people who make vernacular landscapes (Peters,2010). Thus, making human-dominated landscapes resilient requires translating science into a vernacular; hence landscape is a medium and method for this translation and could be referred to as touchstones for where we have come from, who we are and how we relate to the world

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around us. Landscape' is a complex concept. (EDS Landscape report).The two most widely used are the character of an area defined by the way people live and the scenery. The scenic and natural component of landscape has historically received the most policy attention in New Zealand and the tension between the different concepts of landscape continues in landscape assessment practice today (Swaffield and Fairweather 2003,Grant 2003). More recently, a concern has developed to protect New Zealand 'cultural' or 'heritage' landscapes, which reflect the inter-relationships between people and the environment over time. They may be significant to Pakeha, Maori or other cultures. Stories can provide a powerful link between the present and past human relationships with the landscape (Sims and Thompson-Fawcett 2002 Department of Conservation (DoC) 2002).

Landscape, as the concept has evolved, means more than just what we can see. It is an important nexus of the interaction between humans and nature. and the importance are discussed below; [i]. Plants offer qualities that help to direct foot traffic in the landscape, moderate the environment around the home, hide objects, or lead the eye and stimulate other senses like smell and feel. Plants should be used together to enhance the best features of a property (William and Tilt,2004), and the basic elements that plants contribute to the landscape in order to express the principles of design are formed, texture, and color. and, shaded trees are important to protect buildings from sun radiation and also provide a comfortable environment. The plants also can become an indicator to protect wildlife habitat, protection against soil erosion, and microclimate control through shade and windbreaks and reduce the pollution (Fitrynadia Mohd Shahli, Mohd Ramzi Mohd Hussain, Izawati Tukiman and Nurbazliah Zaidin 2014).

Also, [ii].Landscape design has become a significant effect in humans as well as all living things in order to provide a conducive living environment. The aggregate effects of landscape design can influence social, aesthetic and environmental qualities of the overall housing areas. As a result, an innovative landscape that incorporates ecologically and beneficially is very important to be reviewed in creating a sustainability of living environment as a whole (Izawati Tukiman and Nurbazliah Zaidin 2014) [iii]. Natural and cultural landscapes play a critical role in enhancing our social, cultural, economic and ecological well-being. They help to define the uniqueness of the environment and underpin our sense of place, who we are and where we have come from; and also help in the creation of forms that attract tourists to the environment (EDS Landscape Report). The presence of accessible natural landscapes provides the opportunity for people to escape the pressures of modern living, to get back in touch with nature, and to refresh their minds and bodies. The change from rural to urban lifestyles has divorced us from our environment and many people now live in cities, increasingly oblivious to the power of nature. A strong connection to the land can give us identity, a perspective of ourselves in time and place. We can see ourselves as a new person in our new environment .We start to know who we are by knowing where we feel 'at home' (Edgar 2003).

Moreso [**iv].** Accessible natural landscapes significantly increase the quality of life in urban settlements; The quality of life in urban areas is not only important for the well-being of current residents but has been identified as significant in the attraction and retention of members of the 'creative class'. These talented individuals are critical to economic development in the context of a growing 'knowledge economy' (Florida 2002) [**v].**,Historical landscapes provide the town with an understanding of earlier relationships to the land.

They can encapsulate many layers of stories about the past. It is important to preserve these landscapes as 'a nation which does not celebrate its history is insecure and impoverished (New zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT) 2003). Natural landscapes also provide a haven for New Zealand's unique biodiversity, whether as existing or regenerating indigenous habitats or through opportunities for indigenous species to be introduced into exotic production systems (Meurk and Swaffield 2000) [vi].Landscapes make a significant contribution to our economy through underpinning tourism. Research carried out by Tourism New Zealand has indicated that the key motivation for visitors coming is their interaction with the landscape. The contribution of tourism to the economy is substantial . Two million international visitors arrived in New Zealand in 2002 and spent an estimated $6.1 billion in foreign exchange. (Tourism New Zealand 2003).

III. METHODOLOGY AND STUDY AREA

Two methods were employed to address the study objectives; first, a review of the literature was used to identify the resort environment and second, case study to examine the resorts were implemented to supplement and enhance the industry data. Three different location were selected and studied for the purpose of this research work and thus include, Whisppering Palm Resort Centre , La Campagne Tropicana Beach Resort and dead sea resort and operal house/accent design group. The first and second case study were chosen to study the existing situation of the resort within the country and while the later foreign case study was chosen to examine similar situation of the resort environment outside the country so as to compare, contrast, and to incorporate useful ideas in the new paper work.

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A. Case Studies

1) Case Study One: Whispering Palms Resort Badagry

This is set within the idyllic town of Iworo/Ajido off the Badagry Expressway in Lagos ,established in the year 1984 over 9 acres land area and owned by Prof Deji Peares. The resort lies by the edge of the beach and offers beautiful picturesque views of the ocean. Whispering Palms over the years has grown to be one of the most sought after destinations for vacations, getaways and honeymoons. Friends and families, even colleagues from work have visited Whispering Palms Badagry from all over the country on bonding trips and relaxing vacations for different occasions and times.

The resort caters for series of activities and events such as Themed event, Concert, Trade Show, Honey moon, picnic, sporting activities etc. The landscape design of the environment is made up of organic architecture with the soft and hard landscape, the soft landscape include trees and ground covers while the hard landscape used are tiled flooring, interlocking paving and concrete paving.

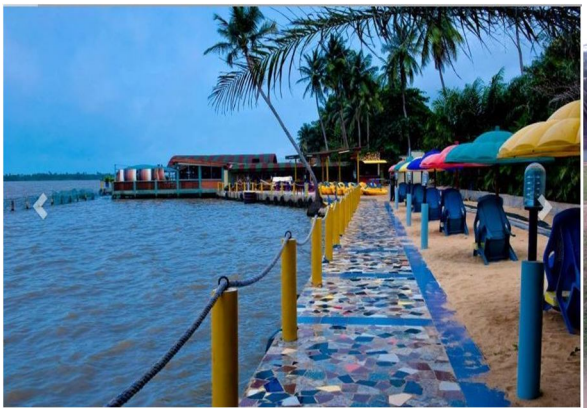

Plate 1: Showing beach relaxation arena of Whisppering Palm resort
Source: Researcher's field work 2018

Plate 2: Showing Children playing ground
Source : Researcher's Field work 2018

2) Case Study Two: La Campagne Tropicana Beach Resort

La Campagne Tropicana Beach Resort is located at Ikegun,Ibeju Lekki LGA, Epe expressway, Lagos State, established in the year 1984 over 65acres of land area, and owned by Otunba Dr Walen Akinboboye ;Surrounded by Atlantic ocean,Ikegun lagoon,A jungle (Animals in the jungle are bats, squirrels, monkeys, geese etc.) Mangrove forest ,Vegetation comprising of trees (Coconut trees, snake-like trees etc.), shrubs, ground cover .It is being used for different activities and events like Themed event, Concert, Trade Show, galas and award, relaxation and other activities of the resort include hiking, hunting, horse riding, canoeing, ocean water fishing, aqua aerobics, beach volleyball & football etc.

La Campagne Tropicana Beach Resort is a luxurious hotel and beach resort which mixes Nigeria traditional culture with modern ones; and thus offers a unique blend of natural environments which include a fresh water lake, accessible mangrove forest, a savannah, extensive sandy beach and the warm Atlantic sea; also the resort combine palm trees of differs strand mixes with soft and hard landscape for the landscape and aesthetic of the environment.

Plate 1:Showing charlet building and swimming pool of La Campagne Tropicana beach resort
Source: Researcher's field work 2018

Plate 2: Showing Children playing ground of La Campagne Tropicana beach resort
Source : Researcher's Field work 2018

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3) Case Study Three: Dead Sea Resort & Opera House by Accent Design Group

Dead Sea Resort & Opera House by Accent Design Group is the World most innovative holiday resort for people physically challenged people with good landscape environment, located at beautiful Danish Coast- line, designed by Accent Designed Group, constructed year 2012 over a land area of 45,000sqm. It is hotel and resort that naturally blends with site, by having the built up areas merge naturally with the surroundings, appearing as terraces in the landscape. These terraces, or strips, contain the individual housing units, amidst a natural/artificial landscape of palm trees and water pools. The resort idea is to have something that infringes as little as possible on the experience of the Dead Sea, and at same time provides an antidote to the other reigning ideas of sub-urban recreational facilities, thus create completely artificial surroundings.

Figure 1 : Showing the floor plan of Dead sea resort
Source: Arch Daily 2018

Plate 5. : Showing the Hotel View of Dead sea
Source: Arch Daily 2018

IV. DISCUSSION

The finding shows that most of the case studies cited and examined are located at destination with the fascinating resort signature amenities (Mill, 2001;Schwanke1997) that make them fit and suitable for the resort environment and these destinations are at out-skirt of the town in order to give reason (s) to be visited for vacation, picnic, etc., being out of hustle and bustle of the city. Whisppering palm resort though well situated but the resort planning is not enough and most of the building structure are less depict of organic architecture. and also the Dead sea resort can both be accessed via land and sea ,also, La Campagne Tropicanal Beach resort can be accessed and utilized by people on sea and land, its building structures are mixture of both modern and natural materials and depicts much of resort environment with soft and hard landscape for its aesthetics and of 80% organic architecture. Moreso, from the study carried-out the resort harmonize the building structure with the natural environment for landscape and aesthetics of the resort environment. Moreso,the findings underlined that the landscape aesthetic parameters would be useful to measure public attachment in open green spaces in related to factor that motivate them to visit and their visiting performance. It is also found that resort environments are known to be a place to reduce stress from hustle and bustle of the city, provide the opportunity for the people to socialize and close with the nature, thus investigating on the landscape attributes and aesthetics values of the environment. Nature and value in aesthetics (Wolf and Wohlfart, 2014): Visual beauty, especially of landscape, is often where aesthetic valuing begins but this narrow conception is also critiqued (Brady,2003; Carlson, 2000, 2010; Saito,1998). The visual approach is the natural outcome of the interaction of pictorial studies with the direct appreciation of nature senso lato. This 'scenery model', a legacy of the picturesque movement, is problematized by Carlson (2000, 2010). Landscape could be referred to as touchstones for where we have come from, who we are and how we relate to the world around us. Landscape' is a complex concept. (EDS Landscape report). Landscape design has become a significant effect in humans as well as all living things in order to provide a conducive living environment.

V. CONCLUSION

This research work revealed and evaluate aesthetics of the resort environment through the landscape design and thus examined the importance of landscape design exhibit and display through natural endowment and the signature amenities to give reason(s) for the place to be visited for relaxation ,recreation picnic etc for the visiting performance of the resort environment. It can be concluded that the visitors' motivation relies on what they see and feel during the visit and the level of the motivation are related with the landscape attributes of the place such as beautiful scenery, undulating topography variety types of vegetation and clear water bodies to enhance the site's aesthetics and visiting performance of the environment. Moreso, there is need for adequate planning in the resort environment to ensure its aesthetics landscape are provides a better and unique experience for visitor and tourist and to conserve natural forms like water bodies mountains and hills as well as giving consideration to botanical garden and thus respect lives, form and the natural environment.

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VI. RECOMMENDATION

This paper deals much on the use of landscape design for the aesthetics therefore it is believed to be a useful tool for the creation of subsequent resort environment ,in view of this the following recommendations can be considered :

A. Landscape in resort environment should enhances our social, cultural, economic and ecological well-being as it helps to define the uniqueness of the environment and attract tourists to the environment.
B. Directory maps and signage should be employed to ease tourists' movement.
C. Recreation cannot be separated from tourism; hence substantial recreational facilities should be employed in the development of tourism centres so as to aid social integration amid tourists.

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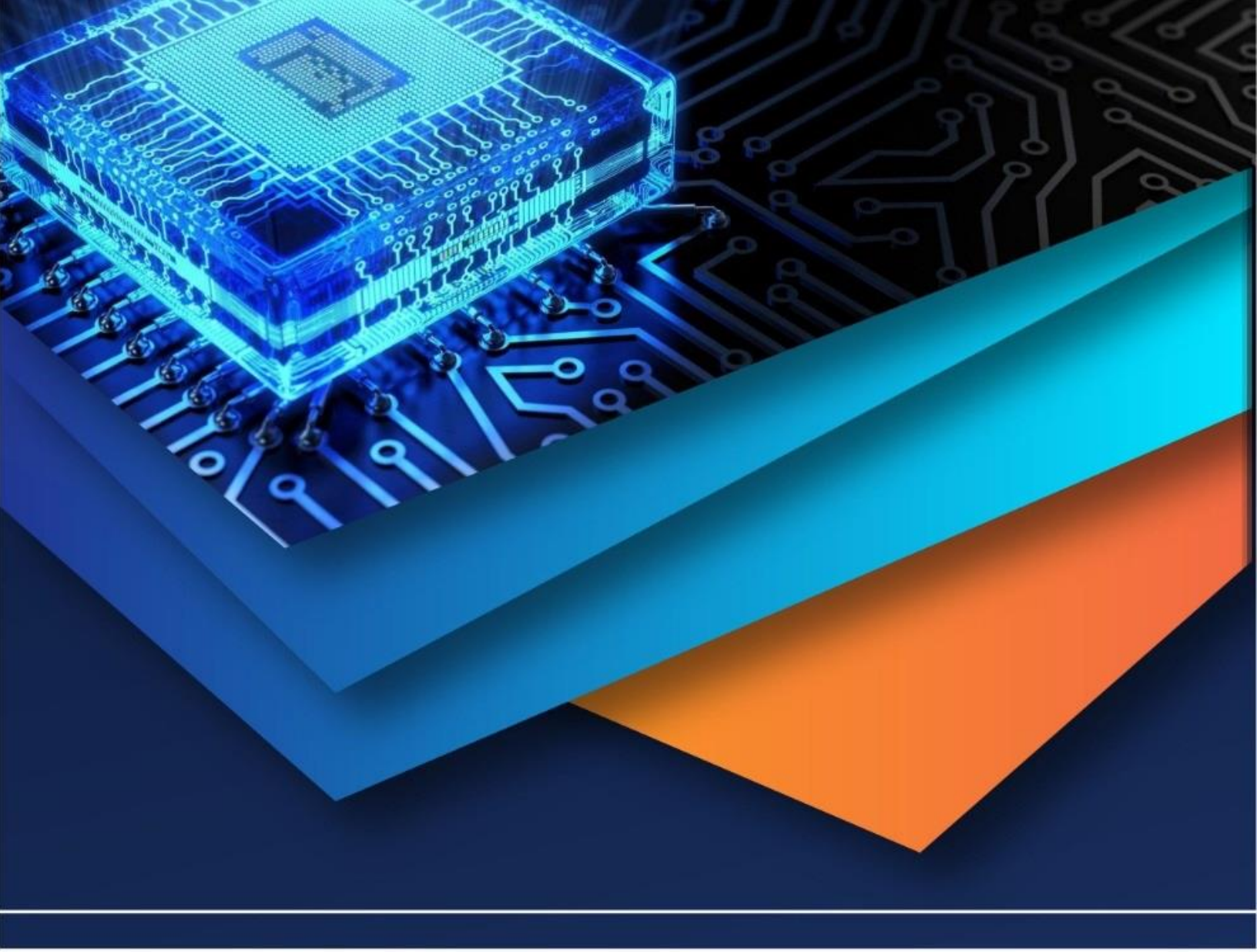

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