



LASU EPE

THE GUIDE

VOL. 1

THEME

LIVING ABOVE THE BOTTOM LINE

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- Rising above the bottom line as a muslim
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- Navigating Graduate School Applications in the United States
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- Success on the path to knowledge
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In the introduction to the vol1 of the guide, we hope you get what you want and more from this piece and wish you the best on this journey.

INTRODUCTION





FROM THE AMIR (20/21)

Idowu Sodiq

***“A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies...
The man who never reads lives only one...”***

Hello Distinguished Readers, I am delighted to have you on this page as you have decided to read the maiden edition of our annual magazine (the Guide) a resourceful work of the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria, Lagos State University, Epe Campus Branch, We acclaim that we have put together relevant intellectual and creative contents from individuals to present to you an edition of our magazine which is positioned to redirect our thoughts on the true definition of **Living Above the Bottom Line**.

A popular saying goes thus **“No” is Easy When You Know Your “Yes”**, Every generation has its own struggles. However, it can sometimes be tough for one generation to relate to another. And understanding the anxieties and concerns currently afflicted by young people is a minefield like no other. As a growing teeming young population in this digital age we have failed at understanding our purpose and defining our personal goal which makes it a lot difficult to provide genuine answers to what our bottom line in life is. In Islam, man's ultimate life objective is to worship the creator Allah SWT (God) by abiding by the Divine guidelines revealed in the Qur'an and the Tradition of the Prophet, We equally need to chase our personal life goals which should not contravene the limits and principles set by our Creator.

The maiden volume of the Magazine (The Guide) will be having the headline theme as **“Living Above the Bottom Line”** seeking to help our readers get clarity on what exactly is the bottom line, how to get better at choices or goals we set for ourselves, get inspired from a few individuals through helpful career tips, importance of knowledge and also get exposure on how they could secure global opportunities.

This magazine is to be viewed as a launch pad for school leavers, undergraduate and recent graduates from around the country who are seeking inspiration and looking to explore opportunities and creative advice from individuals who have stories to share on how to get better with their faith, career, academics and social life. This humble initiative seeks to provide our readers a unique guide which will position them to be ready to shoot for the stars. The enthusiastic write ups from all our contributors are indubitably sufficient to hold the interest and admiration of our readers.

Let me start off by giving all praise and thanks to Allah, the Creator and Owner of time, who Has blessed the pious and collective effort of the editorial team and contribution of the cabinet members into launching the maiden edition of the magazine despite the hustle and bustle of the administration, They have indeed put in relentless efforts to bring excellence to this treasure trove. Our contributors and all those we interviewed are indeed appreciated, your positive attitude, innovative ideas and wealth of experience that you all shared and exhibited will surely stir the mind of our readers.

*Despite the contents, efforts of the team, the personalities that contributed and the strong messages embedded in the magazine, all efforts will be proved futile if our readers insist not to read this publication, on this note I want to appreciate you (yes you!) and heartily convey my best wishes and I hope this magazine meets your expectations and plays a vital role in your decision to **Living Above The Bottom Line!***

*On this note I greet you with the best of greeting by saying "**As Salaam Alaykum Warahmotullahi Wabarakatuhu**"*



A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies... The man who never reads lives only one...





FROM THE AMIRA (20/21)

| *Amdalat Anthonio*

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. We beseech His abundant mercy to be showered upon our noble Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahu Alayhi wasalam, his households, companions and the entirety of the Muslim ummah, **Ameen.**

Higher institutions are always exciting, but sometimes stressful.

What is the experience like for Muslim students?

What can universities do to address their needs?

And what should students be doing on their own?

This boils down to managing our equilibrium objectives of academics and continuing to develop progressively in the cause of Allah. The bottom line is that there simply is not enough time in the day to finish all there is to do.

Whether it is due to stress, an unpredictable schedule, long class times, and for many students, working while going to school, many Muslim students would admit that higher institution is making it difficult for them to practice their faith. But also gives an enormous opportunity to prove to yourself that you can maintain (at least) the prime/minimum that makes you a true Muslim.

Your faith will wax and wane during the stress of your studies, but the blessing of education has only come to us because of Allah's generosity. Let us talk about the topic "**Living above the Bottom line**".

ABOVE THE BOTTOM LINE

The first thought that came to my mind when I heard this topic is "the light at the end of the tunnel". I wasn't sure if I was right, so I looked it up online. I still don't understand the meaning so well, but from what I could establish, it means "above the fundamentals".

Now I know the next thing that comes to your mind is "above the fundamentals of what?". I'll be writing about what we see as the fundamentals of life (**Dunya**).

So I'm not a motivational speaker or anything. This write-up is just made by a woman that lives in this Dunya and is wary of the akhirah.

Now, "above the bottom line" for me is everything above the material things attached to this Dunya. Yes! Wealth, a loveable spouse, perfect children, a first-class, fame, etc. All these are things that matter to us in this life.

If you're single, look deep down in your heart and you'll know that what you desire most in this world is to get married and be so financially stable, that Allah blesses other people through your pocket.

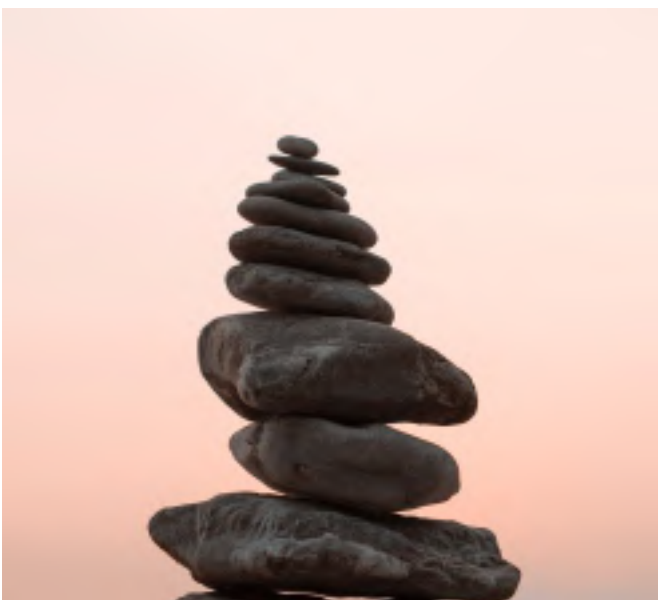
If you're married, you know that what you desire so much in this world is for your family to become so financially stable, that Allah blesses other families through your pockets.

I'm sure you're wondering why I'm making reference to marriage. It is simply because this is also one of the fundamentals of this Dunya. If you've been truly chaste and you're biologically normal, then of course you should be looking forward to getting married if Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala ordains that for you.

***As a human, I want to be that successful Muslimah that other Muslimahs look up to.
I want my family to be close to perfect.
I want to be the best I can be, but above the bottom line,
I want to please Allah.***

Akhirah: As a Nigerian, I will say "in your mind o", you know that Jannah is the goal. You know that you want to please Allah. But at the same time, you want to make the most of this Dunya. Personally, I'll say that you can't eat your cake and have it. You can't have all that you desire and still expect that your creator will always be pleased with you.

As Muslims, we have no idea how lucky we are that our creator is ever forgiving and most merciful. We make mistakes and he still forgives us. Most of these mistakes that we make are simply because we want to satisfy our worldly desires and we don't put our trust in Allah. We want all our worldly desires to be satisfied and still want to make Jannah.

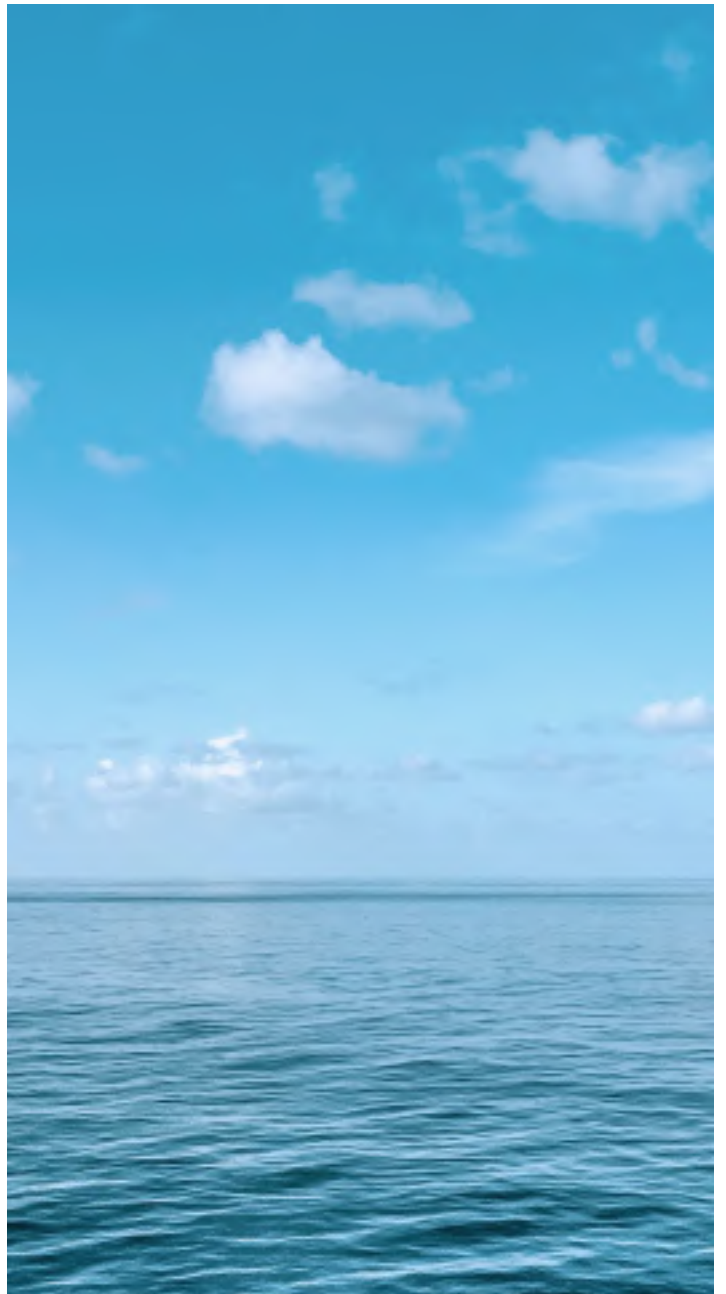




I wouldn't lie, I also desire the same thing. But one thing that brings comfort to me most of the time is that I am Allah's servant and Allah loves me. I know this might sound a bit normal like "everybody says that " but it means a lot to me. It means a lot to me to know every time I don't get what I want that it's because my creator has something better for me. It feels good to know that my creator is probably blocking some evil from coming my way. Sometimes, I am afraid of becoming as wealthy as I dream to be because I have seen first-hand how money changes people. I have seen how people with the sweetest form of Iman become wealthy and begin to act like life is all about money.

However, "you know now" I still want to have money and I trust that my Rabb will bless me with a provision that is just enough for me because above the bottom line, I want to make the highest rank of Jannah.

“What is above the bottom line for you?”





**FROM THE EDITOR,
MSSN LASU-EPE (20/21)**

Otubanjo Abdul-hameed Kayode

Sometimes, my mind wanders through a lot of possibilities and desires. What would it be like to be the richest man in the world or be the C.E.O of the biggest tech company in the world? But never do I see myself wondering what it would be like to be the poorest man in the world.

Every individual is on a journey, not only to make it above the bottom line but also to make it to the top of the line. We may not find all the answers, but we'll learn a lot of lessons and become better versions of ourselves.

As Salaam alaekum Wa Rahmatullah Wa barakatuh. Firstly, I would like to thank everybody who has contributed to the development and success of the first edition of this magazine. I would also like to thank the editorial board, the magazine execution team, the transcripator, the designer, and our sponsors.

When I was nominated as the new editor, a lot went through my mind on how to achieve all the tasks, what the role of the editor has to offer, and how I would give my best to the role bestowed upon me. Man plans, Allah plans, but verily, ALLAH is the best of all planners! Upon assembling the editorial board, I was provided with everything I needed to make our project a success but what is life without setbacks? But amidst the setbacks, Alhamdulillah, our dream of launching our first magazine has come to fruition.

When sister Islamiyya suggested the theme of the magazine to us, upon further reflection, I noticed that many of us in one way or the other were not only living above the bottom line in aspects of our

lives, but we didn't even know where the bottom line was!

Setting out on the compilation of this magazine, we wanted to answer relevant questions and inform our readers, like, "What is the bottom line?", "How do you live above the bottom line?", "How are people already living above the bottom line?" Our goal pushed us to arrive at this destination and I hope all your questions have been answered.

In the editorial preface themed, "Living Above the Bottom Line", the authors focus on explaining what it means to live above the bottom line. The magazine talks a lot on topics that directly translate to our everyday life from struggling to get good grades as a student to achieving the right amount of spirituality to please ALLAH, and progressing further in our careers. For anyone that reads this in its entirety, you will become so different from the person you were before embarking on this journey. You will also be able to say you have been guided towards living above the bottom line.

I am honored to have been given this opportunity to serve as the Editor-in-Chief for the mssn lasu-epe editorial board. I am grateful for the confidence placed in me by the shurahh Committee and for the support from the Editorial Board.

It is my pleasure to present (Volume 1 of the guide) issue of the year 2021!

With best regards,

Otubanjo Abdul-hameed Kayode



THEME

This chapter tackles the question, of why live above the bottom line, how do you know you are living above the bottom line, what does the bottom line mean and so much more. Do, have a wonderful read and I do suggest reading everything sequentially as it has been arranged so.

ABOVE THE BOTTOM LINE

Written for the Editorial Board (20/21)

By Otun Islamiyya & Makanjuola Fadheelah

One of the major challenges facing students in higher institutions is "living below the bottom line". The question we are faced with now, "What is the bottom line?" and "How does one live below the bottom line?".

A bottom line describes the ultimate outcome or the most important facet of a situation. When people ask about the bottom line, they only want to focus on the primary objectives or they only want to focus on the main or present problem while not giving concern about the things that lead to that problem, its interrelationships with other problems and what comes after.

Most higher institution students of today believe that success depends largely on getting a first class or at least a high grade. While we do not trivialize the importance of getting good grades, it is a common belief that this can only be achieved when sideboards aren't included. Sideboards are a set of cards that are separate from a player's primary deck, used to customize a match strategy against an opponent by enabling a player to change to the composition of the playing deck.

Sideboards are needed to customize strategies to rise above the bottom line. If graduating with a good grade is the bottom line, your skill set is the sideboard because really, it's no longer just about the certificate but what you bring to the table. These are not the only sideboards available however, as a young Muslim in institution, important skillset needed include skills and Religion.

Getting good grades is the bottom line for every student. It is the essential result, the bare minimum and it is not enough. Developing and maintaining skills like content writing, poetry, web development, designing, programming and more is a plus. These

skills tend to raise one above peers as there is more to life after schooling and getting perfect grades.

Good grades and having workable skills is one of the best ways to rise above the bottom line.

However, would we limit ourselves to just these? As a Muslim, having a strong spiritual life is essential to rising above the bottom line. Would we pursue this dunya without care for the hereafter, remember that in the pursuit of the hereafter, we gain the dunya as well. Obeying Allah's injunction, following the sunnah of the Prophet in your everyday dealings is certain to raise you above your peers.

Having good characters can also not be underestimated, diligence in work, friendliness in your interactions, efficiency, patience and building good relationships with those around you would guarantee to make you stand out in the crowd.

Muslims tend to excel more academically, politically, skilfully, morally because our religion encompasses both character and obedience to Allah which is a power combo on its own.

MSSN LASU (Epe) is here to help you keep those sideboards to raise you above the bottom line. A Nigerian writer; Romantic Philosopher once said : "it is wrong to follow the pack when they're at fault and also wrong to leave while your preference is wrong as well". We are here to make you stand out as you stand away, we are to make you defy the norms by creating something better and not creating your own wrong.

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In the end, we should not limit ourselves and stay comfortable below the bottom line, rising up to the bottom line is also not enough.

Soaring high, exceeding the bottom, Erasing the line is the goal.

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STORY OF ALI

Vincent Shamsudeen
Member of the Editorial Board (20/21)
Faculty of Engineering
Lagos State University

Living in a face-me-and-gossip-me house was a lifetime experience that has impacted my life, although, positively.

As the cliché says; “what goes around comes around”. Such truism is the perfect metaphor for life that unfolded in the life of Ali, the son of a cheat.

One evening on Monday, May 2015, just some days before democracy day. I eavesdropped on the lamentation and groaning between Ali and his father. At age 14, I was attending the same junior high school as Ali. He was then an all-through first-position student. We used to be marveled at and intimidated by his style of success. No one ever knows how he did it. But, listening to his father’s, often, boastful merry-talks and cruises over how he [the father] sailed through his exams during his time in high school and the university made it glaring how Ali, who might, however, be a play-hard boy did come all-time top position in his class. Albeit, did Ali’s craftiness work for him in the university as well? Yes, but short-lived!

Ali inculcates the habit of cheating by solving leaked examination questions preceding the time of the D-day. His father must have encouraged and engineered the malpractice, as per his waywardness. He plans this a day before every examination. This culture propelled him from an average student in primary school to a scholarship student in the university, since scholarships were naturally

awarded to the best performing student in the examination. He, consequently, would be expelled in his final year after being caught for insubordination and examination malpractice. Ali’s father helped his son to scale above the bottom line using unscrupulous means, and the aftermath was detrimental to the child’s future.

Can you ponder what is rambling in Ali’s mind at the moment?

He concluded; firstly, I am a cheat!

Secondly, have I had good mentorship?

Thirdly, had I been encouraged to be studious and work towards success instead of looking for shortcuts?

Fourthly, had my father been a good mentor rather than a bad influence. My father was my problem and I am also the driver of my problem!

Ali’s father felt sorrowful and remorseful for his sinful attitude in the past and how it has impacted his son for bad. The deed is done and the remark is left to ruminate about for a lifetime. Karma was served hot!

Thereupon, I have advice for anyone striving to scale above the bottom line, either in Academics, business, or spirituals. Please, do not cheat or ease your way up there! The Holy Prophet (May Peace be Upon Him) warned us defiantly to desist from cheating. In one of his hadiths, he said, "He who cheats is not one of us". Imagine cheating invalidates your quality of being a pious member of the Muslim community, signed by the prophet himself. Easing your way up there will eventually result in your failure as you are not grounded and principled enough to survive the tides when circumstances change.

As a student, attend all your classes, formulate study plans ahead of your exams, build a good relationship with your colleagues, and seek Allah's guidance. These will ensure your all-through success instead of engaging in malpractice.

As a business owner, commit your business to 'halal business', deal with diligence, and pray for Rizk, as provisions come from Allah SWT only.

And, if you find yourself relapsing in your Iman and your duty to Allah, your lord. Please do not cheat and deceive yourself because [He] is All-knowing and All-seeing, and he shall accord you the exact measure of your deeds.



In conclusion, what Allah has decreed for you shall never pass you. If you seek his guidance with the right attitude towards success you shall be met with glad-tidings. And if you seek assistance from the evil of your soul and your ego, you will be meted out with stern failure and disappointment, as what goes around comes around.





MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

Mar'yam Ibraheem
(Imperfectly Flawed Mess)
Sister Secretary MSSN Lasu-Epe (20/21)

As salamu 'alaikum warahmatuLlahi wabarakaatuh,

This write-up has been composed to convey how I now feel about my own journey. Although, everyone's journey is different, and mine hasn't been easy. I've included some things herein, and I hope you'll take the time to read them and consider them.

1. Firstly, Have you ever been in a situation where you finally got what you wanted but were still unhappy? This happens and that is the story of my relationship with Tawwakul.

Tawwakul however translates to "totally reliant on Allah" (subhanahu wa ta'ala). Yes! It's just total reliance. This is a problem I've had for a long time, and I don't think I'm getting any better at it. As a human being, I occasionally try to cut shortcuts to ensure that I receive what I want. I forget that if my creator doesn't want it, I won't receive it. I forget that no matter how difficult anything is, if my creator says, "Be it!" it will undoubtedly happen.

I've been in certain situations in my life where I've decided to trust Allah with everything, and shaytan tries to reach out to me:

"What if you don't get it?"

"You better cut corners and ask Allah for forgiveness. After all, he's ever forgiving and most merciful"

"What will people say if you don't achieve this success?"

"Are you certain that your camel is secure, now that

you're shouting Tawwakul here and there?" and many more strange bewildering thoughts.

Also, considering a country where you get everything and anything you desire through "connection" and people that work hard for it aren't certain to get it - I recall taking an exam at some point in my life where I literally wrote nothing reasonable, I didn't even try to persuade myself that I will pass the exam since I didn't do well. To my dismay, I came to realise I was one of the top scorers in the exam. I'm not sure how that happened because I knew I didn't give it my all and would have failed the exam if the examiner had further examined my script just one more time. I'm fairly certain her mind was elsewhere when she scored the script.

This is an example of a time in my life when Allah's Rahmah appeared to me in disguise. When we can have anything we desire with "connection," we don't think it's vital to rely on Allah. It may be tough to imagine, and I'm not implying that it's always simple. This dunya is a challenge in and of itself, and it might feel as if you won't succeed if you don't cut corners. This whole Tawwakul story had such an impact on me that I chose to name my child Tawwakul (may Allah bless me with one when the time comes). I know you're probably thinking I'm being dramatic, but I felt compelled to do it so that it would serve as a continual reminder that I must rely on my creator for everything.

2. I'm not without my faults.

I am flawed and imperfect. I recognize myself as a sinner in the same way that you do. My loose attire does not make me any more holy than anyone else. Of course, I do my best to be a good servant of Allah, but I am still a human person with my sins. My hijab does not make me any more holy or superior to anybody else; I just wear it because that is how Allah wishes me to be seen. The good news is that my hijab serves as a constant reminder that I am responsible for a lot of things. When my emotions take over and I'm ready to do something I'm not meant to do, I sometimes feel like I'm representing Islam because of my headscarf, and I immediately stop myself. "Mariam, respect your hijab," I tell myself most of the time.

I am just like everyone else, a normal human being with feelings and emotions. I'm not going to pretend to be flawless.

Allah has just not shown me my flaws. Allah has absolved me of my misdeeds so that I would not be shamed. This has completely altered my perspective on a variety of issues. I believe I have learned not to judge others since I have my own sins. Knowing about another person's wrongdoing does not make me better than them; instead, I should pray to Allah not to reveal my flaws. I don't believe we should ever see somebody as a "better" or "holier" person. People who wear the hijab or niqab aren't expected to be blameless. We're just like the rest of the servants of Allah.

I'm grateful for the mistakes I've made before, they instilled in me a type of humility. They taught me that I was not flawless and that I was a piece of art that could not be perfected. Also, if Allah ever points out your flaws, understand that he is attempting to educate you on how to be a better person. Always keep in mind that Allah would never put more on a soul than it can handle. Allah is fully aware of you!

3. Tests will come

Knowing quite well that Allah has promised to test his slaves, most times, I still find myself in a state of fear regarding this. Sometimes, I cried every day while going through these tests.

On some other days, I always convince myself that these are times of trials all in lieu to ensure that I remain steadfast. All in all, all I can say is that I am

thankful for life and his forgiveness; It is like a second chance for me to correct my errors and be a better person.

The Big question is "How well am I taking advantage of this second chance?". That period of my life has changed a lot of things about the way I used to live. It's a difficult situation. Since then, it has shaped my life dramatically. The benefits and drawbacks make me intensify my gratitude towards Allah for every one of them. Now I'm simply a young woman trying to make her way through life. I'm not berating myself; I'm simply taking my time and letting my creator take care of me.

4. Let's take a look at my experiences as a "tech sis"

I used to think my confidence was "not awful" until I went to a program where I had to engage with other young women in the tech industry. I found that I was very uncomfortable and shy. I have been trying to convince myself that it was not from a place of low self-esteem. I always had the impression that I was the "dumbest" person in the room. When most of them talked, they spoke so confidently that I felt like I was the only one who had recognized their errors (I can be that unserious, yeah). That's when I finally concluded that I was "socially awkward". To get my work out there, I didn't believe I needed to connect or even have social media profiles. If I knew that, maybe I would have studied medicine because I have never really been a social media person. Everyone is talking about having a social media presence these days, and I can honestly say it is the most unsettling thing I have ever had to do. It doesn't appear to be a "Maryam" type of thing, but then ("anywhere belle face na front"). I'm still new to it, but I can say that I have an incredible support system that Allah has utilised to make my life much simpler.

The most amazing thing is that everybody seems to be rooting for me. It is amazing and also scary. I'm not sure why I still lack the confidence that others possess, perhaps it's because I'm still a beginner and, most of the time, I feel like a "kindergarten child" among university students.

Most of the time, I'm not confident enough to declare that I can create even the most basic HTML. I just have the feeling that others will take me for a joke.

Apart from my lack of confidence, I believe I am performing well in other areas. Even though I am studying at a sluggish speed, I believe I will improve over time, Bi idniLlah .

5. Do I really want to do this marriage thing?

This has always been a difficult question. Marriage has always terrified me! But at this moment in my life, all I want to do is wait and see what Allah has in store for me. I only wish to be an exceptional mother to "nearly perfect" children. (I understand that Allah is the only one who is flawless.). Someone questioned me, "So you just want to be a great mother and not an outstanding wife?" Then I replied, "Of course, I want to be an exceptional wife, but I believe that being a wonderful wife comes easily to men who have Allah's taqwa". However, the true answer to the initial question is "I no get choice, as I have to complete half of my deen". I just pray that Allah grants me the one that is best for me.

6. Trying to get a hang of adulting life

I don't believe it's even dawned on me that I'm an adult yet. It's interesting how I've grown up to be such a different person than I was as a youngster. Maybe I'll write a letter to my 13-year-old self one day. I have a lot of things I want to do in the next couple of years that "adults" do, but I'm afraid of appearing as if I don't know what I want! When I believe I want to be wealthy, I remember how some individuals get wealthy and ignore their religion afterward. Sometimes I want to get a Ph.D. and other times I think it is just a waste of time. I just know that things will go According to Allah's plan so I am safe.

7. Am I even living this "Dunya" the right way?

I'm tempted to write something about it, but I feel that Allah is the only one who knows.

I leave you guys with the following verses I just absolutely love :

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ.

Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief:

وَوَجَدَكَ عَابِدًا لَّا فَاعِنٌ طُ

And He found thee in need, and made thee independent.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ۝

(Being) those who have believed in Our Signs and bowed (their wills to Ours) in Islam.

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رَرَقُوا ۖ قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَنْتُمْ بِمُتَشَابِهَاتٍ ۚ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ ۚ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

But give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that their portion is Gardens, beneath which rivers flow. Every time they are fed with fruits therefrom, they say: "Why, this is what we were fed with before," for they are given things in similitude; and they have their companions pure (and holy); and they abide therein (for ever).

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

my Lord! truly am I in (desperate) need of any good that Thou dost send me!"

Above all, I mostly recite surah-al duha when I'm down. So if you ever feel uncomfortable or displeased just recite this surah and pay close attention to the meaning.

But remember to BREATHE!!!



THE BOTTOM LINE

Abati Patrick
Faculty of Engineering (20/21)
Lagos State University

So many people today are living at their bottom lines or below. Only a few people can live above the bottom line successfully. But, what is the "bottom line"? How are people living below or above it? What can one do to live above the bottom line? What aspects of the "bottom line" will we consider?

Here, "bottom line" will be taken in two contexts. The first context will be the dictionary meaning- the fundamental or most important (deciding or crucial) factor to a person, or one people attach. The second is the final or drop point; the lowest point one can get to in life. No matter how much one scrutinizes both meanings, they relate. I will be referring to the first definition as "bottom line 1" and the second as "bottom line 2". making decisions and ignoring bottom line 1 will lead to one hitting his bottom line 2.

We must first consider one's bottom line in the all-encompassing aspect- life. It is generally noted that the poverty stage- the poverty of heart, mind, and body- is the rock bottom one could ever attain. A stage where one is mentally unstable has no friends, and cannot get what he needs (no gender is exempted). Many today live at their bottom line 2 or further below because they could not set their priorities and most important factors (bottom line 1) right. Some people have their bottom line 1 set and strive to live way above it. Some people are also struggling to live a little above their bottom line 2

because they often disregard their bottom line 1. Someone who does not distinctively clarify his bottom line 1 can easily be stepped on, overlooked, and ridiculed by others. Other people also need to know one's bottom line.

You might agree that reaching or not reaching the bottom line 2 in life depends greatly on reaching or not reaching that point in all aspects of life- academics, marriage, relationship with others, financial and spiritual life, and what have you.

Taking one's academics as an example, an individual can have his bottom line 1 set as study periods, lectures, assignments, projects, and periods of relative rest. Taking the bottom line 1 listed above seriously has led many to become geniuses ("scholars" as we love to call them). These people ensure that each aspect of their bottom line is well satisfied and not trampled upon them or anyone else. Hence, they excel in tests and examinations.

Some people are still striving hard to balance satisfying their bottom line and leading a social life. They sometimes relent and trample or let others trample on their bottom line 1; This is caused by distractions such as friends, gadgets, romantic relationships, partying, and even laziness. Some have also to face fending for themselves and their needs. Yet, some can conquer and rejuvenate themselves.

Some people have no intention whatsoever to set themselves a bottom line 1, while some have their bottom lines 1 set, they still trample or allow others to trample on the bottom lines constantly. They allow distractions to occupy the majority of their time, perform poorly as a result and end up bribing their way through or blaming others for not helping them. Hence, they constantly hit rock bottom (bottom line 2) or even go further below in their academics. The first group also faces these distractions, but they do a good job of channelling their energies towards fulfilling their bottom line 1.

No specific bottom line can be set for work, marriages, relationships, and financial and spiritual lives. But one's spiritual life helps him set a good bottom line (e.g., integrity, honesty, etiquette and good ethics, loyalty, self-confidence, prayer, among others.) A variety of qualities and bottom lines are needed in the different aspects of life, though many overlap.

Setting one's bottom line 1 and living up to it, letting people know by words and action what your bottom line is, and constant prayer and consultation to help one live above his bottom line.





THE SIMPLEST CHOICE

Ayinde Ayomide
Speaker Engineering Students'
Parliamentary Council (20/21)

Researching about what a bottom line is was quite exciting. I didn't even know that something like that existed till now. Well, it will be more accurate to say that I didn't know there was an actual phrase for what it means. I have always known instinctually what it stands for, I just didn't know there was an exact phrase for it. Having a bottom line basically means having a boundary, it encompasses what we will base our decisions on and what line we are definitely not going to cross when making those decisions.

It is funny and even astounding how making even the simplest choice can be overwhelming unless we establish our priorities. If we know our bottom line – the thing that is most important to us – that one decision eliminates most of the others. The most difficult part is the decision fatigue, and once we get rid of that, it's smooth sailing!

It is said that the average adult makes something like 30,000 decisions per day. Talk about decision fatigue. But what if we could eliminate the vast majority of those decisions by establishing our bottom line (or lines) in life? If we knew what was absolutely most important to us, so many of the big or small decisions would be made.

Let's take the example of budgeting money. If you decide that saving for a new phone is your bottom line, then every other financial decision has to be subject to that one. You can decide on an amount

you want to save, and the time it will take to save that amount. That's your bottom line. Now: Trying to get a first class degree? How does that affect your lifestyle? Unsure about going to parties and having fun? How does that affect your ability to read more extensively and assimilate? And on and on.

Even something as mundane as whether or not you will buy food or make it at home is determined by this bottom line. You've eliminated many big and small decisions from your days.

It's also true for less concrete things. Does your family have priorities in life? How do you make decisions about jobs, schools, travel, housing? Do you choose what is most convenient? Then convenience is your bottom line. Or maybe you choose things so that you can always be close to extended family. In that case, your bottom line is clear, and moving far away from family, even for something like a better job, is not an option.

But it seems like many people don't have a bottom line- or at least, not a conscious one. They haven't taken the time to sit down and think through what is truly most important for them. Somehow they ended up in the job they are in and the place where they live, without considering if it aligns with what they care about the most.

So when it comes time to make a big decision, they're at a loss for what to do. Should they move to be in a better school district, even though it means a longer commute to work? Should they change careers if the job is more enjoyable but the salary bracket is lower? A friend sent me a video recently about an athlete that overcame racial limitations by training extensively. Obviously he had a bottom line of being amongst the best and adjusted his lifestyle and training regimen to achieve that purpose.

Without a bottom line, it's a lot more difficult to make a good decision. But once you've decided what's important to you (whether for this season of life, or your whole life), then you can hold up every other decision in light of that. Isn't that a freeing thought?



***If someone asked
you what your
bottom line in life is,
what would you say?
What would your
friends say is your
bottom line?***





RISING ABOVE THE BOTTOM LINE AS A MUSLIM

Written by Mariam Balogun

Treasurer MSSN LASU-Epe (20/21)

The bottom line according to the dictionary means the final results after making a loss or profit in a year. According to the perception of life, the bottom line is the standard set by the people of life. The bottom line of some families is to procreate in life, some are for them to go to school, some is for them to live every second on Earth anyhow they seem fit as far as they can feed, the bottom line of some is to distract people from worshipping Allah the creator.

To the believer, the bottom line is to worship Allah. Allah says in the Quran and I quote that "he has neither created man nor jinns but for them to worship him".

There are basics and prerequisites in worshipping Allah, as a Muslim you have to accept first that there's no other God besides Allah and he has no son nor any family, you have to believe in the six pillars of faith which are belief in Allah,

belief in the Angel, belief in the prophet, belief in the books of Allah, believe in Destiny and believe in the day of judgement these are the prerequisites of worshipping Allah, then you also have to observe the basics which are the pillars of Islam :

1. Testifying that there is no other God besides Allah and that prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah
2. Praying the obligatory Salah at the right time and as they are taught
3. Giving out zakat or paying your alms
4. Observing the Ramadan sawm
5. Going on pilgrimage(Hajj) when you are able and capable.

How do we rise above the bottom line?

We rise above the bottom line by having the fear of Allah in whatever phase of life we are in, By dealing justly with the guidelines set by Allah wherever life takes us be it in business, family affairs, friendship, education, fun e.t.c

By having faith in Allah that he will always be there for us whenever we are tried, by seeking knowledge and finding the right path.

By calling upon him when all is well and all seems to be lost, by standing firm in faith that Allah is the only God and that he is the best of the helper in all adversities.

Backing up this faith, with dreams and goals and striving hard each day to accomplish them, we can rise above the bottom line by aiming higher than the boundaries set and believing that Allah is with us, we will rise above the bottom line.

When you're ill, you pray and then use your necessary drug believing that Allah will cure you. When you are in debt, pray to Allah then go to your daily job with faith that Allah will provide and pay your debt, you just don't pray without taking the necessary actions that follow faith.

When you lose your loved ones, though you are hurt and no one can feel the pain more than you do, in that pain praise Allah and acknowledged the fact that Allah loves the person more than you do and pray for you guys to be reunited in Jannah, it is never easy but you believing in Allah will ease your stress.

You have been aiming for a particular job, admission or for particular stuff you love or you want to do and you have been losing it, keep praying and working towards that goal, if it is best for you Allah will give it to you and if it might bring harm to you, Allah might delay it remember in your heart that he knows what is best for us all because he said we might like what harms us though it is not good for us and hate something though it is best for us, that's why we should trust Allah, if after trying several times and is not giving you what you want, try achieving other goals don't just give up, believe in your Lord Allah.



***I believe with
faith and fear
of Allah backed
up with hard
work we will be
able to rise
above the
bottom line.
Thank You.***



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NIGHT EVERY R V I E W S

03



A close-up portrait of Barakat Oyeyinka, a woman wearing a light-colored hijab, smiling warmly. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be an office or indoor setting.

Interview with **BARAKAT** Oyeyinka

Tell us about your transition into design.

Cowrywise was my starting point. Initially, I was offered an internship to join the growth team as a product specialist. I also did my NYSC training there and was retained as a growth associate. I focused on community management but on the side, I was picking up design. Before leaving Cowrywise, I realized I wanted to pursue design as a career path. I ventured into it fully when I got to Dubai, although I'm still into community management.

There is a popular misconception that a strong technical background is a prerequisite to kickstart a career in tech. What do you think?

No! I studied economics in school and had no background in tech. Most people think tech is just about Programming, but that is just a minute part of the tech space. There are a lot of things you can do in tech that could fit your personality aside from coding, like content creation, customer experience, product management, and so on. A good thing about a tech career is that there is little to no concern about what you studied in school. I once worked with a product manager who is a medical doctor.

What is your definition of a tech career or tech generally?

Tech is multifaceted but, in layman's language, it's like our everyday life in simpler forms. For example, financial technology (fin-tech) ensures that you save your money from the comfort of your home without going to the bank. You can also attend classes or meetings without having to leave your house. So, our daily activities are carried out with utmost comfort and little stress.

What is the main drive in your career?

What keeps me going is my love and passion for design. That's why even when things get difficult, I keep on because I enjoy it. Money is also a factor, but it's beyond that. I'd like to chip this in: it's not a crime if you're joining tech for the money! Don't let anyone guilt-trip you into thinking you're senseless if you're joining tech for the money. My dear, I want to be able to shop without looking at the price tags; I need the money; I want to be comfortable. That's it.

Considering the huge gap between male and female representation in the tech world, how would you encourage more females to go into tech?

Yeah! Thanks for talking about under-representation. Although I am happy to see people trying to bridge the gap between the male and female talent supply in the tech industry, I feel like the gap doesn't just exist in the tech industry. It is more of a general aspect of the professional space. Well, when young women start to see other women doing amazing things in the tech space, it could inspire them.

My advice to other young women is this: It is not rocket science; it is just people doing things you can do and even better. So, instead of scaring off or thinking you cannot do it, put yourself out because you surely can! There are many organizations out there empowering women who intend to pursue careers in tech. Get involved!

At a young age, did you ever envisage being on this career path?

No, I did not. I just stumbled across it while doing

those things we consider extracurricular activities in school. I got information about the Cowrywise ambassadorship program through a friend. I also started learning basic parts of design before leaving Cowrywise from a colleague who is a designer because I was always fascinated while he was building things. Then, I started taking courses when I realized I was good at the basics and that's how my journey began

As a designer, do you ever lose motivation or have creative blocks during projects?

I don't know if I have ever had a creative block, but I have had moments when I felt like I didn't enjoy what I was doing although designing is something I enjoy. I once worked at a place where I was not doing what I really wanted to do. At that time, I felt helpless because there was nothing I could do about it. Yeah! That was probably the lowest time I have had in this career.

Do you face any bias regarding your technical credibility as a lady?

No, I have never faced any bias just because I am a lady or a Muslim.

How have you been able to balance your Islamic life and your career?

It is not that rigid. I just make the company I work for understand the reasons for consideration about my time.

How can you say Islam has impacted your career?

I have always carried my identity as a Muslim well even before this career existed. So far, Islam has been my life because everything I do merges with my stance as a Muslim.

What do you feel is a huge obstacle to pursuing a career?

I think the first would be getting started at all. You know trying to figure out things — how to start, how to get the help you need, how to project yourself. Another thing is finance. It can be expensive to start. For instance, getting a laptop for an average Nigerian or paying for courses to upskill can be quite expensive.

How can one overcome these obstacles?

I think having a support system made it quite easy for me. Sadly, some people don't have that.

What would you say to your younger self?

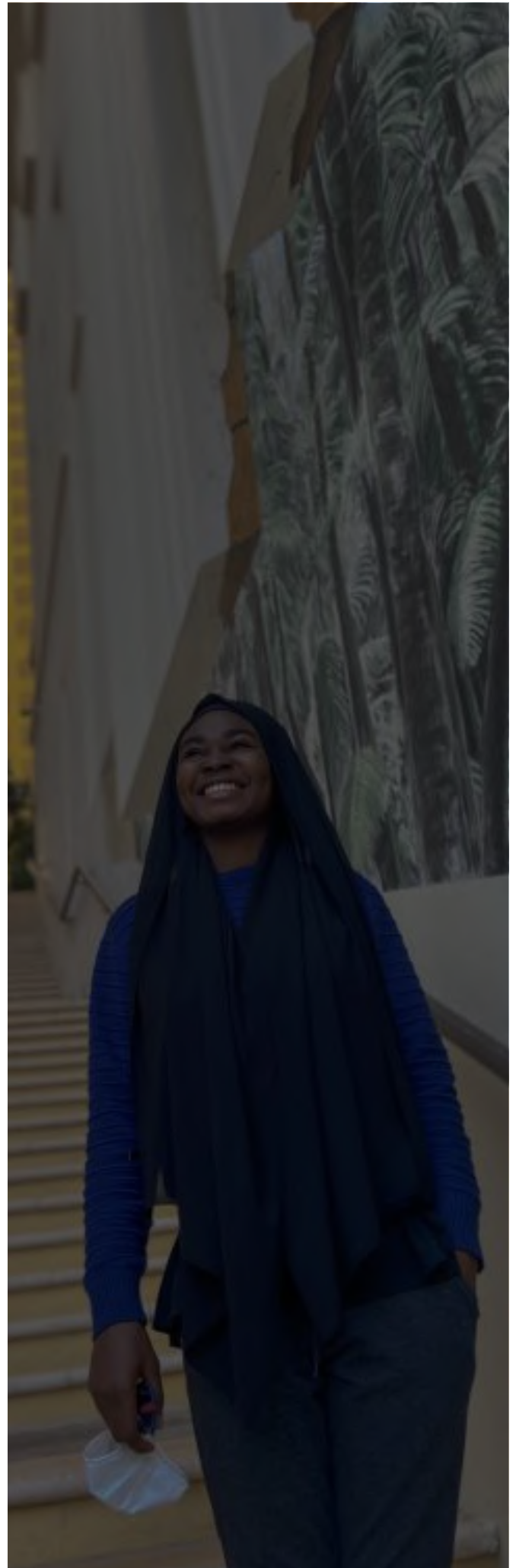
If I were to talk to my younger self right now, I will just proudly say she is doing amazing and things will get easier with trust in Allah because looking back, I don't think there's anything I would have done differently, in terms of actions, although I wish situations were easier. upskill can be quite expensive.

Parting advice to females about joining the tech sector and females already there.

To ladies already in the tech space, you're inspiring a lot of people in many ways you don't even know. You all are an inspiration and representation for a lot of young people. Try to be more accommodating to more women to serve as a support system for more women.

To ladies yet to join, there's nothing to be afraid of. All it takes is just one step to begin your journey. Make a decision and just start somewhere. Keep putting in the effort, too, because one thing I have realized is that the world is watching.

Then, for those who want to join the tech space and don't know how to go about it, join tech communities online and offline, network, and reach out to people already in the space. There are a lot of people willing to help out there.



A portrait of Dr. Babajide Milton, a young Black man with short hair, wearing a light-colored blazer over a dark shirt with a red and green stripe. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a solid yellow color.

Interview with

DR. BABAJIDE Milton

Please, introduce yourself.

I am Dr. Babajide Milton Macaulay, from Eti-Osa, Obalende, Lagos State. I'm an academic. I graduated from FUTA Federal University of Technology, Akure where I studied Biology and graduated with first-class honours. I was the best in my set and was offered employment as a lecturer. I accepted it because I love teaching and research, and I've been a staff of FUTA since 2012.

Although my first degree was in Biology, I've gone on to specialise in Environmental Science. My Master's was in Sustainable Environmental Management at The University of Greenwich, London. My Ph.D. was in Environmental Geochemistry and Geomicrobiology from the University of Manchester in Manchester, UK. Both of them were sponsored by a Commonwealth Scholarship in 2012 and 2015 respectively.

Aside from being an academic, I'm also a mentor entrepreneur. I run an educational consulting platform called ILLUMANIA which was established on January 1st, 2018. Since 2018 to date, we've helped over 150 people win scholarships; not just in Nigeria, but in Botswana, Kenya, Ghana, Cameroon, and South Africa. And it's these success stories that the scout from the Ooni's palace saw on LinkedIn and decided to award me the Royal African award in 2021. So that's what I do: Academics and Educational Consultancy.

How did you come about the name Illumania?

Good question. In the first 6 months of launching Illumania, people were confusing it with Illuminati. That was a big problem because a lot of people came online and thought we were the Illuminati or one of those demonic groups. Someone was asking me to change the name, but I decided not to. People would have to get used to it. Well, it's more than a year now and nobody talks about Illuminati anymore. Illumania has now stuck.

So, how did I come up with the name? The thing with me is I think very deeply about names that I give anything. So, I thought about the goal of the solution I'm creating which is of three parts. And that's the motto — Enlighten, Empower and Elevate. I started with the first word, which is illuminate. i.e. shine light into people's minds, but I thought I needed something else to compliment it. I came across this word, MANIA, which means two different things. The first meaning is someone who is crazy, like a maniac. And the second, which I liked, is excessively enthusiastic, like one who's overly eager to want to do something. I decided to combine ILLUMINATE and MANIA. And that is how Illumania was born.

What are the major challenges students face when applying for scholarships?

One of the major challenges that students face is that they don't know what scholarships to apply for. There are so many scholarships out there and they don't know how to choose which to apply for. So, what they often do is try everything. And because they are trying everything without being strategic, they have many rejections and that will kill their morale and make them feel inadequate.

Hence, I liaised with a Python expert to create a system where graduates can just put in their details and automatically generate scholarships that match their profile. If you check www.scholarometer.com, you will see it. It's called Scholarometer, but we've not publicly launched or made any noise about it because we are still testing it.

"You all have all the opportunities in the world. Just don't let your environment drown your dreams. Don't always think about local solutions all the time. Sometimes think about what the world is trying to fix and position yourself there. Once you do, you are relevant anywhere you go globally."

What are the opportunities available for students studying agriculture?

Most scholarship opportunities favour STEM fields. Why so? There is no development in the world today that is not based on STEM. And engineering and agriculture are part of STEM.

You all have all the opportunities in the world. Just don't let your environment drown your dreams. Don't always think about local solutions all the time. Sometimes think about what the world is trying to fix and position yourself there. Once you do, you are relevant anywhere you go globally. Whether you come back home here or you go back elsewhere, you will be relevant. You will not struggle to get a job or get a position in the agricultural sector.

Today, the biggest issue for agriculture has to do with sustainable farming for future generations. So if there are ways that tech can enable agricultural systems such that food production is sustained over time, you will be the next big thing. That's why the use of drones in agriculture is becoming a common phenomenon because it helps you do more with less.

There are lots of schools in the US that have departments that focus on all of this, all you just need to do is send a cold email to one of the professors. Once you secure a supervision role from him, the next thing is to submit your application. Once your SOP is properly written, you're going to get into the US.

In fact, if there is any time to take advantage of all these opportunities, it is now. You have lots of opportunities, but you must have good grades to take them. If you want to stand a big chance and your school grade is over a 5.0 scale, then I expect that you have nothing less than 4.0. These scholarship sponsors rank grades. And if you make a first-class, fantastic! Information is just information. Just know how to position yourself and you'll get these opportunities. That's it.

What would you define as good academic grit for someone whose GPA is graded 5.0?

Yeah, just as I said earlier, if you have a 4.0 on a five-point scale, that's a good grade. You don't need to have a first-class, but if you have a 4.5 on a 5.0 skill, that is fantastic.

If you make a first-class in this bad environment and you present your certificate to them abroad, they will see you as a first-class product. They will not judge you by your environment, just the first class. And then they'll give you an opportunity. I know that you don't have all the resources here, but let it not discourage you from giving your best.

Is there any way people who don't have a good result can apply for scholarships?

Yes, of course. A minimum of 3.5 is what you need to even attract a scholarship. You need to go through four stages, but if you make a first-class, it automatically eliminates three stages. You only have one stage. If you make it 3.5, let's say you've eliminated two stages and only have two stages left. It's possible, but it's more difficult to navigate.

We would like to ask about your platform. How can we become a part of it?

People usually confuse my platform as being a mentorship platform. On the contrary, it's an educational consulting platform. What we do is advise you if you want to apply for a scholarship and need help. Consultation is free. So, call us anytime.

We simply examine your profile, and what you have, and then advise you on WhatsApp about what scholarships to apply for, but we will not apply for you. You are the one to start the process. When you begin, we can help you fine-tune it. For instance, if you want to send an email to a professor and want it to be very good, you can reach out to us to help you with that. We will restructure that email and guarantee a response — for a small charge.

Also, in the case where you're asked to submit a Statement Of Purpose (SOP), or they're asking you to also attach your CV, if you're not sure about what you have, you can come to us as well for a small fee.

We'll edit your CV and edit your SOP because we don't write from scratch. We only edit or review because writing from scratch is unethical and unprofessional. So you have to write something. Then, we will review it for you.

How do you contact us? You can just go to our platform, www.illumina.org. You'll see columns for everything you need.

Thank you for that! Before we move on to the closing, do you also deal in international undergraduate scholarships?

No, I don't. There's no market for that in Nigeria. Most Nigerians are not even interested in that. The demand from Nigeria is postgraduate study. Graduate study in Nigeria is cheap, especially when you go to a federal school, so people don't see the need for any payments or whatever, because they can afford it. And if you're struggling, various platforms can support you. There are lots of them. Chevron, LNG, MTN — there are many more. So, many people don't have a problem with it in terms of funding.

It is when they graduate that they realize that a master's and Ph.D. abroad or more is very expensive. We are talking about 20 to 40 million naira. My Ph.D. was about 100,000 pounds, around 51 million naira. So, because of that, the focus is on post-graduates because that's where there is a market. So, I pitched my tent in international postgraduate scholarships. That's why I often talk about Master's and Ph.D.

Thank you so much for that. To the next and final question for today, what advice would you give graduates looking forward to securing fully-funded, robust scholarships and what advice would you give to people in general?

So, young undergrads, you want to get a scholarship abroad? First, read your books. It's very important because good grades matter for this journey to be a bit smoother. Number 1, study. Number 2, apply for local scholarships. It's a big plus because it means that some people have believed in you in the past.

And that means that these international people can then believe you. So if I were you, if I hear about any local scholarship, I'll apply. Aside from the money involved, you're arranging your profile very well, such that it looks very attractive to international scholarship sponsors.

Now, number 3, volunteer. I can't overemphasise the importance of volunteering. Don't just don't be selfish and do things only for yourself. Join an NGO or a student organisation on campus. Go to communities, do things for your community. The reason is that today, the spotlight is upon people who also care about their community. That's the reason why in some scholarship application forms, you see questions like, in what ways do you hope to inspire your community? Or what have you done for your community? Does the Commonwealth also put your tasks into voluntary activities? Yes. And it's 500 words. So, it's very important to volunteer. Part of volunteering is also joining religious organisations. It can be your fellowship or the newest society where you are helping students. Volunteer to teach younger students at tutorials.

You're into agriculture. Volunteer with the Legos State Food Bank initiative. It's at no cost, but it's powerful in your application. So, number 3, volunteer. Number 4, lead. If you have an opportunity to lead, please do because these scholarship sponsors like intelligent people who are leaders.

They know that you will drive change and become a community mover and shaker because you are a natural leader. They don't want to invest all that money in just anyone. Once someone who's a natural leader eventually stands before people, they don't try to influence or motivate them; they just do. And they know it when they see it. So, if you have the opportunity to lead, please don't shy away from it. If you know that leadership is stressful for you, be a supporting leader. Just make sure that you're in a team that will bring impact and influence.

Lastly, you need some fortune. Pray that God should give you good fortune because there's an element of luck you need to survive or succeed in this world. I can tell you that the majority of my achievement is not because I'm super intelligent or super good. It's because God had mercy on me. I just allow things to flow. So that's my final advice for young people in school.

Now, generally for young people, number one, be aware of the impact of social media. I noticed a trend with gen Z: they're very intelligent and tech-savvy.

And that's because information is everywhere. They are so well-informed that it's making them more confused about what to do.

So if there is any advice I'll give youth generally, it's that you should be careful with the way you digest information. Don't let everything get to you. Like Mahatma Gandhi would say, I will not let you walk into my mind. Be careful to guard your mind; don't allow every information you read from social media to just take root in your mind.

Also, number 2, set your expectations right. Because of what you see on social media, your expectations will be super high, and the moment you don't get it, you'll be depressed. Depression has become a common illness now amongst young people and it's alarming. Don't set unrealistic expectations and, most importantly, don't let social media be your yardstick for comparison.

So number 1, be careful with the way you digest information on social media because a lot of people tell lies. They only tell you what they want you to know. So when you look up to people and want to start mirroring the lifestyle in your own life, that is the first step for you to make a mistake. Don't ever do that to yourself. The only way to measure success is by your personal growth per time. Don't measure it by comparing yourself to your peers. Take charge of your life. Have a never-say-never attitude.

There are many instances where life will knock you down. It's up to you to stay down or get up and keep working. No one will ever know that you almost quit some seconds ago. They'll only see your victory. It has happened to me as well in life, but nobody will ever know because it's not part of the stories. So, you need grit.

This life has no balance; things will happen, but depending on how strong you are, you will get up again.

So we've come to the end of this session. Thank you so much for your time.

Thank you so much. I'm grateful.



Spotlight Cast

RAHEEMAT Rafiu

Navigating Graduate School Applications in the United States

I am Raheemat Rafiu, a fourth-year PhD Chemistry Candidate and the founder of The Graduate School Hub, an educational consulting and recruiting company for prospective graduate school students. As a Graduate School mentor and the founder of the Graduate School Hub, I have successfully mentored hundreds of graduate school students and would like to share my perspective on the Graduate School application process.

Applying to graduate schools in developed countries can be scary but preparing strong application documents and seeking guidance and mentorship goes a long way in the process! Interestingly, graduate school applications in the United States are much easier than University applications in Nigeria, you don't have to know "somebody" that knows "somebody", it is strictly by merit!

Unlike many contradicting opinions, you can apply for a direct doctoral degree with your bachelor's or Higher National Diploma degree in many schools and programs in the United States. This is quite strange to many people as a master's degree is required for a PhD in Nigeria. However, the structure of PhDs in the US makes the "direct BSc to PhD" track a great deal! For most schools in the United States, most of the classes taken during a PhD are master's level classes. This means every PhD has a master's degree embedded in it. In some schools, you can request a master's degree during or after completing the PhD program.

To successfully navigate your graduate school application, it is crucial that you are focused and ensure that you have access to verified information from a trusted source. The major application documents are your transcripts, a statement of purpose (SOP), the GRE (some schools/programs waive), English proficiency exams like IELTS/TOEFL/Duolingo (some programs can also waive this), Letters of Recommendation and Application fees (waived by some schools).

You can start processing your graduate school applications in your final year. You do not have to wait till you graduate or complete your National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). I immigrated to the US for my doctoral degree a few weeks after my bachelor's degree convocation because I started planning immediately after my final year exams. If you would like to enrol in the Graduate School Hub mentorship, please send an email at "raraheemat@gmail.com" or send a LinkedIn message at "Raheemat Rafiu." You can also follow the company page on LinkedIn and Twitter at "The Graduate School Hub."

Every step you take towards your goal has a massive Return on investment (ROI). Prioritise what matters most to you and give your best to your Graduate School Applications if you desire an advanced degree. I wish you the best in your endeavours, and I pray Allah grants you an abundance of Barakah. Salam...



CAREER & PERSONAL GROWTH



04

HOW TO BALANCE WORK AND STUDY

*Peter Zokoro;
Product Designer @ Rigel Protocol,
Futures Trader.*

Working during your university education can be extremely beneficial to your future for a variety of reasons. You may meet new people, learn new skills to add to your resume, and the part we all like, improve your financial situation. However, balancing work and study can be very challenging due to the need to divide your time between academic and professional schedules. I have been doing this successfully for the last 3 semesters, and I intend to show you a way through which you can consistently get your 5s while you build a career in the tech space or in any field of interest.

Academics is your number one priority as a student and should be treated as such. You should keep in mind that once your academics start suffering or are in shambles, it tampers with every other thing you are into because your primary assignment on campus is not going well. Hence, we need a system that enables you to ace your academic work, get your 5's, and still have a job or skill that earns you money.

One of the most effective approaches I have found builds on small consistent efforts with Academic activities and seasons of imbalance with Tech activities. What this means is that instead of seeking to balance both areas, you can achieve great results by putting in more effort in one area and less in other areas. For instance, the academic activities of the first 6 weeks of the semester are usually minimal, I usually devote myself majorly to activities outside academics; I spend most of my time working on jobs and honing my skills. Then as the semester progresses, I gradually shift my focus towards my academics: getting up-to-date notes, more intense



studying, and preparing for tests. However, I don't completely neglect my studies during these first 6 weeks, I put a consistent amount of effort into it daily.

I have found that you can achieve your academic goals just by studying for 2-4 hours daily, you don't necessarily need to study long hours. However, sustaining a good study habit requires consistency and discipline but it becomes much easier when you break it into small consistent efforts. Doing this helps you stay up to date with your studies. You can break the study into two sessions: 1-2 hours in the morning just after you wake up and another 1-2 hours later in the day. To make this easier to do, it's very important that you schedule this reading period and stick to it no matter what. Also, you will need to make sure that the time you spend studying is time well spent. Be productive! Study in short periods with breaks to ensure you stay focused and avoid procrastination. When you encounter a difficult problem or concept, don't spend too much time on it trying to tackle it by yourself, note it down and go seek help from your mates or even lecturers later, they will gladly help you out.

Studying for 2 hours daily and sleeping for 6 hours daily amounts to 8 hours, you have 16 hours to devote to lectures, skill acquisition, jobs, and every other activity you are involved in. To maximize that time, accept that you will need to re-order your current activities and priorities. This entails rearranging your personal, family, job, and social obligations. Students have a lot of free time outside lecture rooms and that time is spent on things we deem as important. The idea here is that you become more productive with your time and spend it on things that have long-term significance: diverting free time to productive things and making sacrifices to make yourself an asset.

Consistent study habits buy you more time and reduce the anxiety and overwhelming feeling that may accompany exam periods. Cramming and pulling all-nighters before exams is the last thing you want to do. If you are consistent with your reading during the semester, exam periods will be more of revisions and reinforcements of concepts. Nonetheless, treat exam periods as short seasons of imbalance in which you focus majorly on your academics and don't let anything distract you, not even your job, clients, or skill acquisition. During this

period, you should also communicate with your boss or clients about your exams, this way, you get reduced workloads; I take time off work during exams to ensure maximum focus and I get back to unfinished tasks as soon as exams are over.

Finally, create a vision board or write down your goals where you can see them every day. Whenever it feels overwhelming, remind yourself why you are making such sacrifices at this time of your life. Focus on your goals, celebrate small wins and remember that it won't be like this forever. It may seem overwhelming at times, but with the success of others, you can do it too!

Graduating with good grades is an advantage and having high-income skills gives you even more edge. Hopefully, these ideas will make your life easier if you work and study simultaneously. It is an experience that will change your life and the way you see the world of work.



FOREIGN TONGUE WITHOUT A FOREIGN COUNTRY

*Written By Mekanjuola Fadheelah
Secretary To The Editorial Board (20/21)*

We dream to travel out of our country, visit places, explore sceneries, explore opportunities, pursue a career in a limitless world, meet diverse people. Dreams could be just dreams or depending on you, could be tomorrow's reality. A good place to start in achieving that reality is to explore new languages.

Although there are many English-speaking countries, some countries with a mix of English and their local language, you can't deny that being a monolingualist is highly limiting. Even within the country, it is a disadvantage to speak only English or your native language and it becomes a necessity to adapt when exposed to people speaking other languages. As an outsider in a particular environment, for instance the north, being able to communicate in their language helps build a kind of connection with the natives and you're more readily welcome among them than when you stand out due to language barrier and as a plus, you're less likely to get lost due to miscommunication when seeking directions.

There are also cognitive benefits of learning foreign languages. People who speak more than one language tend to have better listening skills, improved memory, problem solving and critical thinking skills, enhanced concentration and greater ability to multitask. These skills are an advantage in daily interactions with people and give you an edge in a work environment.

Speaking multiple languages can be a significant competitive advantage that sets you apart from your monolingual peers in the career space. There are higher chances of employment for professionals who can communicate seamlessly with customers in the new and expanding overseas market. Also, in many instances, language skills also lead to hiring bonuses and increased salaries which puts you ahead of the crowd.

Deciding which to choose among the array of enticing languages might prove to be a challenge. Learning a language to give you an edge in the work environment, you might want to learn Chinese which is the second most spoken language in the world. China being one of the globe's largest manufacturing and export networks with an expansive business opportunity reaching numerous

countries of the world, a good proficiency in the language is currently in high demand to ensure seamless conversation in conducting businesses.

German, while being more difficult to learn than most other European languages, would be invaluable in the world of science and technology not forgetting that German does have the highest median U.S. salary for jobs that require its ability. Spanish, which is the 4th most spoken language in the world, learning to speak Spanish will open all types of new doors for you, allowing you to discover a world of new opportunities including travel experiences, exposure to a rich culture, making new friends and of course, job opportunities.

Arabic, would not only get you ahead in government jobs, industries in business, engineering, medical and international relations. It is also a great way to strengthen your relationship with Allah. Being the language the Quran was revealed in, it makes interpretation and understanding of the Quran easier, more importantly, it helps in enhancing focus during Solat as you would connect better to the words recited and feel the emotions as you communicate with your Lord.

The best place to learn a foreign language will be anywhere it is natively spoken. However without such travel opportunities, an alternative way to learn any language would be with the numerous applications available online. A good one would be Memrise which makes use of memes and gamifications to create a fun but efficient learning method. LinguaLift comes with available tutors and is for more serious and determined learners and is great for learners at different stages. Duolingo helps to improve language vocabulary and introduce you to a language in a fun way.

To acquire a foreign tongue, you don't necessarily need to be in a foreign country and to use a foreign

language you do not necessarily need to live in a foreign country ,thanks to advancements in technology you can work for foreign companies and the stream of possibilities is endless. One tip I would suggest to make your journey on acquiring a new language less challenging is inviting your friends to partake in the exhilarating journey and to close this off with a proverb that says charity begins at home this also affects language ,the closer to your language a new language is the easier to learn.



Getting a job in the tech industry as a developer without any work experience is difficult

Benjamin Iduwe
Software Engineer at Andela

Software developers with great potential tend to get rejected without even getting an opportunity to prove themselves. Work experience whether, it's an internship, full-time, or a contract job, is relevant, but things like appropriate skill set, hard work, dedication, and others always come first. There are a lot of software developers without any work experience that got noticed by tech giants (FAANG or MAANG) and got hired as entry-level software developers because of their skills and dedication. I will let you know about all those approaches and skill enhancement that might help you secure your first job as a software developer.

1. Apply for an internship:

One of the fastest ways to skill up is through internships. When searching for an internship opportunity, don't set earning money as your number one priority. Apply for both paid and unpaid internships. Internship roles are not permanent roles; what you need is exposure from the organization, getting the idea of how to effectively work with a team using version control software, and other tools to speed up your productivity. An internship role gives you a broad understanding of how various groups in a team build products. You would get to understand the role of a product manager, scrum master/agile coach, product designer, software developer, QA engineer, and DevOps engineer.

2. Build projects:

Think of product ideas and make them come to life. The product idea doesn't have to be unique or so perfect. You can take your favorite product and try to recreate it. While trying to build things, you would run into a couple of issues, and resolving those issues would help give you a confidence boost and make you more "self-dependent" as a developer. Self-dependent in this context means you can identify issues within an application and fix them yourself. You might ask yourself why you need to build projects? When you finally get the opportunity to get interviewed by a company without any work experience. One of the questions they would ask is what products have you built in the past? At that point, you can showcase the products or packages you have created to the interviewer.

3. Attending meetups and conferences:

To succeed in any niche, you need to have like-minded people in your circle. Tech meetups and conferences are one way you can connect with software developers and learn about new technologies and better practices to help improve your productivity. Connecting with new software developers is very relevant as they can recommend you or send you job openings to help speed up securing a job. You would also learn a lot when you get to meet with developers. Going out to connect with fellow developers is worth trying out. One developer can turn your career around for the better. You might be lucky to meet that developer at a meetup or a conference.

4. Contributing to open source:

Open-sourcing your project and building packages help you grow marginally. If you have a unique business logic you frequently use, consider abstracting it into a software package. You get to learn about software versioning, contributing via pull requests, and the concept of releases. Open source is one of the ways you can showcase your skills to everyone since your source code would be generally available for everyone to see your level of proficiency. Some job applications require their applicants to reveal the source code of some projects they have done in the past.

5. Take paid courses and get certified:

Taking crash courses is a good idea, but most crash courses abstract only the relevant information. Spend money on courses related to your niche and get certified. Certifications do not guarantee a job, but it gives you an edge over other applicants. Platforms with some of the best tutors are Udemy, Pluralsight, Coursera, and Udacity.



6. Connect with developers and technical recruiters on LinkedIn:

LinkedIn is primarily used for professional networking and career development and allows job seekers to post their CVs and employers to post jobs. Build your professional profile on LinkedIn and showcase your qualities, attempt the various skill tests that match your skills. Depending on your LinkedIn connections, people share job openings on their timelines. The platform also provides a job section where you can easily apply for jobs.

7. Apply for jobs:

You can also try applying for junior roles and entry-level roles, the salary might not be appealing, but all you need is work experience. 6 to 12 months of work experience in a good organization can transform your career as a software developer. While applying for jobs, prepare your mind for rejections. During every interview, try to note the questions you could not convince the recruiter, and read up and get a better understanding of those questions afterward. Before every interview, try not to cram the concepts instead understand their use cases, and you can also try having a mock interview to give yourself a confidence boost. One way you can get the best roles as an entry-level software developer, learn data structure and algorithms, solve Hackerrank and Leetcode regularly.



“HIGH CAPITAL OUTLAYS” AN ANTIQUATE SENTENCE IN MODERN REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT

Adebisi Hammed Adewale

Real estate can simply refer to land above and below the earth’s surface, including all things that are permanently attached to it either natural or artificial. Therefore, the term “Real Estate” is broader than the term “land”. It includes not only the natural components of the land but also all artificially improved immovable features made by the man. Any artificial thing that is attached to the land, such as a building or a structure or a fence is concerned as a part of real estate. (Adebisi 2019)

The land is also converted into real estate as it is improved by providing access, utilities, sewerage systems, and other services that make it suitable for habitable buildings. They are also called serviced lands, improved lands, or developed lands. Such parcels of land are called real estate since they have been reshaped from their natural features. At the same time, it is clear that the land becomes usable when it is converted into real estate.

In recent years, most people believe real estate investment requires a huge amount of money to invest in it, Both rich and poor can venture into real estate but the inverse will be that, in any business arena the higher the rate of investment, the higher the risk and the higher the rate of return and vice versa.

Real estate investment requires less and high capital just like other investments like cryptocurrency, it allows all classes of people (High, medium, and low class) because many business-oriented organizations are now venturing into real estate with convenient terms and conditions for all

categories of people. Organizations such as Jomav Homes and properties, T Pumping concept, etc.

Due to ongoing modernization and innovation in real estate, it’s possible to own a plot of land for as low as #15,000 monthly (#500 per day) which allows low-class people to own a parcel of land conveniently without altering other contingencies.

Real estate investment is not just about the construction of large numbers of buildings for disposal, lease, or rental purposes, it includes land or building or a combination of land and building for the purpose as determined by the investor. An individual who owns a parcel of land can also be referred to as a real estate investor.


One of the most notable advantages of real estate is that it hardly depreciates unlike most other types of investment. Factors that can depreciate real estate investment are not common but can occur due to unforeseen circumstances (like natural disasters e.g. Earthquake, volcanic eruptions) or changes in the area of influence.

Real estate investment is one of the best and easiest investment products available in any economy. Innovation and the insatiable nature of human beings for goods and services also give room for opportunities in real estate investment. The rate of appreciation of real estate and the services it provides make investment decisions in it wise. Location is the major factor in decision-making before buying a property.

In conclusion, Real estate investment is desirable for both the rich and the poor because it is a basic need and has a lower comparative risk on investment. You can invest piece-meal by investing in small and increasing shares in the future. It is a status symbol to be a property owner as well as an income earner. Real estate can also be procured to serve as collateral security for loans from banks to get future facilities for doing business. Real estate is a store of value in a stable economy. Apart from being a status symbol, real estate can act as savings by buying property and improving it before selling at a future date.

The greatest challenge of real estate investment is how to start the ladder and build a successful portfolio. It is better to start small and consolidate after gaining experience before one can dabble in bigger projects. Real estate investment is risky like any other business and requires a lot of financial analysis, and risk management including political, environmental, social, legal, technology, economic, and security risks analysis. It also includes a payback period, analysis of yield, and other considerations before one can dabble into it. Contacting a professional for advice before tossing a hard-earned income is the solution to a turbulent real estate terrain.





THE ART OF PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Shitta Ahmed
Vice president
Lagos State University Student Union (LASUSU)
Epe campus (20/21)

What is People Management?

People Management is a process that utilizes the necessary skills involved in directing, training, and motivating individuals to optimize productivity within the workspace and promote professionalism. It also involves controlling and organizing people, managing their different opinions to attain a common goal; productivity.

Who is a People Manager?

This is an individual with the ability, training, experience, and skills to manage human resource processes, policies, and systems for several people easily and efficiently following their duties, tasks, and responsibilities.

What it entails:

There are essential skills to incorporate into a workplace to effectively carry out the process of people management. Some of those skills include:

1. Trust- without trust, nothing works as it should and a level of trust is required in a workplace. Trust can be earned via virtues.

2. Active Listening- a Manager that wants to know what goes on under him must keep his ears open at all times. That way he can hear either the complaints or the praises from people working with him.

3. Clear Communication- the common saying that 'communication is key' did not just come out of nowhere. The transfer of knowledge and understanding between leaders and followers is a major basis of management.

4. Flexibility- for effective management, a knowledge of when to be flexible and when to be direct must be understood. If being accommodating is not improving productivity, a manager must get direct on his decisions.

5. Patience- this involves showing kindness and empathy to aid and cross over hurdles in a workplace.

6. Conflict Resolution- skills in conflict resolution help to identify miscommunication, the difference in opinion, mediating between the two or more individuals, and coming to an agreeable term. It is important to ensure a good work environment thereby improving productivity.

Insight on how People Management Affects Output.

People management is one of the most important human resource skills within a workplace. The major reason is to improve productivity by making sure that working conditions are at an optimal level.

It is beyond doubt that good management ultimately results in improved productivity. But how?

By taking into consideration, all the skills enlisted to be incorporated into the workspace, we can almost see how.

In a workplace where trust is made the center of all activities, teamwork is encouraged. This is to prove that better teamwork yields better output.

The same can be said for a manager that turns a listening ear to his workers, a workplace where conflicts are resolved amicably, and a workplace where communication is key.

As easy as it sounds, it takes work to achieve all this.

Understanding the Balance.

Don't do too much; don't do too little.

This is where knowledge of flexibility comes into play.

It must be understood that in trying to be the perfect manager, discipline must be ensured at all times as there is a thin line between discipline and negligence.

A proper manager keeps that line in check.

Certain actions like favoritism, nepotism, lack of attention, and the absence of a Manager can greatly upset this balance.

My Experience So Far.

I have had no better time to truly understand the importance of people management than in my time as Vice president of LASUSU, Epe campus.

I have come to realize the sheer importance of conflict resolution among the student populace, the importance of negotiation in politics, building trust within my cabinet, building friendships, and simply enjoying what I do.

Being a Leader and a Manager has its challenges.

A major challenge would be the different opinions and thoughts of people around you. This makes it impossible for a good Leader on a mission to be a people pleaser.

Ways to Develop People Management Skills.

1. Take one skill at a time
2. Find a mentor or a coach.
3. Enroll in development courses (professional or not)
4. Ask for advice or input from other managers.

How to manage your procrastination

Odulate Toheeb
Member of the Editorial Board (20/21)

Initially, the title I chose for this article is 'how to overcome procrastination.' However, the more I write, the longer it takes me to write this article, the more I realise that it is an energy consuming, almost unrealistic goal to aim at overcoming procrastination.

Energy is best put into managing procrastination rather than eliminating it.

So, for this article the focus will be on how you can manage procrastination.

I will discuss what procrastination is, its effects, and tips to help you manage your procrastination.

Let's dive into the article.

What is Procrastination?

Based on research and review of numerous resources such as YouTube and Google, procrastination can be summed up to be the act (an action) of irrationally delaying, postponing, or avoiding tasks, by doing something (usually an easier and unrelated task to the primary task) or nothing, until the last minute, or past their deadline despite potentially negative consequences.

In simple words, it is the act of not doing what you need, have, or want to do when you have to do it.

To be more relatable, procrastination is when

- You grab your phone to do something fun, instead of doing/performing a task.

- You have an exam the next day but you decide to spend the day hanging around with friends, with the intent to study in the evening, and when it's evening, you decide to take a nap with the intent to study later when you wake up
- You decide to take a quick study break that ends up lasting for like 3 hours
- You ignore getting your chores done, and instead decide to spend time enjoying a good time with your friends
- You tell yourself you'd work on your paperwork, assignment, or project report, which is due for the next day, later and decide to plop down on the couch and watch a movie.

Effects of procrastination

One might generally say the effects of procrastination are bad, however, from the above definitions of procrastination, it is apparent that the effects/consequences of procrastination vary with what you are procrastinating about, and the frequency of your procrastination.

Also based on research and review of numerous resources; YouTube and Google, I discovered that everyone procrastinates on some things and it is usually harmless and okay to procrastinate as long as you don't procrastinate on important things in life such as health, wealth, career, and personal relationships, which can have severe consequences if you do, most especially when you are an adult.

Procrastination becomes a big issue when it becomes a lifestyle, a self-defeating pattern of behaviour, that often results in not getting things done; or when your procrastination affects another person.

Hence, it's really important for people to try and manage it.

Why does it occur? What causes it? Why do we procrastinate?

How to manage your procrastination

- Identify the reasons why you procrastinate and write them down

From the definitions of procrastination, I have stated above, it is easy to conclude that procrastination is solely caused by laziness.

However, contrary to the conclusion, experts have confirmed, people who procrastinate are not lazy.

Although laziness can be a cause of procrastination, from research, I discovered that there are numerous, various reasons why people procrastinate.

To properly manage your procrastination, it is essential for you to pay attention to your reason for procrastination.

To guide you, here are a few general reasons why people procrastinate.

- Distraction
- Fear
- Being Overwhelmed
- Messy environ

Also here are common general personality style of people who procrastinate

- The perfectionist is reluctant to start or finish a task because they don't want anything to be less than perfect.
- The dreamer doesn't like details. This makes ideas difficult to implement.
- The worriers have an excessive need for security, causing them to fear risk. They fear change, causing them to avoid finishing projects so they

don't have to leave the comfort of the "known."

- The crisis-maker is addicted to the adrenaline rush of living on the edge.
- The defier is a rebel seeking to buck the rules.
- The overdoer says 'Yes' to too much because they are unable or unwilling to make choices and establish priorities.

So I strongly recommend you spend an adequate amount of time figuring out why you procrastinate before you proceed to this step.

- Manage your cause; Explore things you can do to manage your procrastination

Due to the fact that there are numerous causes of procrastination, it is apparent that when it comes to managing it, there is no one size fits all, in fact the right advice for one person is the wrong advice for another.

Generally, here are a few tips that might help you manage your procrastination.

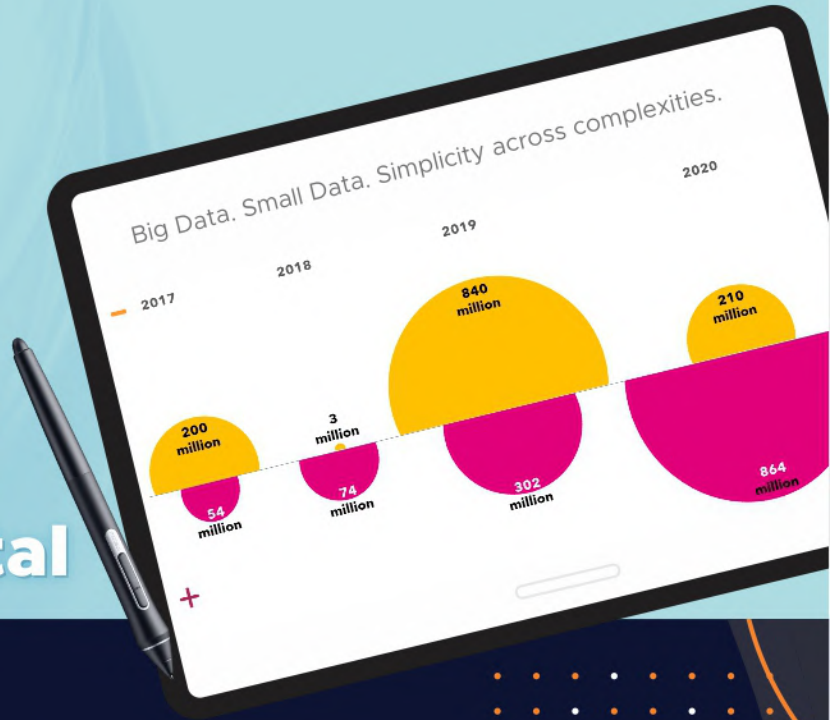
- If you procrastinate, the most important thing to know if you want to overcome procrastination, is to know that you are not a procrastinator', instead, you have a habit of procrastinating, it is your behaviour.
-
- Split large and diff tasks into smaller, manageable ones
- Create a daily schedule for how you're going to work on a projects, and stick to it
- Set final deadline a few days earlier than you have to submit
- Prioritise your tasks, and always start with the hardest and time-consuming ones
- Work for a specific amount of time, so you know when to start and how long to work for
- Take breaks and allow yourself to 'procrastinate' for a set amount of time
- Keep yourself accountable; let others and yourself know what youre going to do and what your goals are
-
- Don't be too hard on yourself

You should hear me talk.



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SUCCESS ON THE PATH TO KNOWLEDGE

*Written by Abdulbasit Abdusalam
Former Coordinator
Council of Higher Institutions (COHI)
(18/19 & 19/20)*

Prophet Musa thought he was the most learned amongst his people and boasted of his assertion. He was not expecting anybody to be more knowledgeable than him oblivious to the fact that Absolute knowledge is with Allah and where one's knowledge stops is just the beginning for another person.

Allah sent one of His slaves who is indeed more experienced and knowledgeable than Musa to him and asked Musa to embark on the path of knowledge with him. Musa jumped on the journey succumbing to the condition given to him by his newly found teacher named Khidr – be patient on this path of knowledge and do not question me until I pass down my message to you.

Knowledge is a journey that requires a lot of things and patience, even though important, is the most underrated requirement of knowledge. A journey is similar to a test, everything and anything would be met on the path of the journey, it however behooves the traveler to be patient and steadfast.

Patience was sounded to Prophet Musa many a time but he keeps defaulting in that regard out of his curiosity to get an explanation for things that were mysterious to him but he was ignorant of. After being warned twice to remain patient, he was disembarked from the journey by Khidr and he got the explanation he wanted and nothing more, he could not explore more of the knowledge of Khidr.

Various things could be encountered on the path of knowledge, however, playing by the rules will keep us going. Rules are extracted from the successful pattern in an endeavor. They could also be extracted from experiences amassed in a particular field of life. Therefore, rules can vary from personal experiences, the scope of study and research, and any other related factor. Khidr gave Musa two rules for their journey on the path to knowledge, I will give you four.

Hard Work and Preparedness

If you want to successfully tread the path of knowledge, hard work and preparedness are inevitable. Nothing happens by chance except you put in the hard work. As a student, you need to intentionally study hard to excel. As much as studying hard is part of the required hard work, studying smartly is also vital. A right step in the wrong direction is a wrong step. You need to study only what is relevant. As it is popularly said, when preparedness meets opportunity, success becomes inevitable.

Consistency

A once-in-a-blue-moon hard work would not yield positive results. Consistency is what sharpens your intellect and makes you more desirable to succeed and make your path to knowledge fruitful. A student needs to develop a system or habit for studies to be successful. When you make studying a habit – you engage in it frequently – it becomes easy to succeed and excel. Have a study pattern even if it is just 2 hours daily and be consistent with it. This is because consistent hard work leads to success. Also, success is the sum of small, consistent efforts.

Perseverance

Like anything else, the path of knowledge comes with its challenges. It is never a smooth path as it is filled with thorns and hurdles. A student should expect all of these challenges and persevere. It could be failing a subject. That should not weigh a student down because the most important thing after failing is trying again. Failure is meant to teach you a lesson, take the lesson and try again. When you don't give up on the path to knowledge and you continue to persevere, your experience will be sharpened and you will end up succeeding.

Taqwa

Taqwa means fear of Allah or being conscious of Allah. It is this factor that will propel you on the path to knowledge. To Allah is all of our affairs, He controls them all, when you are conscious of him by obeying him, he brings success closer to you. A student should be mindful of obeying Allah always. When there is a difficulty, it is Taqwa that will pave the way for him.

He said:

"And whoever fears Allah, Allah will make out a way for him."

"And whoever relies on Allah, He will be sufficient for him"

(Surah Talaq)

It is essential for a student to always put Allah in his mind because that will guarantee him the support of Allah.

In conclusion, a student who wants success on his/her path to knowledge should be ready to pay the sacrifice and the sacrifices are the aforementioned.



**Although success
has no destination,
it is expected of a
student to amass
the courage to
keep achieving
more of it.**



THE "VIRTUE" AND THE "VICE"

IN THE SHADE OF "ISLAM"

Written by Abeeblah Ajibola, BALOGUN

B.A. Islamic Studies, University of Ilorin (2019)



You seemingly know what virtue is, and what vice is all about. The demarcating lines are obvious. The lawful is clear, the unlawful is glaring. The human natural tendency, intuition, and unaltered moral principles are also a rider of this course. There is a natural difference between what is commendable and that which is condemnable. By way of concise capturing, while a Virtue in this context refers to anything such as principles and behaviors which conform to moral conduct and admirable qualities, a Vice renders the direct opposite. That is, a vice is simply a bad habit or ethically unacceptable act. Both, in other words, are the good and the evil respectively.

In Islam, the Qur'an is the divine criterion separating the truth from falsehood. It states "The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal..." (Q41:34). This Qur'an is seconded by the Prophet Muhammad's paradigm (Hadith/sunnah); the life he lived; the legacy he left, tellingly: "I was raised to exhibit good virtues". Indeed, exhibiting virtues is the trodden path of the believers to Allah's countenance. This Prophetic call to attention emphasizes the purpose of the everlasting message to humanity: promoting goodness and forbidding evil. The subject message of which is giving glad tidings and warnings. The Qur'an indeed places this as the utmost assignment that defines the essence of true believers in Allah (Q3:104 and 110). Allah affirms that their fulfillment of this function of bettering the society elevates

them as the best folk ever raised and would strengthen their proximity to Him.

Verily, the question of enhancing virtues and eschewing vices by a Muslim revolves around the attainment of Allah's pleasure, and, this requires a lot of physical and spiritual submissive efforts. However, the key to attaining the same is one and only; At-Taqwa (Fear of Allah). While the question is how one does fear Allah and become well conscious of Him? The answer lies in the prophetic code of self-examination and behavior regulation as follows:

In a popular hadith (prophetic tradition), Abu Dharr said: "The Messenger of Allah said to me: 'Have Taqwa (fear) of Allah wherever you are...' This requires the consciousness of the driving force of the body—the soul. But how is this attained? It continues "...and follow an evil deed with a good one to wipe it out, and treat the people with good behavior" (Jami` at-Tirmidhi 1987). This tradition unveils that virtuous acts are cleansers that wipe off the vicious stains. This, no doubt, is an infusion to policing the soul, to maximize good deeds for erasing any likely punishments for sinful and wanting behaviors.

Since this being wary of one's actions is a milestone in the God-man relationship, the above prophetic tradition equally stresses the need to maintain good dealings and demeanor with fellow humans. Treating people with good behavior adds to the scale of one's virtuousness on one hand and suitably sweetens the requisite of a man-man relationship on the other. By this, the soul itself becomes pure. The mind feels solace. The body sets loose and free of filths.

Grasping the more aptly description of virtue and vice; Nawwas bn Sam'an al-Ansari reported: I asked Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) about virtue and vice. He said: Virtue is a kind disposition and vice is what rankles in your heart and that you disapprove that people should come to know of it (Sahih Muslim 2553).

I'm naturally good at action, I can always be very open and conspicuous for all to see and witness, everyone's natural tendency likes to see and commend me, as a process or result, I'm that which gives tranquility to the mind, good feelings to the body, always free of doubt, leaving no fear of sincerity, I'm good; natural goodness and godliness. I'm the uncompromising truth. Indeed I am what I am: a virtue.

I follow my whims, I'm complacent and cunning, I'm always of suspicion and at most questionable, not tenable or presentable to the public, for I will welcome deserved criticisms and songs of condemnations, I'm always doubted and doubtful. I question my conscience and sincerity. I'm detestable, abominable, ugly, and abhorred. I'm ungodly. I'm a falsehood. I stink. Anything built on me collapses at the very beginning. No doubt, I must surely be a vice.

O you men of honor and valor! Know through the shade of Islam unfolding that:

Virtue is rewarded with virtue (Q55:60) and in manifolds (Q6:160). Nay! The time is always right to do that which is virtuous. And this being the right and only time, hit the ground running to make your virtues outweigh the vices. However, take or have no intention of following up a bad deed with a good one as latitude to commit evils. You might not live again to perform what you intend to use as an eraser; the vice might be your last of the last.

Just as a good deed deletes a bad one, it is vice-versa. Vices also negatively water down virtues; for instance, according to a prophetic tradition, envy accompanied by evil wishes erodes a portion of goodness put forth by the envier, just as the fire guts firewood.

Whenever your fallible nature holds you hard and tempting, and you are on the verge of committing a vice, evil, or immorality, remember these three:

- Allah is watching (Q89:14).
- Angels are recording (Q50:17-18).
- Death is near (Q62:8).

Seeking forgiveness always is indeed the best virtue to follow up a vice with. The best of Adams are those who sincerely seek repentance to their Lord. Ask Allah for forgiveness and do not despair of His mercy as regards your trespasses, for He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Benevolent and Most Merciful (Q39:53).

MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

Written by Otun Islamiyya

Member of the Editorial Board (20/21)



And among his signs is: that he created for you mates from among yourselves that you may dwell in tranquility with them and he has put love and mercy between your hearts: Verily, in that are signs for those whose hearts reflect (Surah Rum vs 21)

In Shariah, Marriage is a legal and social contract between two individuals. Marriage is a religious duty, a moral safeguard, and a social commitment.

The primary objective of a Muslim in life is to worship Allah alone and then all otherworldly aspirations can be categorized under secondary objectives. Therefore, marriage should be committed solely to please Allah.

Marriage in Islam is considered to be half of one's faith and with that, it's necessary to take the choice of a partner as an important decision which needs to be taken seriously. Many intending couples of today only prepare for their wedding and not the marriage. Despite how marriage is highly valued and regarded as being half of one's faith, it's agreed in Islam by the schools of thought that forced marriage is strictly forbidden as Islamic marriages are contracts between two consenting parties.

Below are important preparations when considering marriage:-

WORK ON YOURSELF: it's important to be a replica

of what one wants. Therefore, an individual considering marriage should:

- Learn about the etiquette of seeking a spouse
- Learn about the rights and responsibilities over each other either as a husband/wife
- Make Duas (prayer) for oneself with details and ask for Khair in it all
- Learn about the process of dealing with conflict because marriage is not full of butterflies
- Shouldn't be hasty about one's life till marriage (start things you intend to do about your goals now, do not wait to get married before accomplishing your goals)

CONSIDER A POTENTIAL SPOUSE: There are certain things to look out for in a partner when considering marriage in Islam which are: religion, family status, beauty, character e.t.c. The prophet urges us to choose a well-behaved spouse who possesses good traits and a spirit of uprightness because marrying a righteous spouse brings tranquility and peace of mind.

It's as well important to know what attributes you need in your spouse and what you want because the wants can be compromised and not the needs

ISTIKHARA: It's important to seek Allah's help before and after making the decision. Ask Allah for guidance on the right decision

However, certain conditions must be satisfied according to Islam for a marriage to be valid:

- A clear proposal
- A clear acceptance, though silence is taken as acceptance as well
- There must be witnesses and it's recommended that marriage should be publicized
- A gift either little or more by the groom to the bride.

After the above conditions have been met, a man and a woman can be considered legally married in Islam and there comes the drive to make the marriage work so as not to give room for one of the most irritated act by Allah which is ta'alaq (Divorce). It is the responsibility of both individuals to make their marriage work.

Here are few ways to make a marriage work out in relation to Islam:

- **Communicate clearly and often:** It is important to communicate with one's partner often and clearly. Rather than you both guess playing, ask so as to be clear.
- **Learn to forgive:** Do not hesitate to forgive your partner when they err as it is bound to happen because you're both mankind.
- **Engage in acts of worship together:** Observe salah together when necessary, read the Qur'an together, make supplications together, go for Islamic lectures together e.t.c. These would make the righteousness complementary and make the marriage healthy with the help of Allah.
- **Don't stop working on yourself:** Some individuals enter into marriage and stop working on themselves, some see marriage as a limit to their achievements.
- **Be respectful:** Respect your partner, treat them like you would like to be treated.
- **Don't hesitate to express your love:** Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was a clear example of this

when he was asked about whom he loves the most and he replied "Aisha". Always express your love to your partner as much as you can; talk to them affectionately, gift your partner as much as you can afford, hug them, play with them.

- **Emotional intimacy/support:** Create a space where your partner can easily share their emotions without fear of being ridiculed and support them as much as they can in their career and goals.

It should be noted that marriage should be considered with the intention to improve oneself for the sake of Allah and it's not important when you get married but important whom you get married to (do not settle for anyone just because you want to get married).



May Allah grant us spouses and offspring that will be comforting to our eyes and make us leaders for righteousness and he bestows on us the best of this life and hereafter.

Ameen





MEDIA MISCONCEPTION ABOUT ISLAM

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The media particularly, those from the west, seem to feature Islam constantly in a negative light. The portrayal of the negative image of Islam takes place by constructing an image of Islam with terrorism, violence and extremism. The media is a means by which information, communication, facts and information are transmitted to the public. The media is one of the most powerful tools in the world. It is a common saying that "seeing is believing and that he who controls the media, controls the people following the media". The media can turn false information into true and vice versa.

During the second world war (1939 - 1945), Adolf Hitler used the media to control his people's beliefs through the use of propaganda. A good example of the power of media is during the cold war, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, making Osama bin Laden declare Jihad against the Soviets. He was showcased by the media as a hero but since the 9/11 attack, he was declared a number one terrorist. From the time of the prophet Muhammed(SAW), there has always been media misconception about Islam. These issues are discussed in detail in the subsequent paragraphs;

Firstly, media, particularly those from the west have always used or displayed content that tends to specially reflect a Muslim woman in a negative light. The media has always tried to show that an average Muslim woman is uneducated, a housewife, oppressed and has her rights being violated. The most common scenario is the Hijab which the media sees as a sign of oppression in an Islamic society but, they seem to have forgotten the fact that most Islamic countries have lower records of rape. A good example is Saudi Arabia, which currently has the lowest record of rape in the world. The reason is that Islam advocates the covering of female body parts, especially those that are seductive to the opposite sex. Wearing the hijab allows one to retain her modesty, morals and freedom of choice. This is to say that Muslim women are not oppressed but, are being treated best for their general safety. Muslim women are well educated, bold, courageous, creative, diverse and dynamic. Muslim women are mothers, teachers, doctors, human rights activists, and much more.

Furthermore, one of the most common media misconceptions of Islam is relating Islam with terrorism. Since the 9/11 attack on the US, the media from the west has always portrayed Islam as an aggressive religion. They commonly refer to an average Muslim as a fundamentalist, extremist, terrorist and a violent person.

The most misunderstood word in Islam is the word "Jihad". The media has capitalised this word to mean a holy war fought by Muslims against infidels or non-believers but, the actual meaning of Jihad is to strive for something. For example, studying to pass an examination can be a Jihad. A Muslim who kills other Muslims or non-Muslims should not be regarded as a Muslim, as it is against Islamic principles to kill. Muslims are not terrorists or violent groups of people. Muslims are peaceful, kind, and generous. The media should not use the actions of a few individuals to judge the whole population of Muslims.

The media misconception of Islam has negative effects on people's views on Islam. Many Muslims have converted to other faiths due to these misconceptions. An average non-Muslim will think that a Muslim is a fundamentalist, terrorist and extremist. The media has also portrayed the Islamic sharia law as a dangerous law. The media has regularly displayed videos of some of the Islamic sharia practices in a negative light. One of the most common is the cutting of the hand of a recognised thief, but sharia is a law which establishes the order in countries that practice it. If one knows he will be severely punished for committing a crime, he will be discouraged to commit that crime in the first place. Although sharia law has certain conditions that must be fulfilled before being implemented, the media would not cover this. Using the punishment of an established thief as a case study; When a person is red-handedly caught as a thief, the first step the law takes is to look for the reason this person has stolen. Does he have a job? If not, then the government has a role to play; to provide a job for him. And if he has a job, the law goes further asking why he has stolen despite having a job. Is his job sufficient to cater for his needs and responsibilities?. If not, the government should provide him with a job that would be enough to do so. If his job is proven to be sufficient for his needs, he may or may not be given another chance. Then, the punishment appropriate for his crime is served. As he has no valid excuse for stealing. An average user of the media will mostly find this punishment served but will not be informed of the procedures behind the scene.

A popular Hadith of the prophet (SAW) says that "Verily, the believers with the most complete faith are those with the most excellent character and who are most kind to their families". This hadith shows

how important it is for Muslims to portray good characters (such as kindness, hospitality, trustworthiness, respect etcetera) and maintain good relationships with people. A Muslim should recognise a misconception about his religion and do his best to correct it. The prophet once said that "If someone among you sees something wrong, he must correct it by hand if he can (by deed, conduct, action). If he cannot, then by his tongue (to speak up or verbally oppose); If he cannot, then by his gaze (silence or expression of disapproval); and if he cannot, then in his heart. The last is the minimum expression of his conviction (faith, courage). " This hadith shows how important it is for one who ever calls himself a Muslim to react to mistakes or wrongs and try to correct them to the best of his ability. A Muslim should not only practice Islam but also support the spread of Islam by showing good character.



**It is our duty as
Muslims to stop
the media
misconceptions of
Islam**



TEN BEST HINTS FOR ISLAMIC STUDENTS

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There is no doubt that seeking or pursuing knowledge is one of the most great deeds which could bring one closer to Allah. It is one of the causes of success in obtaining paradise and excellence for its pursuer. Here are a few tips for my fellow seekers of knowledge.

1. Manners come first

Anyone who studies Islam must learn proper etiquette when dealing with others. They must show a high level of mercy and tolerance, be liberal, and have a personable demeanor; otherwise, they may cause more harm than good.

2. A few years of study does not make one a scholar

Young Muslims all too often study for a few years and then develop a "scholar" behavior. They start imposing their beliefs on others as though they cannot be incorrect. They become intolerant of opposing viewpoints and label anyone who disagrees with them as illiterate or deviant. We must recognize that there are numerous points of view in fiqh, and the chances of always being correct are minimal. I tell all my young Muslim brothers and sisters to keep their egos in control, approach disagreements with the risk of being wrong, and never forget to say, "Allah knows best".

3. Studying Islam does not make one immune to sin

Some people do believe that if they study Islam, they will achieve a level of piety from which they will not be able to fall. The truth is that Shaytan works even harder to lead people of knowledge astray because it has a greater negative impact on the community as a whole. We should be Prepared!

4. Everyone will judge you

Practicing Muslims worry a lot of people. Whenever they see a practicing Muslim, they notice their weaknesses and deficiencies and look for shortcomings in that person. People judging our clothing, habits, or infirmities should not surprise us; it is their way of comforting themselves or justifying their faults. We must bear this in mind at all times and be prepared to respond accordingly.

5. You are a representative of your faith

When somebody chooses to study Islam, especially after receiving a title, they automatically become an ambassador of the deen. People will expect to see a living example of Islam when they meet an Imam or a Shaykh. If such a person sins, people will either lose respect for him and become disappointed with Islam, or they will consider it as proof that what he is doing cannot be that serious of a sin. In any case, for an Islamic instructor, our lives define our deen,

thus we must always be careful to not exhibit Islam in a negative light.

6. You will be tested

Life is a test and every human is being tested all the time in different ways. However, one should not think that because one is studying Islam and teaching it, Allah will grant a life of ease and comfort. Rather, history proves that those closest to Allah are the most severely tested. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "The most severely tested people are the prophets, then those closest to them in piety, then those closest to them."

7. Studying should not be an end in itself, but rather a means to an end

Anyone who studies Islam should be thoughtful and discover a good reason to do so. Maybe you would like to be a da'ee and a source of instruction for non-Muslims. Perhaps you would like to open an Islamic center in an area that is in desperate need of one. Perhaps you want to be a mujtahid in a subject where there aren't many good scholars. Whatever you choose to do after finishing your studies should be something honorable that you want to undertake for Allah's sake. In summary, learning should never be a goal in itself, but rather a means to an end.

8. You can't change everyone

Keep in mind that not everyone you encounter will agree with you, will listen to you, or will accept your message. Instead, there will always be those who disagree with you or openly reject you. This is reality, and we must prepare for it by understanding that guidance is solely in Allah's hands, and we are only capable of communicating the message.

9. You will make errors

When they find that, despite their newfound awareness, they still slip into sin on occasion, some people become disheartened and abandon their Islamic activities. The truth is that Shaytan wants us to quit, and doing so only plays into his hands. However, Allah is Most Merciful to repentant people. When you fall and make a mistake, get back up, repent, and try again to be a good Muslim. Never, ever let your errors or mistakes prevent you from doing your Islamic work.

10. The reward for studying and teaching Islam is well worth the hassle.

We all know that the path of knowledge leads to Paradise, but we must also remember that we will be rewarded for the good deeds of those we educate or inspire to do well. In this sense, it is one of the few good things we can perform when the reward multiplies. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "When a person dies, all their deeds end except three: charity, which continues to benefit, the knowledge he left behind which people benefit from, and righteous children who pray for him".



Let us, my loving brothers and sisters in the deen, seek knowledge of Allah while not forgetting the trials and tribulations that come with it. May Allah strengthen us and accept it as an act of Ibadah from us. Ameen.





GHUSL

*Written by Abdul Rahman Kolawole Ishola
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Ghusl is an Arabic term to the full-body ritual purification mandatory before the performance of various rituals and prayers, for any adult Muslim after having ejaculation or completion of the menstrual cycle.

The washing is also mustahab (i.e. required) before Jumu'ah and Eid prayers, before entering the ihram in preparation for Hajj, after having lost consciousness and after formally converting. It can also be performed before Solatu-t-Tawbah (Prayer of Repentance).

Ghusl is often translated as "full ablution", as opposed to the "partial ablution" of wudu that Muslims perform after lesser impurities such as urination, defecation, flatulence, deep sleep, and light bleeding and generally before observing any form of solat (prayer).

Allah (SWT) commanded us to perform ghusl in the Holy Qur'an in Suratu-n- Nisaa O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are in a state of drowsiness until you know what you are saying or in a state of janabah, except those passing through [a place of prayer], until you have washed [your whole body]. And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands [with it]. Indeed, Allah is ever Pardoning and Forgiving. (Q4 VS43)

TYPES OF GHUSL

Ghusl becomes obligatory majorly for four (4) causes, and the ghusl for each of these different causes has different names:

- Ghusl Janabat is ghusl performed after sexual intercourse or ejaculation.
- Ghusl Hayd is following menstruation.
- Ghusl Nifas is following vaginal discharge after giving birth, which can occur for up to 6 weeks after birth (also known as lochia)
- Ghusl Mayyit is ghusl performed on a dead Muslim.

In some cases, two further categories obligate ghusl:

- Ghusl Istihada is for irregular bleeding (in women).
- Ghusl Mas-hil Mayyit becomes obligatory if one directly touches a dead body.

Ghusl also becomes obligatory following a vow or oath to perform it.

As mentioned above ghusl is also required for both the minor Eid (Jumu'ah) and the major ones (Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha).

Similar to wudu, some water is permissible for use for ghusl whereas some water is not. Permissible water sources include:

- Rainwater
- Well water
- Spring, sea, or river water
- Water of melting ice
- Water of a big tank or pond

Ghusl is not allowed with unclean or impure water or water extracted from fruit and trees.

HOW TO PERFORM GHUSL

1. First have the intention that you want to perform ghusl
2. Say Bismillahi (In the Name Of Allah)
3. Washing both the hands up to the wrists.
4. Wash the private parts with the left hand and remove dirt or filth from the body (using your left hand).
5. Perform wudu (ablution).
6. Pour water over the head three times, and rub the hair so that the water reaches the roots of the hair.
7. Then wash the body, making sure that the water reaches all parts, starting with the right side of the body and then the left and rubbing it with the hands so that the water reaches the entire body.



THE CALAMITY OF SUNNAH ANNULMENT AMONG MUSLIMS ON CHIEFTAINCY APPOINTMENT IN ERUWA AND YORUBA LAND AT LARGE

ADEBISI HAMMED ADEWALE

All praises and thanks are due to Allah. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon the Prophet of Islam, his entire household, companions and all his followers. The term Chieftaincy could be translated to mean "the position of the chieftain, which technically is used to refer to a chief or leader.

It is well-known fact that Islam is the religion of prudence and orderliness. It guides adherents and shields them against everything that may cause disorderliness and result in social maladies. It is indeed painful to me and my colleagues in the field of Islamic knowledge acquisition that this orderliness in the mode of Salaat observation and appointment of the Imam of this all-important religious obligation has been bastardized and turned upside down. Instead of appointing the most pious, the most knowledgeable and the most versed in the art of Quranic recitation, the process of imam appointment nowadays is of the most fraudulent and the most knowledgeable in the arts of sorcery charlatanry, our indigenous mosques have been turned to theatres of experimentation magic, practising of sorcery and dissemination of evil! In fact, the Imams position which the pious people used to turn down in preference of obscurity is now being regarded as a juicy post that the ignorant and half-baked people are so desperate to attain to the extent that they resort to acts of fighting and burning houses all sort of things that a lay-man refrain from, our Alfa's are now hiring thugs to fight one another in the streets (what a pity), a conscious Muslim that is aware that religion forbids him from infidelity and its exigencies.

The jurists have concurred that the yardsticks for the appointment to the position of Imam are merit and competence. They have agreed that whosoever possesses characteristics of scholarship, mastery of Quranic recitation, piety, etc, should be preferred for the appointment into this important position of Imam. Based on that, the right person to be selected for this post is the best among them in terms of Quranic memorization, jurisprudence and Sunnah (the Prophetic Tradition). In other words, the criteria and scale of comparison for choosing an Imam is superiority in Quranic memorization, jurisprudence, traditions of the Prophet and Hijr migration from Makkah to Madeenah.

This is based on the following evidence:

The First Method (Consultative appointment method): When the illness has weighed down Allah's Prophet and he could come out to lead prayers. This led Abubakre's leading people in prayers.

The Second Method: Direct appointment: This form is when the leader directly pin-pointed a person to be his successor after his death. This was the method adopted in the enthronement of Umar as he was directly hand-picked by his predecessor, Abubakar, to succeed him. He was reported to have the large gathering of the Muslim faithful who converged in his palace: "Do you agree with my choice (of Umar as my successor)?" they all said "Yes"! In this method, we can see that the ruler is the sole determiner of who his successor will be without any conditions.

Today, chieftaincy titleholders among Muslims are of different backgrounds, with varying motives and activities. Whereas the intention of the early Muslims in conferring chieftaincy titles was to serve as an incentive, drive and encouragement, it is different nowadays due to the following reasons:

A. Political Consideration: Islamic Chieftaincy titles nowadays are being conferred based on political considerations and motives rather than motivation for the propagation of Islam. This trend was noticeable at the dawn of the Second Republic in 1979. The defunct Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) began to use the Mosque and chieftaincy titles among Muslims to score political points. It was a period when a serving Muslim governor would attend church service with his cap removed in the typical Christian deference to Allah, or when a non-Muslim politician was allowed to enter the mosque with disdain for the ethics and teachings of Islam. Also, it is now common among the Yoruba Muslims when many Muslims assume a political post, the Muslims would confer on such people an Islamic chieftaincy title to extort money from them. They do not consider whether these people are knowledgeable or not.

B. Financial Inducement: Most Muslim chieftaincy titles now go to the highest bidder. Moneybags now have free access to any religious title in their community as long as they can pay their way. The Imams do not bother much about the ill-gotten wealth of who would be title holders, even if they are drug pushers. And the society at large seems to be satisfied as long as money can exchange hands.

C. Tribal Affiliation: Unlike the early Muslims who considered titles as a weapon for unity, cohesion and strong social solidarity, the trend among Muslims today, especially in Yorubaland, is the promotion of tribal lineage rather than merit

D. Ego and selfish interests: A Muslim, by definition, submits himself or herself to Allah alone in all affairs. He does not seek any worldly position and when called to service, must humble himself. This principle seems to have faded away among Muslims who nowadays seek Islamic titles only to satisfy their ego and selfish interests. The award of Islamic titles has assumed an unfortunate dimension. This is because the occupiers of these positions could be people of questionable

characters in society.

In conclusion, the origin of Islamic chieftaincy titles is traceable to Allah who besides making Prophets the leaders of their communities also conferred on them some chieftaincy titles in recognition of their strong devotion to their missions. It also identifies that the chieftaincy title in early Islamic days was in line with what is operating among Yoruba Muslims. However, the modification and addition are due to cultural variations in terms of the number of those who are recognized with the various chieftaincy titles. Islamic chieftaincy titles were also used to honour the efforts and contributions made by individual Muslims in major Yoruba cities who have distinguished themselves, particularly in such areas as the building of mosques and Islamic institutions, the issue of Islamic chieftaincy titles today is shrouded in politics, tribalism and nepotism which are all against Islamic teachings. Among the major motives are political consideration, financial inducement and tribal affiliation.

For Islamic chieftaincy titles to be meaningful, preference should be given to Muslims who are steadfast, loyal, committed to the cause of Islam and, above all, have the fear of Allah. The League of Imams and Alfas in Yoruba land in Nigeria should come up with a blueprint on the conditions and criteria for awarding Islamic titles to any Muslim. It is recommended that at no point should financial inducement, tribal consideration and political affiliation be allowed to be determined as a factor for the conferment of Islamic chieftaincy titles. I will also recommend interviewing with whoever is to be turbaned as an Islamic chieftaincy holder or given any position in the mosque. The idea that an Islamic chieftaincy titleholder must emerge from a particular family, even where there are more brilliant scholars and dedicated people in town, should be discouraged. The current trend, therefore, requires urgent review by the League of Imams and Alfas in southern Nigeria who are the competent authority to confer chieftaincy titles. As pointed out in this article, Islamic chieftaincy titles among Muslims should be a motivation for greater dedication to service in the cause of Allah rather than for monetary gains and political patronage.



ISLAM AND JIHAD

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The most misunderstood word in Islam is the word Jihad. It is quite unfortunate today that at the mention of the word Jihad, everyone usually becomes afraid because jihad has now been associated with holy war and terrorism done by the Muslim extremist. Although Jihad means can mean a holy war fought by Muslims to defend their religion but Jihad can also mean an act of serving one's parents. So, what does Jihad truly means, what does the Quran say about Jihad.

Details of this issue are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs:

Firstly, the etymology of the word Jihad can have several meanings. Jihad is derived from the Arabic word Jahada which means to extent strength and effort to use all means to accomplish a task, in other words, Jihad can also mean fighting the enemies of Islam as well as meaning adhering to religious teaching, good deeds, helping one's parent and also not partaking in evil.

Furthermore, some dictionary definitions of Jihad can be very controversial. Some dictionary defines Jihad as a holy war "(the Han Wahr dictionary of modern written Arabic defines jihad as "Fight battle, holy war against infidels and as a religious duty)" I see this type of definition as very controversial as it defines Jihad in terms of negative ideas as it fails to define Jihad in terms of the right way.

What does the Holy Quran say about Jihad? Jihad is mentioned as a noun or verb in the Holy Quran. Jihad is mentioned as a noun in 4 places in the Holy Quran and 24 places as a verb (Al – Tawbah 9/41, 44 and 81 are a few examples). With a proper examination of the verses that talk about Jihad in the Holy Quran, it is clear that Jihad can mean an act of warfare or an act of striving for religious purification. But the primary aim of Islamic warfare is not to convert non – Muslims into Muslims but the expansion and defence Islam. Although from the early life of early Muslims, Islamic warfare forbids the killing of non-combatants (children, women, disabled etc), terrorism should not be associated with Jihad as modern terrorism in which some group of terrorist claims Islamic jihad to support their killings of non-combatants which is strictly forbidden in Islam.

In conclusion, to most people, Jihad might mean a Holy war fought by Muslims against infidels but judging from its etymology and usage in Quran, Jihad can mean more than a Holy war fought by Muslims but an act of striving for good deeds so struggling to pass the exam can also mean Jihad.



HEROES

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For every nation,
there are heroes,
and they are eternally etched in the memory of their
nation.

As for the heroes of this Ummah,
They are unparalleled in other nations.

These are our own heroes
They will be eternal in paradise.
Paradise vast as the heavens and earth.
It's a right for them,
For they were of excellence, sacrifice, courage and
influence.

Of these heroes was the supporter of our Prophet,
The chief of the Ansar,
Their political and military leader,
A leading figure from amongst the Ansar.
Allah guided him to the right path,
And illuminated his heart and soul.
Converted to Islam on the basis of sound evidence,
As put to him by Mus'ab ibn Umayr.

His entrance into Islam was neither blind imitation
nor spontaneity,
Neither was it nonchalance or mysticism.
Thus Islam became his deen and ideology,
This Dunya a frivolity in his eyes.
His conversion led to the conversion of his entire
clan,
Such was his influence,
A man of gallantry and greatness.

On the day of Uhud,
The Muslims had lost control and focus.
The disbelievers launched a counterattack,
Everywhere was tumultuous,
Pandemonium here and there
Yet our hero stood there,
Defending the Messenger of Allah courageously as
though he was pinned to the ground.

And on the day of Al-Ahzab?
The battle of the Confederates.
The Jews of Bani Quraizah had compromised,
Abandoning the Muslims and their agreements, and
Becoming allies of the enemies.
The Muslims resorted to a counterplot,
Digging a trench as protection,
While the enemies laid siege to Madinah.
The Muslims so then prepared for war.

Reciting lines of poetry as he marched - "I waited
anxiously for the battle to start, How beautiful death
seems when the time is right".
The confederates then attacked,
Their archers, shooting arrows from afar Ibn al
Araqah!
Ibn al Araqah, it was,
Who shot our hero an arrow,
Piercing an artery in his arm.
Blood gushed out as his sword fell.

He was carried to the mosque where a tent was put
up and he was nursed.
Upon seeing his state, He said:
"O Allah, do not take my soul,
Until I am comforted with the end of Bani Qurayzah.
O Allah, If anything yet remains to be decided,
From the war with the Quraysh,
Spare my life so that I may fight them in your cause."

Bani Qurayzah was besieged for 25 days, Certain
there was no escape,
They asked for their fate to be decided by our hero.
He ruled that their warriors be killed, Children and
Women be taken captives. You have given a
judgement similar to Allah's. The Messenger of Allah
said. [1]

Indeed the demise of heroes,

Is not ordinary like the rest of humanity, For they are
martyred in the path of Allah.
His wounds worsened day after day and On the verge
of death,
The Prophet visited him,
"Peace be upon You, O Messenger of Allah,
I do witness that you are indeed the Messenger of
Allah".
Taking a farewell look at him,
The Messenger of Allah said: "Rejoice, O Abu Amr".

Down and finally out,
Our hero martyred,
Breathed his last whilst resting his head on the
Prophet's lap.
At the death of this glorious companion, ALLAH the
most Powerful's Throne shook. [2]
70,000 angels participated in his Janazah.
"Every wailing woman is a liar except Umm Ibn
Mu'adh" said the Prophet.
*The Messenger of Allah also said:
"The handkerchiefs of Ibn Mu'adh (in paradise), are
better and softer than clothes made of silk." [3]

What a great honour for a great man! Became a
Muslim aged 31.
Martyred at the age of 37.

Now, this is a HERO!!!
Who was HE???
He was none other than the beloved Companion,

HE WAS SA'AD IBN MU'ADH.

May Allah be pleased with Him.

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[1] (Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Number 3804)

[2] (Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Volume No. 5, Hadeeth No
147)

[3] (Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Volume No. 5, Book No. 58,
Hadeeth No. 146)

LIVING LIFE



06



OBESITY

Dr. Simbiat Lawal

Noibatul Amirah, MSSN LASUCOM (19/20)

Casting our minds back to MR NIGERD, nutrition is an important characteristic of living things.

What we eat and how the body utilises them plays a huge role in our social and physical wellbeing. Protein-energy malnutrition and obesity are extreme ends of the spectrum of the nutritional disorder. While PEM [kwashiorkor and marasmus] are most common in younger children 0-10 years while obesity can be seen in any age group.

Obesity represents an imbalance between calorie intake and expenditure - which means there are more calories taken in than expended. it's a global pandemic and the risk factors that could predispose one to Obesity includes

- Sedentary lifestyle
- Excessive junk intake/Unhealthy eating pattern
- Genetic predisposition
- Unhealthy sleeping pattern
- Excessive stress

How can I know I'm obese then?

Simple! Just calculate your weight in KG and height in METRE

THEN:

BODY MASS INDEX = $\text{Weight in kg} \div [\text{height}^2]$ in metres

BMI OF:

- >35 extreme obesity
- 30-34.9 obesity
- 25-29.9 overweight
- 18.5-24.9 healthy weight
- <18.5 underweight

CONSEQUENCES OF OBESITY

- Diabetes mellitus
- Cerebrovascular accident
- Musculoskeletal pain
- Breathing problems [obstructive sleep apnea]
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome leading to infertility in females
- Subfertility in males
- Psychosocial issues like low self-esteem, being bullied, poor self-image, depression etc
- Heart disorders

PLEASE NOTE!!!

BEING SLIM OR NOT OBESE DOESN'T EQUATE TO PHYSICAL FITNESS, NOT ALL FAT PEOPLE ARE OBESE, NOT ALL OBESE PEOPLE ARE FAT

SO I'M OBESE, WHATS NEXT?

- CHIN UP!!.... Let no one put you down
- INSIGHT.... Be sure you are TRULY obese and be willing to seek help
- Diet modification... is an important aspect of your fitness journey. Reduce junk and eat healthier foods.
- Exercise... Now don't go all the way to killing yourself at the gym, as drastic weight loss is not also good.
- SLEEP ADEQUATELY, as less or poor sleep has been found to increase obesity
- DRINK WATER a lot, some call it hydrotherapy its good for weight loss
- Avoid carbonated and sugary meals
- Do not be in a hurry. Rome wasn't built in a day
- Avoid slim teas and fake magic routines

EATING DISORDERS

An eating disorder is a mental disorder defined by abnormal eating habits that negatively affect a person's physical and/or mental health.

The common types of eating disorders; are binge eating disorder, anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder.

Those with eating disorders can have a variety of symptoms. However, most include the severe restriction of food, food binges, or purging behaviours like vomiting or over-exercising. In severe cases, eating disorders can cause serious health consequences and may even result in death if left untreated.

Types and Symptoms

Anorexia nervosa

Anorexia nervosa, also called anorexia, is a potentially life-threatening eating disorder that is characterised by self-starvation and excessive weight loss. Anorexia is likely the most well-known eating disorder. It generally develops during adolescence or young adulthood and tends to affect more women than men.

The disorder is diagnosed when a person weighs at least 15% less than their normal/ideal body weight. Extreme weight loss in people with anorexia nervosa can lead to dangerous health problems and even death.

Common symptoms of anorexia nervosa include: being considerably underweight compared with people of similar age and height, very restricted eating patterns, an intense fear of gaining weight or persistent behaviours to avoid gaining weight despite being underweight, a relentless pursuit of thinness and unwillingness to maintain a healthy weight, a heavy influence of body weight or perceived body shape on self-esteem, a distorted body image, including denial of being seriously underweight.

Bulimia Nervosa

Like anorexia, bulimia tends to develop during adolescence and early adulthood and appears to be less common among men than women.

Bulimia is a psychological eating disorder in which you have episodes of binge eating (consuming a large quantity of food in one sitting). During these binges, you have no sense of control over your eating. Afterwards, you try inappropriate ways to lose weight such as forced vomiting, fasting, laxatives, diuretics, enemas, and excessive exercise. Individuals with bulimia usually maintain a relatively normal weight, rather than becoming underweight.

Common symptoms of bulimia nervosa include recurrent episodes of binge eating with a feeling of lack of control, recurrent episodes of inappropriate purging behaviours to prevent weight gain, self-esteem overly influenced by body shape and weight, and a fear of gaining weight, despite having a normal weight.

Binge eating disorder

Binge eating disorder is another common eating disorder, it typically begins during adolescence and early adulthood, although it can develop later on. Individuals with this disorder have symptoms similar to those of bulimia or the binge eating subtype of anorexia. For instance, they typically eat unusually large amounts of food in relatively short periods and feel a lack of control during binges.

People with binge eating disorders do not restrict calories or use purging behaviours, such as vomiting or excessive exercise, to compensate for their binges.

Common symptoms of binge eating disorder include eating large amounts of foods rapidly, in secret and until uncomfortably full, despite not feeling hungry; feeling a lack of control during episodes of binge eating; feelings of distress, such as shame, disgust, or guilt, when thinking about the binge-eating behaviour, and no use of purging behaviours to compensate for the bingeing. People with binge eating disorders often have overweight or obese. This may increase their risk of medical complications linked to excess weight, such as heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.

What You Can Do About Eating Disorders

Medical Care: The highest concern in the treatment of eating disorders is addressing any health issues

that may have been a consequence of eating disordered behaviours.

Nutrition: This would involve weight restoration and stabilisation, guidance for normal eating, and the integration of an individualised meal plan.

Therapy: Different forms of psychotherapy, such as individual, family, or group, can help address the underlying causes of eating disorders. Therapy is a fundamental piece of treatment because it affords an individual in recovery the opportunity to address and heal from traumatic life events and learn healthier coping skills and methods for expressing emotions, communicating and maintaining healthy relationships.

Medications: Some medications may be effective in helping resolve mood or anxiety symptoms that can occur with an eating disorder or in reducing binge-eating and purging behaviours.

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ALONE IN LOVE

Olasunkanmi Abd-Hameed and others
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If you decide alone and rush into a relationship, it will be your lonely world of pain. True husbands and wives are rare today as mistrust is prevalent. You cannot tell what kind of person the brother or sister is, you cannot know what kind of life he/she has been living before meeting you, and you cannot specifically take his sweet words or her charming face or courtesy as his or her true essence after marriage. Islam does not make mistake when it stipulates that we start the journey with istikhaarah. The path of love toward marriage is delicate and fragile. Both sides want something from each other. There are several 'unknowns' but one should proceed with optimism. It should not be one based on deliberate wrong or selfish choices. There are times when the man will act like a fox. He will hide his true self. He will say what you want to hear; He will attend programs you attend. He will please you so as to win your heart. If he is already in your heart, nobody can dissuade you from the relationship, not even your parents.

Your new love has become everything. Attempts to explain and call your attention to some salient issues will not be welcomed by you. Every voice of love has its magnet. Your ears become glued to it. Not all men marry women because of their mission. He may simply be infatuated by your beauty or elegance. He may simply cherish your academic excellence and your association with him; he may simply want to penetrate your family because it is illustrious for scholarship or activism. It is in such a relationship you see a man saying and behaving strangely after marriage. That brother is a first-class student does not mean he will be a first-class husband; in fact, he can be the worst. That he memorises the Quran is not equal to being a good husband; that he is a motivational speaker does not make him build a good marital home. All these qualities are good but marriage is not premised on them. It is a lifetime edifice which needs the right understanding of Islam and good character. These you can only get with patience and fervent prayers to Allah.

Every young adult wants to go into a relationship. There is a natural call for this. The choice of who becomes your partner is your making. You must however know that human beings are like fruits. When a woman is pregnant, we talk of the fruit of the womb. So, this brother or sister you so much love and can even die for is a fruit of somebody's womb. There were times in his or her life that he knew nothing and in fact had no sexual feelings.

Now that has attained puberty he also wants to bear another fruit. When you feel love is getting you intoxicated, remembered when you are nothing to be remembered. Fruit could also be an outcome of something like the fruits of labour. In this case, the kind of effort you invest in making your choice will tell the kind of fruit it will bear. Nobody will share your pain if the person starts showing his or her true self. Fruit in its real meaning is a product we pluck from a fruit-bearing tree. There is no human being who does not relish fruits; though our tastes may be different. As you embark on a relationship, regard it could be ripe or unripe; the juice could be sweet, sour or bitter. The shape could be round or oval; it could be small or big. Every man or woman affects the other just as the taste of fruits is different in the mouth. If a man lacks basic and proper intellectual -- - moral training, he will be an unripe fruit. If he is your choice, then the kind of home or future you want to build will be feeble.

Even when you rightly get married eventually, you must know that human characters are like the flavour of fruits, you can perceive some tastes at times but it is only when you eat it that you can know whether it is sweet or sour. Sweet fruits could become sour but sour can never be sweet. So you need to learn how to tolerate and together mutually by being fully patient and prayerful. The shapes in fruits are like human uniqueness. An orange can never be like a watermelon, nor can guava be like a mango. This is to teach you contentment. You must be satisfied with the person you have chosen. Focus on him or her. Do not look elsewhere. Accept him or her for whatever he or she is. After all, it was this shape that attracted you. Do not complain since you could not look beyond physical. Every man wants a sweet fruit but it lasts a while. Lasting love resides in the heart.

But why are you in love? "I am just in love "; "All my friends are in love"; "I just don't know how it happened, I think it's Allah's work,". Ah! Why am I in love? "Am I too young to be in love, it's natural now!"; "the guy is cute, cool and fine; in fact, he's stainless ."If any of these is your reason, it shows you do not understand what love is. If yours is because of money that you will be getting from him or sexual, then you are lost.





HOW TO RELATE WITH INTROVERTS

Written by Abdul Rahman Kolawole Ishola
Member of the Editorial Board (20/21)

Introverts are often-times a set of misunderstood human beings. They hardly socialize, they are quiet and shy, being around many people and talking for long hours tends to drain their energy, they are always self-conscious of their words and actions, they enjoy being alone and are mostly-drawn to jobs that require some level of independence.

Introverts are said to make up around 40 per cent of the global population, because they can be quiet and reserved. It can be difficult to assume their next line of action. Sometimes, they may be perceived as being rude.

However, because of the way introverts are wired, they can be sometimes difficult to understand, especially by extreme extroverted friends. This is why it is important to note the following tips on how to cope with them.

Accept your introverted friend for who they are

The most important tip for coping with an introvert was to accept them for who they were. Accepting an introvert for who they are is the key to making everything work. An introvert may not be the life of the party, a social butterfly or an amazing group conversationalist.

However, they might be extremely polite, quietly amused in social situations and very intuitive in your post-social, private time. In other words, see your introverted friend for who he or she is and value the good.

Acknowledge your differences from the start

Knowing key personality differences helps to be more aware of their friends' feelings and expectations, psychologist Ashley Papa wrote on Business Insider.

After the acknowledgement of differences, do not push too hard or try to change one's, introverted friend. It doesn't matter who is the introvert or extrovert in the friendship, you can't change them, balance and understanding were the most important factors to make the friendship work.

Let them be if they need to be left alone

Introverts usually wanted to be left alone sometimes and advised their friends to let them be when they needed such moments.

They might just need to recharge when they are socially exhausted. They will come around when they are no longer socially exhausted.

Also, do not take it personally when they are wanted to be left alone.

Check-in on them and encourage them

The fact that one's friend is an introvert does not mean they don't appreciate affection. Like in every successful relationship, communication is very key and it isn't something one does once in a while because one's friend is an introvert.

Abandoning your introverted friend in a situation outside their comfort zone is never good. Pay attention to their needs and always check in on them. Check-in often to ask how they are doing, comment on their dressing, gift them something. Introverts appreciate it when you take the time to notice what they are silently communicating to you.

Do shoulder-to-shoulder activities

If you need to spend time with your introvert (your needs matter, too!) and they seem to need disengagement, do something "together" that doesn't require face-to-face engagement, like putting together a jigsaw puzzle or cooking a meal.

It is normal and okay for your introvert to want to read, play solo games, take walks alone, and do other solitary activities. This doesn't necessarily mean they are depressed or lonely. They enjoy and need solitude. And hearing things like 'you don't ever spend time with friends,' can sound like criticism or disapproval instead of concern.

It's okay to have separate social spheres

Introverts won't like some of your friends. That's okay. You won't like some of theirs, either. Having separate social spheres is generally healthy in relationships anyway. There is absolutely nothing wrong with you and your friends doing something fun and extroverted on a Saturday night, and your friend and his/her friends doing something introverted - or even your friend just deciding to stay home while you go out. When relationships are solid and each friend understands the other, these types of arrangements aren't seen as threatening or a sign that there's a problem in the friendship.

Don't try to impress them

Introverts don't like braggarts and showoffs, and they will spot efforts to impress them with superficiality from a mile away. They'll be more interested in what makes you unique. Tell them what's on your mind. Introverts don't like unnecessary drama. If high dudgeon and drama were your way of showing love and investment in prior relationships, that's just not how introverts do it. Boundaries, assertiveness, and healthy conflict resolution: These are music to an introvert's ears.



Show you're invested in them

Introverts have a habit of being self-sufficient in many ways. They may have developed skills to manage difficult feelings and emotions on their own, and you may wonder why they don't immediately open up to you when they have a problem or a bad day. Introverts are better at asking questions rather than answering questions sometimes, so you might need to be more inquisitive at first and show them you're invested.



THE MENACE OF CULTISM

*Written by Olatunji Fatimoh
Former student of The Guidance College, Epe*

The menace of Cultism, indeed, has become a social problem that calls for urgent and collective social action.

A cultism is a group of people that are in an enclosed organisation engaging in bad deeds and devilish acts which are against society.

These so-called cultists commit themselves in path and allegiance which serves as their strong bond. One of their attitudes is callousness which makes them act violently and have no pity for their prey.

This group engaged in killing and other deceptive behaviour that can make the school environment not conducive for other learners. All they believe is they are protecting themselves from harassment from the teachers and their co-student.

Examples of cultism in our society are Eiye(The Eagle), Aiye(The Black Axe), pink lady and so on. It is common in secondary schools, higher institutions and even those that are not students.

The major cause of students being initiated into a secret cult is a lack of parental care. Most parents devoted more time to their business instead of giving their children the attention needed.

Many over-ambitious parents believe enrolling their children in boarding school is the solution to their problem. Alas! They have forgotten that the first school of knowledge for every child is the parents.

Secondly, Poverty may be another cause of being initiated. A child that comes from a poor home can easily be lured into a bad gang as a result of his not contentment using the syndrome of "teach me how to fish" and lastly found himself in a deadly group.

Moreso, peer groups may also be another cause of being initiated into cultism. There is an adage that says "show me your friend and I will tell you who you are". Another one says "Birds of the same feather flock together". Then another one says "Evil communication corrupts good manners". A child that chooses to move with bad gangs will be easily initiated into this devilish cultist group.

The consequences of cultism include;

>> Untimely death of those that are supposed to be good leaders of tomorrow.

>> The families of the victims of cultism will always be in a panic and thus reduce their movement all because of threats from the opponent's cultist group.

>> Victims of cultism are not useful to themselves and their families.

>> Cultists always look horrible. They create fear in the mind of people merely by seeing them.

Despite all these consequences which are known to the societies, some still join the devilish group as a result of either of the causes above. In the light of this, I think the following steps should be taken to reduce the rate at which people join or are being initiated into cultism.

>> Parents should create more time for their children, monitor them, and give them thorough home training that a child needs.

>> Public awareness should be given on the consequences of cultism both at home and in schools.

>> Disciplinary officials who are courageous to handle cultism cases should be set up in both secondary schools and higher institutions.

>> Any cultist caught should be eliminated instantly.

>> Government should create more job opportunities for graduates to reduce crimes.

In conclusion, I thought with all these points and advice, if we all cooperate and put our heads together, we'll eradicate cultism in Nigeria.

Thank you!!!





NYSC IN DETAILS

Lawal Aishat

B.Sc. Mass Communication (19/20)

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Asalam alaikum waramatullahi wabarakatu my Dear brothers and sisters in Islam. It is not news in Nigeria that NYSC Scheme (National Youth Service Corp) is a compulsory one year program (If you're not above 30 years of age or exempted due to certain issues) organised for graduates of tertiary institutions across the country to come together to obey the clarion call.

This gathering is a mix of Nigerians from different ethnicity, regions, cultural background, socioeconomic background, and religious backgrounds with the aim and objectives (NYSC Scheme Decree No. 51, 1993) of; inculcating discipline in Nigerian youths, to remove prejudices, eliminate ignorance and confirm at first hand the many similarities among Nigerians of all ethnic groups, to enable Nigerian youths to acquire the spirit of self-reliance by encouraging them to develop skills for self-employment, to contribute to the accelerated growth of the national economy and to develop common ties among the Nigerian youths and promote national unity and integration.

The NYSC scheme is divided into 2 phases, these are; the 3 weeks of orientation camp and the 11 months of service to the community and nation at large.

The 3 weeks orientation camp program is arguably the most interesting as well as stressful part of the entire NYSC Scheme. Now, let us relate the activities in the orientation camp to daily activities as a Muslim.

National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) orientation camps in Nigeria are not the same, thus activities at each camp may be different. For example: what is allowed in Benue may not be allowed in Kano and vice versa. Prepare what to eat, though there is provision for food (provisions only or buy from Mami Market), it may not be enough or be your choice. Prepare what to wear; short and tight dresses are not our dress, especially for the female. Get dresses of that colour (especially white) and use them diplomatically. Remember, the best provision for the journey: (taqwa) and strengthen your Iman every moment.

Let us have an example of what a typical day looks like at the orientation camp. From 5 am to 8 am, Corp members are woken up for Morning meditation (if you like yourself, make sure you wake up as early as 3 am because you're not in your father's house! The bathrooms and toilets are not free!! Even water na struggle in some camps).

This gathering includes; admonishing corps members and morning exercises with every corps member assembled in their various platoons. At 9 am, all corp members are expected to be back after having breakfast and fixing their hygiene for 5 hours of lecture that comprises; skill acquisition, personal development lectures, and many more to equip corp members for the near future.

Subsequently, all corp members are assembled after lunch by 3 pm till 6 pm for sporting activities and then retire for dinner to resume again for social activities (pageantry, academic competitions, and lots more). You're obligated to attend all these activities except you prefer harassment from camp Soldiers that won't hesitate to send you back in an attempt to escape a gathering.

Muslim Corpers Association of Nigeria (MCAN), a visible and active body inaugurated during the 1978/1979 service year, with its National Headquarters in Mabushi, Abuja, and its branches all over the 36 States of the Federation, including the FCT, is on camp to guide, protect the rights and redress any form of injustice against the Muslims in camp. As a Muslim, you must register with MCAN as soon as you report to camp (don't get me wrong! All Muslims are under MCAN, but you should register for easy identification, and socialisation and be involved in all kinds of activities organised by the body).

My stay in camp was fruitful, All thanks to NYSC and MCAN. But for every success, there was a sacrifice: I FOLLOWED THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF NYSC. So, here are some tips/advice for y'all if you want to have a hitch-free and interesting stay on camp:

- Accept that you are alone and on your own.
- Always put Allah first in whatever you do and do not neglect your home training for the 3 weeks of freedom away from home
- Be friendly and approachable
- Never abandon your ibadah for whatever reason
- FOLLOW THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF NYSC. Even MCAN may not have a say if you deviate from the rules
- Be smart!!!! Be Quick
- Don't take nonsense. Be assertive
- Be Social and approachable
- Make friends.
- Respect that trumpet!!!!

- Partake in some of the NYSC activities. Trust me, they are interesting, apart from the SAED lecture (lol)

And as for the second phase of NYSC, I implore y'all to brace up, because it is a caricature of what the Labour Market looks like; different people, different characters, etc. May Allah make it easy. Allahuma Amin

On this note, I wish y'all a fruitfulness stay in camp whenever and wherever you want to serve, Bi idhnillah.

Byeeee



THE IDEAL PHONE

Written by Abdullah Solahudeen
300L Computer Sci. (FUNAAB) (20/21)

An ideal mobile phone satisfies the primary purpose for which it was procured. So, you have chosen to get yourself or a loved one a new smartphone. You probably have a few devices in mind. Still, it would be nice to consider some factors that allow us to maximise the value regarding the cost of purchasing one.

Of course, the first thing to consider is the available budget. This is the most significant constraint determining whether to settle for a low-end, midrange or go all the way for the creme de la creme of the premium end devices.

Several other variables can be considered after determining the budget, but I believe that specifying the purpose of the device should be next. Are you hoping to get the device for a child, casual or hardcore gaming, journaling or reading e-books, multimedia device, daily driver or a little bit of everything?

Many smartphones are marketed to have large RAMs and hundreds of megapixels, but this might be misleading as poorly optimised features would inadvertently lead to poor user experience. Large RAMs are excellent, no doubt, but they must be complemented with a good processor and optimised ROM.



Another potent myth in the mobile device sphere is more megapixels = better image quality. In today's world, that couldn't be farther from the truth. Having large megapixels would only leave you with large-sized pictures and missing important frames while the phone is struggling to capture all those pixels.

Mobile devices are usually divided into three categories: low-end, mid-range, and high-end or flagships for marketing purposes.

Low-end phones are budget-friendly devices with essential features and specifications to run day-to-day activities such as making calls and performing simple web activities. They are very accessible and primarily target third-world countries; therefore, low-end devices usually have large battery sizes to ensure extended usage in places with little power supply. The compromises are generally boring design with plastic material, low-resolution display, little to no software updates and low storage capabilities.

Low-end devices feature smaller RAM and slower processors, which usually lead to stuttering when multitasking and playing resource-intensive games. When going for a low-end device, I would recommend checking the benchmark scores of the processor. In most cases, Qualcomm chips edge their counterparts in this range.

2022 low-end recommendations

Redmi 9a/ Redmi 9c

Samsung (A32, A03s, A21, A22)

Midrange devices are the middle ground between premium feel and pocket-friendliness. A mid-range device is usually enough for the average user as a daily driver. It combines some of the features you get in a premium device such as glass build, higher resolution display, high screen refresh rate, great processor and more memory storage and other cool features without breaking the bank. Within this range, we still have low and upper midrange devices. Mid-range devices can handle most popular games, sometimes at a lower graphic quality. This has endeared it to most youths looking to participate in the latest action/adventure games but do not have the budget to splurge on high-end devices

2022 Mid-range recommendations

Low Mid-Range	Upper Mid-Range
Samsung A33	Samsung A53 5G
Redmi Note 11 Redmi Note 10	Xiaomi Note 11 pro Redmi 10T Poco X4
Moto G200	iPhone SE 2022

High-end Smartphones

The premium kings, the quality difference between this category and the rest is astonishing. They come packed with the best features technology of today offers, including the best processors, camera lens and features, higher refresh rates and display quality, and battery optimisations, amongst others. Each brand has a distinct feeling in its premium offering, Samsung with its highly interactive pen from the Note series, Pixel with its superb camera, which produces unbelievable output under all conditions, iPhones with an industry-leading processor and RAM management. If you intend to have the best features your money can get you, this is the range you go for and use comfortably for many years. While the mid-range and low-end smartphones offer great features, high-end devices surpass higher standards such as waterproof features, better device warranty, and updates. A premium phone will always feel premium no matter how many years go by.

2022 Premium recommendations

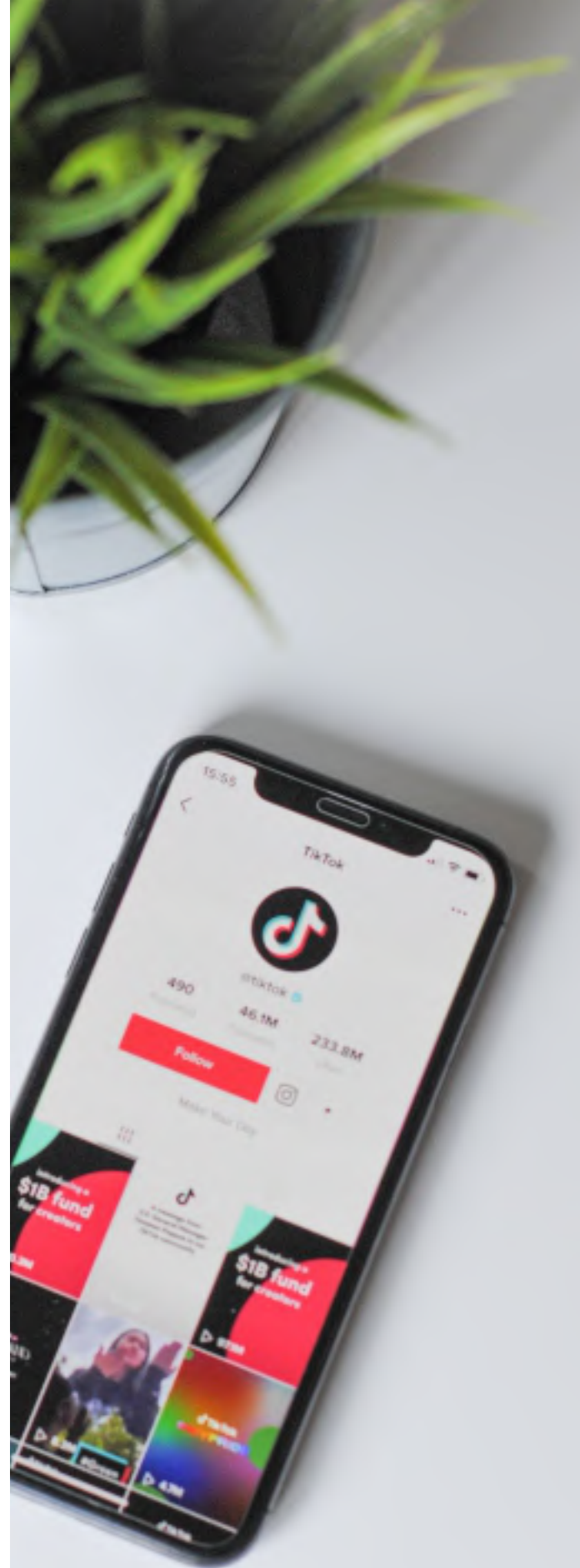
- iPhone 13 series
- Samsung S22 series
- Oneplus 10 series
- Xiaomi Mi 12
- Sony Xperia Pro-1

Side Notes:

If you intend to get a device for kids between ages 5 and 11, I would recommend getting them an educational tablet with parental safety to ensure that they are not exposed to harmful contents. Many cheap and sturdy tablets are out on the market for kids with preinstalled educational apps and media. A tablet around 9 inches is recommended to reduce eye strain and provide a better viewing experience. Amazon produces the best children tablets, check out Amazon Fire HD series.

Best Gaming Experience	Best Camera	Professional Phones
Asus ROG 5	Iphone 13 pro/ pro max	Samsung Note series
Black Shark 3	Pixel 6 pro	Sony Pro series
Razer Phone 2	Samsung S22 Ultra	
Nubia Red Magic 5g	Pixel 5a	

I hope this gives a little clarity on what to look out for when shopping for your next mobile device





FULFILLING FUN

Otubanjo Abdul-hameed Kayode
Editor-In-Chief MSSN LASU-EPE (20/21)

In the society we find ourselves in today, there are a lot of people feeling depressed and not having a fun life, but what are the ways to avoid this, what are the causes, and what can you do to have fun.

After our first semester exams, I played the most enjoyable football match I had ever played in a long time probably since junior secondary school. Not that I had not played football matches in years but as time went by it became less and less enjoyable. Through this occurrence, I started thinking about what made this match so different from the matches I had been playing up till then. One significant difference I noted was that the people I played with that day were that we all had a similar proficiency level in football (we were exceptionally good at kicking a ball but not playing football). Towards the end of the day when people truly good at football came the excitement we were getting from the game had reduced, bringing us to the first point of this article **“anything fun is best enjoyed with others on the same proficiency level as you.”**

Another example I would like to illustrate came on a particular day when I was playing chess online, and I had been on a losing streak. I had sought to retire for the day when a good friend of mine, AY, put through a message challenging me to some games of chess, after mercilessly defeating him I had the motivation to play more games that day, this brings us to the second point

“although a lot of people will tell you everything is not about winning but the fact remains that a minimum level of success is required to enjoy an activity truly and a lack of it might make a once enjoyable activity a boring one, the point here is everybody loves winning and sometimes you might need to play a weaker player or change the settings to remind yourself how winning looks like and what it is. ”

The questions that may be going through your mind include questions like this used to be fun but I do not enjoy it anymore, everybody is doing this but I do not enjoy it. Let's go over these 2 scenarios.

Why do you not enjoy this particular activity anymore?

The first cause of the problem can be due to a lot of improvement from the people around you and also vice versa meaning you being exponentially better than people around you, both issues can be solved easily by learning either by improving yourself or teaching and inspiring people to be better than what they do wrapping this up with a story of a friend that used to play chess a lot in school and loved it so much only for him to experience utter beaten at the mercy of one of his brothers and another of a friend that taught his other friend chess and stopped playing chess because his former student was now better than him. In summary, always try to improve in whatever activity you partake in and improve the people around you.

The second possible cause of the problem is a new environment, and personal growth and development, a good example is somebody that likes going out but upon schooling in Epe where there are not many places to go to and the few that are available might be too stressful or expensive, for this particular issue you can try and do more research on where to go or convince your friends to go with you to lessen the stress and if you are one of the people schooling in Epe, pray for more development to Epe. As regards growth there are a lot of activities that will eventually need to be curtailed or expelled when trying to improve yourself. My advice for this category is to give yourself periodic breaks and rest to avoid living a life that just feels blanded.

Everybody is doing these but I do not enjoy it?

Everybody doing something does not necessarily mean it is compulsory to enjoy it but there might be some factors influencing your emotions and desire (unless it is football, just kidding though but seriously at least try to like it). If you are from a different environment to the people in question, you don't need to bother yourself as it is perfectly normal for you not to enjoy it because of your different setting.

MAXIMISING MAXIMUM FROM MINIMUM

With some of these suggestions, you can get the most out of doing any little activity you do.

#Activity with friends: The same activity done with close friends would exponentially increase the fun out of almost anything from activities like cleaning or cooking which may not be exactly fun to research work, design or even coding. To put into perspective a point relating to a point given above the chess community at my level grew higher because all of us were trying to be able to play against our friends.

Multiplayer Activities and Player Communities: If you look at the state play of almost all current games they are always trying to pit players against each other and create gamer communities, this is not coincidental but a planned strategy which has been proven to work from time to time. The creation of a community allows people to share ideas, communicate with each other, and share opportunities with each other essentially creating a type of bond between them which could lead to friendship at times.

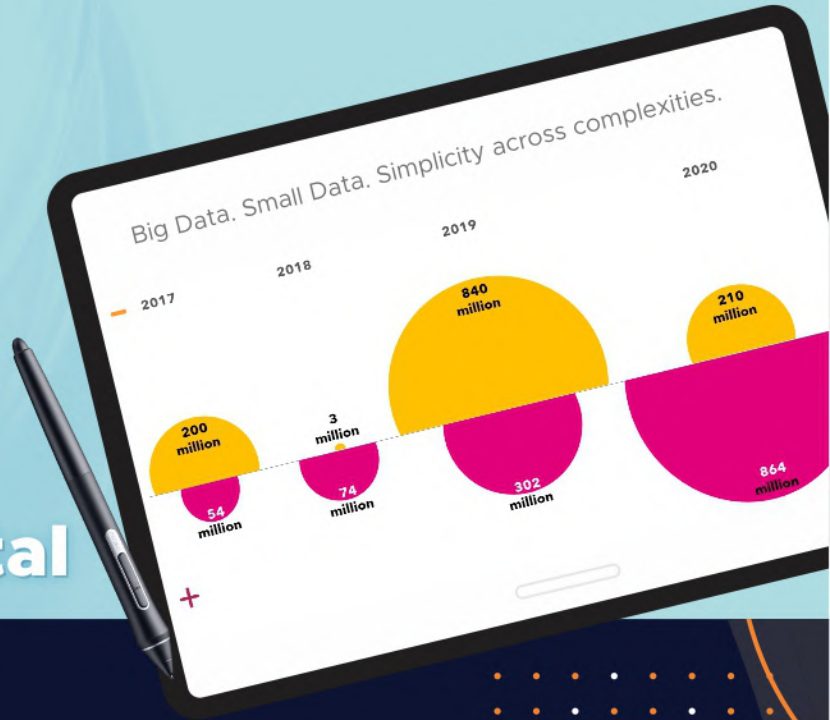
Some activities Explore places, reading wide and making new friends, join communities Humans are social creatures and should behave such.

The art of fulfilling fun is not a definitive process that exists only in black and white but something that as you live life you discover new and creative ways in which to fulfil it, one thing we should all do which we don't do is jot down either mentally but best written down somewhere the best experiences we have ever had, any time you have a memorable experience ask yourself some of this questions and put down the answers, what was I doing, with who was it and where was it. This allows us to know ourselves well, thus knowing what is best for us.



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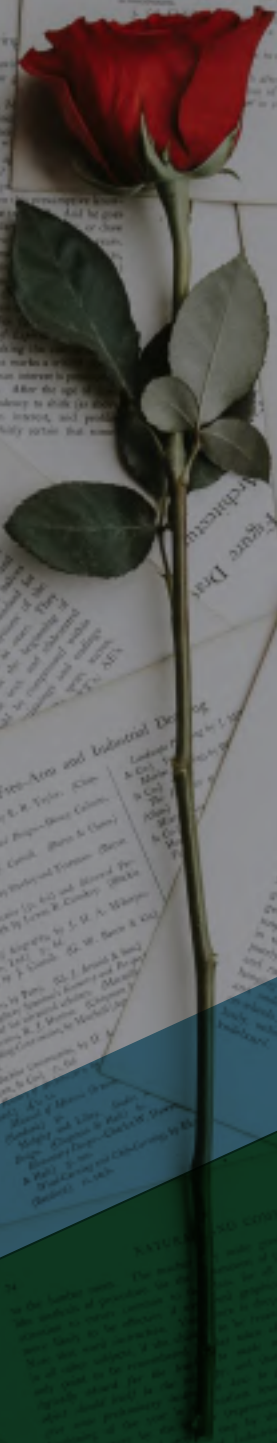
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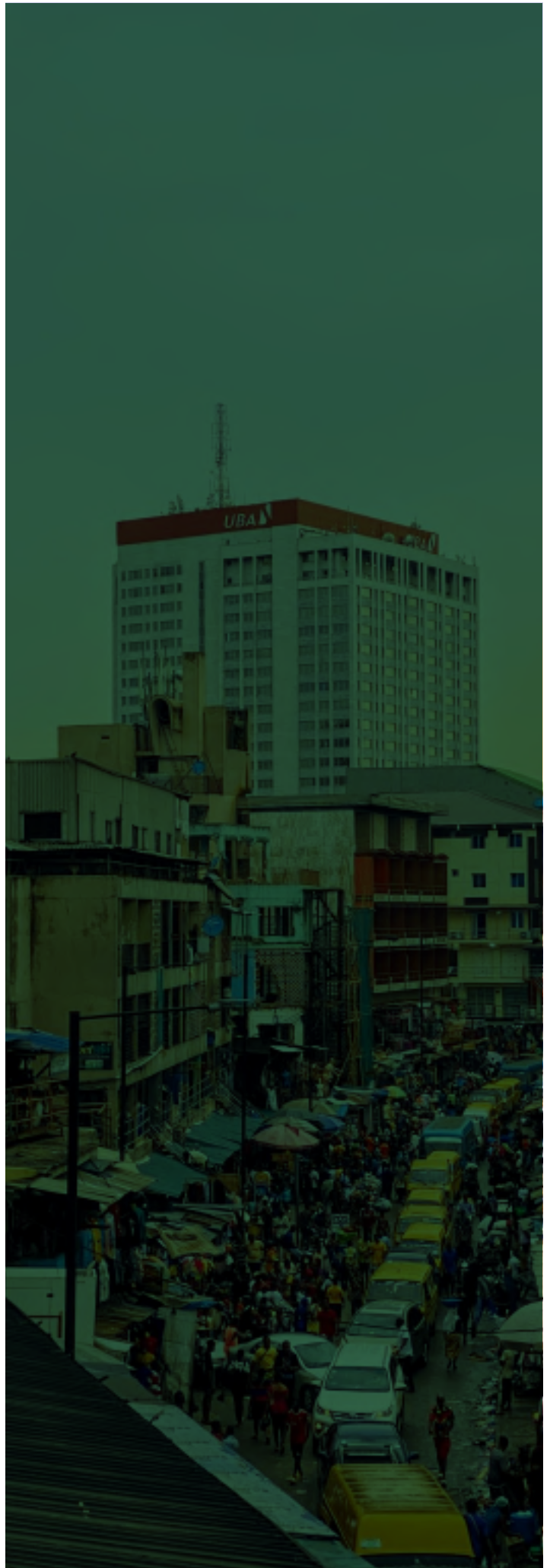


LIVING ABOVE THE BOTTOM LINE

*Cheers to the good life,
Greatness is to the conscious,
Achievement is to the hardworking,
Success for the consistent,
Living above the line.*

*There's a target for all,
Ours is raising the bars,
Bridging the gap for success,
Maintaining the standard,
Alone, along Side challenges,
Is the price for our Greatness.*

*Little or big there's a difference,
A difference we can make,
Individually towards success,
Together towards Greatness,
For there we live,
Above the bottom line.*





I PROMISED ALLAH MY OBEDIENCE

*This poem is between Allah and me.
The last time I promised Him my obedience,
I was like a cat held at the back of the neck. Powerless.
Gentility became an unwanted norm. Holding on
till my legs would grab ground again
and my hidden claws would see the limelight
and my incisors would leave marks on preys.*

*Or like a caged bird / with / his useless feathers.
The sky / remained vast as nature dictated / for her,
but flying across / the wide blue yonder / was an
abomination.*

*Or I was / like a hard ground / waiting for the sky's
ejaculation.
My green leaves / were dying of thirst and /
old age / visited them / while they were young.
Or what do you call it / when a child grows grey hairs?
/
My green leaves / transformed into yellow / at a
young age.*

*Then I asked my shaggy self-portrait in the mirror:
"How did you get here?"
The body that detest being touched by the ablution
water.
The forehead that stopped kissing the ground.
The face that refused to face the Kaaba.
The tongue that forsaken the revelation of his creator.*

**Moshkur Ajikobi (fondly called P-Seven)
Student of English language
Lagos State University.**

ALIVE IS A PLACE

*The photograph on the wall seem not to fade
life is like this side and the other side
Your loved ones left like a running mist, their shadows
whittled your sleep every dark night
you dwelt in the trachea of wounded memories
your mind is ectopic to dreadly thoughts*

if the spider could speak, it will

tell you the might it takes before

it settles in its own abode. 'you will

be fine', says a man with a walking stick

You said, 'kissing the dust is another way

of escaping the pains in your body'

*but little tinders will sparks, new moon shall rise, new
flowers shall blossom*

The litanies in your song about breaking

waves will reach the four corners of life

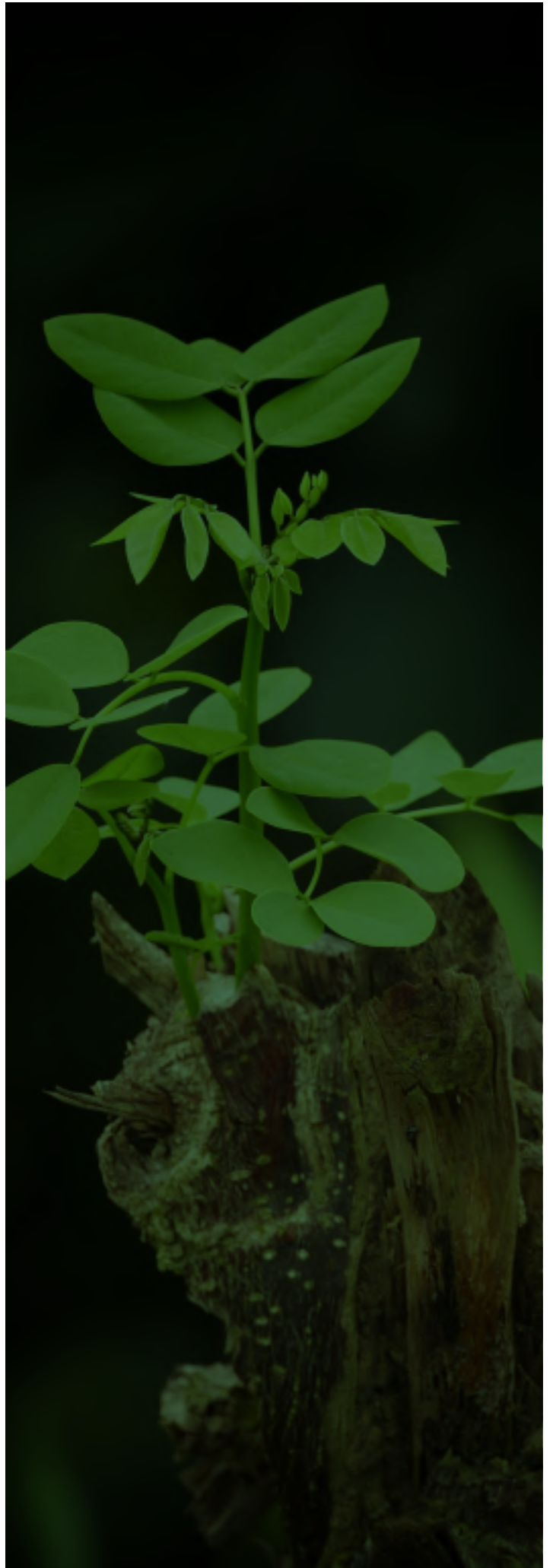
make your feet firm on the rock of hope

truly, hope is another universe of every man

Alive, too, is a paradise, a rivulet

of gold, a place, a place

© **Otun Islamiyya**





THE SLEEP OF A NOBLE MAN

*When everyone sleeps
Their hearts pound serially
Facing reality of what they belied
Regretting every moment of existence.*

*But when noblemen sleep
Their hearts meet tranquility
That which they longed for,
Certifying their struggles.*

*The world is but an ephemeral dwelling
Where existence get terminated,
And within twinkle of an eye
One will go to sleep.*

Don't sleep but like a noble man!

*When in distress,
They turn to the Maker
And when in euphoria
They recognize the benefactor.*

© **Mujaahid**

VIRGINITY IS DIGNITY

That one thing that gives you confident and makes you prominent.

Virginity is one thing that beautifies you beautifully. That thing you treasure without being pressured

But then what does all this dignity turn into now! It turns vanity that we didn't even care to lose insanity. Now we offer our respectability for Perishability.

We are all sucked!!

LIFE SUCKS

How do you express yourself when you are down??

Did I just hear someone throwing that question back to me Hmm, I cry! I cry!! Like I literally cry over everything. I cry to my satisfaction but then not to myself or any of Allah's creatures

I cry to Allah cos he's definitely gonna wipe off my tears

LET'S SAY A SHORT STORY

Nobody: How do you feel when your mates are doing better than you?

Me: I feel great! Cos all that matters to me is whom I am today, cos I am definitely better than yesterday which shows how great I am moving similarly, Ain't in competition with no one. I just want to be better than yesterday

© **Aisha Ewa-Ade Popoola**

MASTER OF MY FATE

"If you think you are beaten, you are,

If you think you dare not, you don't.

If you like to win, but you think you can't,

It is almost certain you won't.

"If you think you'll lose, you're lost,

For out in the world we find,

Success begins with a fellow 's will,

It's all in the state of mind.

"If you think you are outclassed, you are,

You've got to think high to rise,

You've got to be sure of yourself before

You can ever win a prize.

"Life's battles don't always go,

To the stronger or faster man,

But soon or late the man who wins,

Is the man WHO THINKS HE CAN!"

© **Yusuf Ahmad**

SHORTS

08





DEAR SISTERS

Makanjuola Fadheelah
Secretary to the Editorial Board (20/21)

Have you ever been out just doing your own thing and then someone notices you and decides to make a comment about you. Perhaps the way you walk, dress or maybe how you relate with others. And then you move from mindlessly representing just yourself, you begin to hear phrases like; "All those Muslim sisters...". You look around and its just you in the hijab. You wonder where the rest of the Muslim sisters are.

"All those Muslim sisters are pretty"
"That's how those Muslims act"
"All those sisters get angry easily"
"Those Muslims are the best to do business with"

My dear Sister, just from your one action, you define the outlook of Islam,
You represent me, you represent us, you represent that little girl born yesterday,
The impression you leave as a Muslim woman, creates opportunities for somebody or closes some.

In a situation where you make a mistake, err or are caught in a compromising situation, this is natural for you're only human, you're not perfect, just striving. But when they react, everyone gasps like it's the most outrageous thing.

"Her hijab is just a pretense" they say
Humiliated, you feel.

If only you weren't wearing the hijab, they wouldn't know you're a Muslim and they wouldn't judge so harshly.

Don't get me wrong, this judgement goes for all Muslims but its harder still on the sisters.

It's alright though, it's not a curse,
It's just because; you have an identification
One that announces to everyone

"I am not like others, I am a servant of Allah"
And my dear, the servants of Allah are the best in character.

So take this judgement as a wake up call, as a test and like the striver you are, aim to get better, be better.

You're not like everyone else really,
Allah has already placed you;

"Above the Bottom Line"

ON RIGHTING A WRONG: VENGEANCE VS. JUSTICE

*Written by Esther Oluwatoyin Mulero
Faculty of Sciences (20/21)
Lagos State University*

The age-old question: Where should one draw the line between seeking justice and wanting retribution?

While a person grieves, most times a spark of anger comes to life and he wants nothing more than the knowledge that the cause of his grief, if human, is feeling the same pain that he feels. Rationally, he seeks justice.

Moreover, in a world like ours where the law is mostly upheld for the rich and powerful, how does the aggrieved get justice? And when justice isn't forthcoming, is seeking retribution; an eye for an eye such an evil thing?

Living above the bottom line probably implies being beyond it all; the corruption, malice, and all that's evil of this world. But is there such a person? And if there is, does this leave us with a third option? Religion and the faith that is often found therein. Thus, the third option is leaving it all to an Unseen Being to judge; here or in the afterlife, if such exists. But then, who after any devastating loss caused by an avoidable element would want to? In the end, it doesn't matter. Why?

Justice, if it were so perfect, wouldn't leave us with repeat offenders. Vengeance won't undo wrongdoing.

But in religion, we find peace, at least a semblance of Peace; strength to move on, and the belief that there is Someone, Something bigger than all of us watching, and would one day balance the scales





WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BE?

Abdul-Azeez AbdulAzeez Olumide
B.Sc. Mechanical Engineering (19/20)
Lagos State University

I am asking how you plan to live your life every day, how are you going to respond when you don't get all those things you've planned? How are you going to feel when the world seems to be against you? how are you going to feel when everything seems wrong?

These are the moments that define you, not the day you gain admission into the university, not the day you win student or personality of the year. not the day you get honorary awards, not the day you graduate, and not the day you get a good job. But the time that forces you to scrape and stand and fight just to get through every of this moment, the moment when you get knocked down and you are wondering whether all of it was even worth it to get get back up and continue grinding see those are the times when you gotta ask yourself. "Who am I going to be?!!!

This isn't just some platitude about building character. In recent years we've seen that skills like resilience and conscientiousness are as important to your success as your exams/test score even your reasoning/ Intelligent quotient (IQ)

If you are willing to dig deep If you are willing to pick yourself up when you fall, if you are willing to always try and try again if you are willing to work and work until your weaknesses become your strength, then you'll develop a set of skills that you can build and apply to any situation you might find yourself in, any jobs you might have any crises you might encounter but you gotta make that choice. You need to start and figure out how you are going to Create that new space, that new environment, that new community for yourself, understand that when challenges come your way all you have to do is to think deep, press further, and confront all of those challenges.

As Dr. Martin Luther King jr has said "you don't get to the promised land without going through the wilderness" it is life's constant. Yoruba will say ọmọ toma ga ẹṣẹ é máa tinrin.

A hand holding a microphone, illuminated with blue and orange light. The microphone has a blue mesh grille and a black handle. The background is dark with a blue and orange glow. The text 'Q&A SESSION' is overlaid in white on a dark grey horizontal band.

Q&A SESSION

09

- 1.** As Salaam alaekum Wa Rahmatullah Wa barakatuh, Could you briefly introduce yourself to us
- 2.** What is your definition of living above the bottom line.
- 3.** What has been your greatest challenge towards living above the bottom line.
 - Career wise
 - Education wise
 - Spiritual wise
- 4.** What professional goals have you set for yourself?
- 5.** What do you enjoy most about your education and career?
- 6.** How do you handle studying under pressure and working under pressure?
- 7.** Most times people think they are the only ones that face failure, could you tell us about a fail you had in the past and how you cope and handle fails and disappointments
- 8.** What academic and career achievements and any other random achievement do you hope to accomplish by the time you graduate?
- 9.** What has been your biggest academic achievement and career achievement?
- 10.** What kinds of extracurricular activities do you participate in?
- 11.** What contributions have you made to your campus community?
- 12.** What aspects of your studies do you enjoy most?
- 13.** How has MSSN contributed to your academic success?



Abdul-Azeez AbdulAzeez Olumide

1. My name is Abdul-Azeez AbdulAzeez Olumide, I am a creative and innovative graduate of Mechanical engineering with great passion for humanity, community, and global development. I have the ability of working with a competitive, challenging and cutting-edge firm, thereby enhancing the company's productivity and reputation.

2. Whenever we hear the phrase "the bottom line," we often think of benefits, profits and money. But there's much more to the bottom line than naira or dollars signs. The bottom line you lead with will make a huge impact in your life. Well as for me living above the bottom is living above the standards you've drawn out for yourself ; financially, morally, spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally.

3. Basically I will say the environment where we found our self it isn't really helping in every aspect. In the 3 wises stated as a case study, I am still living below my bottom line as I haven't gotten to that stage where I can boastfully say yes I have achieved a lot in the course of my career and Education. And frankly speaking I am not content with my level of spirituality. I need to get closer to MY CREATOR.

4. Smiles professional goals honestly speaking my goals are so unlimited, I learn every I try new things everyday. Let me just say I want to be one of the top leading professional engineers in the whole world by 2035. How I will get there only GOD knows but one thing I know is I will get there as far as the owner of my life hasn't taken it.

5. Putting everything I learn into practice. I see engineering as not just a paper work but more of field work and experience. Doing this gives me more insight about what I'm being taught or what I read. It broadens my thinking and shows me how those theories, mechanisms, designs and all can be applied to solve real life problems (creative and innovative thinking) . I must say it gets better and clearer on a daily basis.

6. I will say most of my days in school are being done under pressure, but instead of allowing that to disturb my work and academics, I stroke down plans,

create flexible schedules, prioritize each of my works and I avoid wasting time on any of them. that's all

7. Failure doesn't mean the end. It tells you to try harder. I had many failures in every aspect of my life and I must say those are the moments that built me. The only academic failure I had was in a 300l course, I wouldn't want to talk about anyways. Well I will just advise you to find out the reason behind the failure, examination malpractice, poor preparation or mistakes while answering the exam questions, understand that first and then study more and retake the examination.

8. As much as possible awards and honors I deserve, Bsc Mechanical engineering. tho I graduated already

9. I represented my school and faculty in 5 different competition, I received 21 AWARDS, HONORS I was also ranked as one of the 100 Most reputable student of lagos state university and I was also awarded by his imperial majesty HIM ooni Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi ojaja II the Ooni of ife. Amongst others.

10. A lot of activities though I didn't really pick interest in the student unionism it was a no no for me. I was an active member of Muslim student society of Nigeria Epe campus, member of plugging Nigeria lasu, campus coordinator SDGsAct Lagos, An officer of the Naval CADET corps lasu command, taekwando group and lots.

11. I contributed significantly well to my campus community. It is unarguable, academically, financially, and developmentally.

12. Every aspect of it.. Most especially machine design, Machine drawing, practicals and projects.

13. MSSN contributed a lot to my academic success with the help of tutorials, group reading, night reading, steadfastness and all.

Abdurrahman Abolaji

1. My Name is Abdurrahman Abolaji, a final year Electronic and Computer Engineering Student, Lagos State University, Epe Campus. I am also a Front-End Developer.

2. I'd define the bottom line as the bare minimum, the least fulfilling, but still adequate condition, that is required, acceptable, or suitable for a purpose. To me, living above the bottom line would mean, living above this minimum. It would mean as Muslims, striving for the best, to be the best, aiming high, and never settling for the least in all that we do. Allah mentions we Muslims as the best of mankind, so why settle for the least when we can be the best?.

3. Career-wise - I think I have an unhealthy attachment to my comfort zone
Education-wise - Occasional lack of focus and motivation.
Spiritual-wise - This, I believe, is the most significant aspect of living above the bottom line. My main challenge has to be lack of adequate knowledge, as there is a recurring need to learn more and more about Islam.

4. The following are my short-term professional goals:

- Increase my core front-end skills.
- Take a professional back-end course and earn a certificate.
- Improve my time-management skills.
- Improve my collaboration and networking skills.

Long term goals:

Become a full-stack developer. However, with the ever-increasing technological advancements, this is subject to change.

5. When you take into consideration the fact that education is beyond just academics, my education on this campus has granted me the opportunity to meet some of the most amazing, smartest and kindest persons in my life. Not just meet them, but relate with them, learn from them, and draw inspiration from them as well. The fact that we got here as strangers and will be leaving as nothing short of brothers for life, that's a huge Win for me.

Career-wise, I enjoy the fact that the software

development field is a field of continuous, non-stop learning, a field that serves as a creative outlet for me and millions of others, coupled with the flexibility of remote work, high demand, and tantalizing salary.

6. I know people who relish working under pressure, it literally enhances their productivity. I also know those who cannot work or study under pressure, it destabilizes them. For me, I take a middle course, I do not love pressure, and neither do I hate it. However, I try as much as possible to avoid studying and working without pressure.

I do this by creating to-do lists, prioritizing my tasks, and even delegating them wherever possible. Tasks that I'm unable to complete in a day, basically become my first task for the next day. This might not be applicable to everybody though, that's why it's always important to know what works for you.

In addition, sometimes, some things are out of my control, and I have to work under pressure just to meet a set target or deadline. In scenarios like this, I just try to focus on the task at hand, and not necessarily the outcome, as this helps to ease my anxiety.

7. Oh Yes! I failed Engineering Drawing in 200L. In fact, I think I knew my fate immediately after I saw the questions. It was that bad, and I remember that I mulled over it for a couple of days.

However, I learned that "Failure isn't a dead-end, it's only a temporary detour".

With that, and several other L's I have taken, I have come to the realization that indeed, contrary to the popular saying that "Time heals", it's actually coming to terms with the decree of Allah that heals. Every other thing is just putting the cart before the horse. So whenever I take any L, I understand that it's Allah's decree, so I learn from my errors, dust myself off and say: "We go again!", and I think you should too.

8. Academic-wise, I hope to graduate with an amazing CGPA.

Career-wise - probably kickstart a back-end course.

Random achievement - I think I'd like to treat some certain persons to iftar or maybe dinner sha, so that they can realize how much of a wonderful cook I am. I'll be fulfilled with that, I guess

8. The number one thing I hoped to achieve was ensuring Agric students can contest freely on this campus and be elected into leadership positions in Epe campus, Alhamdulillah. It didn't happen now but definitely it has been finalized and will kick off from next session.

9. Academic achievement, not having a carryover throughout my academic year. In this kind of environment we are, you'll understand why this is an achievement. Career, having about 3 years working experience before graduation

10. Student union, marketing, event planning and business development

11. Leadership wise, I would say I have done my part to contributing to the affairs of this campus community. Against all odds, as the president of NAAS-LASU, our administration raised school fees for some of our students who had challenges with that, we organized the first dean's cup, amongst others. I have also been opportune to contribute my time and resources towards the development of MSSN on this campus.

12. Might sound weird but I enjoy attending class. That's because I learn better while it's been thought firsthand by the lecturers

13. It has helped shaped how I see academics, I have been challenged to do better generally in my academics when you see what your mates are doing academically, especially in the Muslim community

Alabi Oluwatosin Muhammed

1. I am Alabi Oluwatosin Muhammed, a final year student in the department of mechanical engineering, Lagos state university Epe campus. I am an advocate for peace and a lover of Islamic culture and values.

2. I would say living above the bottom line is one of the major determinants of good decision making. The first step is knowing your bottom line which is setting a standard for yourself as regards all spheres of life ranging from financial spending, Job requirement, Career prospect, Academic pursuit, Marital selections etc.

Setting a standard(bottom line) it will enhance making decisions that will ensure living above those chosen bottom lines is an easy feat to accomplish.

There are several ways to live above the bottom lines as it applies to different decisions for example as a student politician you can decide that you only want to feature as a representative in the apex structure of the school leadership which controls faculty and department leadership after setting this standard all your political decision, manipulations and strategies from the beginning will go towards those direction and these applies to every other sphere of our life. The major thing I will repeat is to set standards for yourself

3. My greatest challenge towards living above the bottom line career-wise I will say is too much community responsibility that is making it so hard to face a career path strictly

But on education wise I can say I have tried my best to maintain a standard for myself but I have been faced with challenges that every other students face too like excessive class activities, practical , packed timetable , very fast academic calendars, strikes etc Challenges face spiritual are due to low level of religious knowledge and also not always being among the conscious Muslims.

4. Well as regard professional goals I am currently a student of data analytics and I am still threading this path to ensure I become an expert in it ,secondly I am an automobile enthusiast with high knowledge of repairs and service of automobile parts .I have also taken a course that relates to leadership and I have theoretical and practical experience in leadership

5. What I enjoyed most about my education and career is the people I have met all through my journey pursuing this career and education ranging from lecturers, colleagues etc.

I value people a lot and I have leverage on them to achieve a lot.

6. I wouldn't say studying or working under pressure should be a strength because I feel it reduces productivity but I love to plan better for something I am expected to do. If it now warrants working or studying under pressure I won't have a choice but my major goal will only be to achieve the expected result so ensuring the goal is achieved is my way of working under pressure

7. Well we have all failed in the past but as Muslims, we have been trained to believe that any disappointment that comes our way has been destined by Allah so this is what I grew up with.

The last time I remembered I fail was when I write ssce exams 4 times before making it to the university, I gained admission to Lagos state university and I couldn't pass the clearance because I submitted a GCE Result I wrote that same year which according to Lasu laws it is not acceptable. After seeking admission for so many years and on the day of clearance I was given a rejection letter because of the above reason, I could help with the several thoughts that came through my head immediately I just had to go to a silent place and I was just there for several hours with nothing good coming to my head but at the I just accepted my fate and I went home with a mindset to prepare for another jamb and start seeking another admission and fortunately for me I had 256 in the next jamb and I gained admission with my name being the second name on the merit list without any external support or connections.

8. The academic achievement I hope to achieve on graduation is simply to graduate as a first-class student Insha Allah and afterwards securing scholarship to have my MSC and PHD abroad .

If I would love to work anywhere it must be an environment that give more rooms for self-development and leadership

9. My biggest academic achievement is maintaining a first-class CGPA and by the will of Allah, I hope to graduate with it.

10. I participate in several extra curricular activities such

- a) Student unionism
- b) Football
- c) Mssn activities
- d) Mentorship

11. I have made several contributions to my campus community in several ways I can't even count

- a) I was the head of the class for over 400 engineering students in my first year on campus
- b) I represented my faculty as an honourable member in the student's Parliamentary council
- c) Moving forward I became the welfare director of the students union of Epe campus seeing to the affairs of over 1000 students as regard providing water, electricity and other basic amenities required for the peaceful living of the students on campus
- d) I was opportune to handle all the financial proceedings of MSSN EPE Campus as the society financial secretary for an academic session and many more

In all these positions I ensured I contributed what is required of me as my deliverables and alhamdulillah I was not found wanting in any.

12. The aspect of my study I enjoyed most is the area that relates to material science as this is the aspect I am working on for my final year project

13. If I am to appreciate MSSN I don't think there is any quantifiable way I can do that but MSSN has been highly instrumental to my life as a whole not even academically alone but they have ensured there is always a platform to ensure academic success for every one of us ranging from tutorials, success duas, platforms for the night and competitive readings, Networking sound students with average students, creating mentorship schemes, organising seminars etc
May Allah bless everyone that has always been contributing to ensuring MSSN activities are successful.

Abdurrahman Thanni

1. Abdurrahman Thanni is an Undergraduate in his final year, studying Chemical and Polymer Engineering. He is also a Digital Marketing professional.

2. Living above the bottom line to me could simply mean positioning oneself beyond the rear - A factor to surpassing complacency. Also, setting and resetting the mindset for growth and sustainability outside the scope of liberal thoughts. Summarily, upscaling.

3. The following are from amongst the greatest challenges:
Career-wise - Resources, Mentorship, and Exposure.
Education-wise - Lack of Information!
Spiritual wise - Adulterated knowledge.

4. (i) Learning from the best in every sector I find myself.
(ii) Aiming to be the best
(iii) Utilizing every moment to connect with like minds.
(iv) Identifying a problem and then proffering a solution.

5. My education and the career I have chosen are not congruous but the thing I have seen to be valued the most is how well the administrative part of education has projected me in the workspace.

6. Studying under pressure will only mean I have taken my time to study beforehand however measures to tackle late preparation is a driving factor. On the other hand, working under pressure isn't what I hope to practice - More workload either means more helping hands or longer deadlines to ensure productivity.

7. Like the popular parlance; Failure is a part of a success story; however, one should learn from failures and make necessary amends vis-a-vis adjustment.

8. Repositioning to either focus on Education and/or Career as a source of income and knowledge.

9. I can't categorically pinpoint my biggest academic achievement, but it's a great fit to still exist in its realm. Career achievement is the fact that I'm already involved in that space even as an undergraduate.

10. Public Relations, Sport (Football and Tennis), Volunteering

11. I have engaged in several Extracurricular activities, and it has been a platform for me to impart one way or the other. I can't measurably quantify.

12. It's versatility and opportunities.

13. The intuitive programs and excellent tutorials organized by MSSN have helped immeasurably in quenching the fear of complete failure.

Ahmad Aminah Abike

1. I am Ahmad Aminah Abike, a final year student of Lagos State University, studying biochemistry. I enjoy traveling, watching football matches and spending time with my family. I also love baking at my convenience.

2. To me, living above the bottom line means doing things extraordinarily, beyond the usual standards of life.

3. Career wise, I'm just starting to build my career, so, I can't say that I've scaled the bottom line. There's still a long way to go.

Education wise, getting to a reasonable level in the field of biochemistry is a challenge on it's own. Alhamdulillah, I can confidently say I've been able to achieve that.

Spiritual wise. Ordinarily, a Muslimah is seen as a second class citizen in the society so the challenges are always there. Therefore, once you go above the bottom line, you're bound to face discrimination, intimidation and so on

4.

- Have a mentor
- Get Internships
- Grow my network
- Take courses to learn certain skills
- Obtain higher degrees in areas of interest
- And lots more...

5. So far, it's my undergraduate project. I worked in the lab and completed a research project involving liver function tests and lipid profile. We worked on albino wistar rats and it was an interesting experience.

6.Wow. It's really not easy combining both. I just make sure I do necessary things so that one task doesn't affect the other and I won't blame myself at the end of the day.

7. Yeah, my 300l first semester result wasn't so good. My CGPA dropped drastically and I was nervous I might not finish with a second class upper because I performed way below expectations in many of my courses. I didn't talk to anyone about it just pushed myself to do better in the next one and

Alhamdulillah, I did.

I'm the type that doesn't discuss my failure or disappointments with anyone, I just sort myself out and regain my balance.

8.

- In academics, aiming to finish with a grade I'd be proud to say I accomplished. Also, to publish my research paper on international platforms.
- I plan to be a renowned public health professional who will contribute significantly to improve the health of the people.
- I hope to finish memorizing the Quran and the peak of my achievements will be to be united with my loved ones in Jannah.

9. To have been able to successfully navigate biochemistry despite the 'inhibitors' on the pathway

10. Sports and student unionism

11. Alhamdulillah, I've been able to Impact one or more lives during my stay on campus. Also, I volunteered with other team members to solve the challenges of students on campus as it relate to their accommodation and other welfarism in the university.

12. Public health, Forensic science and Food biochemistry

13. I'm motivated to achieve excellence when I see her members achieving great feats and even leaders despite the work pressure.

Oshinkoya Masturah Abiodun

- 1.** I am Oshinkoya Masturah Abiodun, an indigene of ikorodu, Lagos State, A graduate of chemical and polymer engineering, Lagos State University.
- 2.** Living above the bottom line to me is being exceptional in everything we do and our way of life, it also means living above the limits that has been set or records that has been achieved by a particular person or people.
- 3.** My challenge towards living above the bottom line is the society we are in today, they discriminate alot interms of careers. For example, being an Hijabi engineering student, when I went for my industrial training, I was told I couldn't use my hijab upon turning the hijab inside my lab coat, they started comparing me with other Muslims that uses cap that they are also Muslims, but Alhamdullillah I was allowed to use my hijab. Since that day I kept wondering how life after school would be in terms of job because of discrimination. I also faced some challenges at home based on my spiritual life, they sometimes see me as an extremist because i'm trying to live above the bottom line. They say things like "Is it not the Islam they have been practicing before I was born that I am practicing" but Alhamdullillah Allah has been with me all through.
- 4.** Due to the discrimination we are facing as an Hijabi, the professional goal i have set for myself is to become a software developer working remotely.
- 5.** What I enjoyed most about my education and career is determination, self-reliance and Hard-working.
- 6.**Let me say I have gotten used to working under pressure since childhood. All you have to do is proper planning.
- 7.** I experienced failure before I gained admission and even when I was an undergraduate. Before I gained admission, our school's Waec results was cancelled for that year and I had already obtained Lagos State college of health form with the hope that I'm going to pass my Waec but Allah is the best planner I was given an admission to study pharmaceutical technology but I didn't have SSc

results, I didn't let it get me down as I sat for external Waec the following year really prepared and prayed a lot. I obtained jamb that year again though I used awaiting result I was given admission to study pharmaceutical technology in Moshood Abiola polytechnic but when my Waec result came out it was held again and was later released but my biology was cancelled which means the admission for that year became a waste because I couldn't go for that course because of biology. I was sad but didn't let it stop me from performing solat. I said to myself that "I will enter University the following year" the third jamb that I obtained I got it myself because I felt ashamed of myself. Alhamdulillah, it was that jamb that fetched me admission into University. The failure I experienced as an undergraduate happened when I got to 2001. I had 2 carryovers in the same semester. That was my first carryover. I told myself that will be my first and last carryover. I registered the carryovers the next session and really studied Alhamdulillah for them and had B in the two carryovers. What I want you to deduce from this my story is never give up, keep on trying,be prayerful and steadfast.

- 8.** I'm working towards getting my master degree and also to be in a position to speak for Hijabites job seekers.
- 9.** My biggest achievement is being a muslimah Engineer.
- 10.** The extracurricular activities I participate in is Mssn.
- 11.** I was amongst those that went for protest for provision of a new Generator for our campus in 2017.
- 12.** Working from home.
- 13.** Mssn really contributed to my success by organizing tutorials, seminars and how to merge spirituality with academics. Thanks to Mssn for the training it gave me.

Idowu Sodiq

1. To keep this as simple and short as possible, I am Idowu Sodiq, a young and energetic individual curiously passionate about imparting and creatively delivering value.

2. "Living above the bottom line" is a concept which I will personally define as constantly working towards being the best version of yourself. It's just basically striving to be better across any space or field you find yourself.

3. Knowledge acquisition, the constant need to always update your knowledge to stay relevant is honestly very challenging.

4. Short term:

- Get certified as a Product and Project Manager
- Pursue an ICAN
- Work with a global startup

Long term:

- I dream to build professional expertise across various disciplines so I can leverage that to grow multiple potentials and solve problems with technology.

5. Education? I haven't figured one out yet, probably the fact that I got to meet very amazing individuals like Abolaji Abdurrahman who comes to my aid whenever I need to study smartly is one thing I find interesting. It relieves me of stress and helps me understand the importance of moving with those who are academically sound.

Career: I like the fact that my role as a product manager involves a work schedule that resonates with my abilities. It makes me do things with less pressure and I equally enjoy managing and assigning tasks to an independent and cross-functional team which exposes me to learning from various individuals with varying expertise.

6. Working under pressure has a lot to do with working with constraints which are often outside of your control, but to make this more relatable working under pressure can only happen when you are already out of time and there's a deadline you

need to meet up with. This is honestly a situation I try to avoid but overtime has become an usual habit not because I do not prioritize my schedule but rather because I run multiple activities simultaneously. My biggest hack to working under pressure is that I try to remain as calm as possible. This enables me to understand the task ahead and stay focused on what needs to be accomplished. Then I leverage working and engaging people who I need to help me solve the problems that are beyond my capacity.

7. Failure is inevitable and they often prepare and motivate us to learn quickly and make better decisions. What is most important is accepting your failures and picking lesson from them to help you become better. Every successful individual at some point in time battled with some downs (failures) but they were smart enough to take advantage of the situation.

One of the failures I would love to share was my academic experience at the Lagos State Polytechnic. I had a carry over which made my (GPA) fall within the lower credit score, this motivated me to question my ability and prepare harder at subsequent semesters. I graduated with a Distinction Honors, an academic scale only three amongst a class of about 81 students was able to achieve.

8.

- Academic: LOL... I want to graduate with a very good CGPA.
- Career: Secure a role as a Product Manager in a fintech/blockchain or web3 focused startup.
- Random Achievement: I must have initiated the learning requirement to get certified as a Product Manager.

9. My interest in building a professional career in engineering drifted towards working in the technology space ever since I saw how technology was becoming a basic requirement to be relevant in any chosen field. This informed my interest in learning data analytics because I honestly did not find writing code exciting as my strength lies in human management, strategic thinking and team management. I had to look for a role in the tech space that aligns with my interest and strength. I believe a career has to be something you enjoy doing rather than forcefully learning a skill you don't find interesting and equally don't see yourself in that space in the long run.

Just then, I made my research and found the role of product management an interesting one that aligns with my interest, after application to a few companies I was lucky enough to be shortlisted for an interview at SabiAfrica, a technology company providing a platform that enables and empowers the most underserved merchants in the world by creating an e-commerce infrastructure enabling merchants, wholesalers, aggregators, distributors to level up their capabilities and grow their business.

Securing a full-time hybrid role as a Product Manager despite being a student to me was my biggest career achievement.

10. I was actively engaged in several extra-curricular activities that spans across social impact, volunteering, career, politics, and Islam. The journey has been rough and it isn't smooth yet, I have continually been passionate about leveraging active participation in several activities to enhance my personal skill and equally building sustainable impact.

I was heavily committed to the MSSN of my campus, and this I did passionately because that was the only space I could get myself closer to Allah and feel fulfilled and happy due to the amazing activities they run and the genuine brotherhood that was established.

11. My major contributions were made through the platform of the Muslim Students Society. I focused majorly on building interactions with people and

motivating them to take steps to make them advance in their professional, academic, social and spiritual life.

12. I am yet to figure out what aspect of my studies I enjoy the most, this is probably because my interest has already drifted away from my course of study. I just want to be in a space where I get to be intentional and curious about learning rather than forcing myself to learn for grades. The only aspect of my studies that was really nice was courses that were related to understanding how circuits work and software development life cycle. This was because I had a strong background in circuit diagrams at the polytechnic and my current job as a product manager entails ensuring software is built using the software development life cycle.

13. MSSN connected me to a number of individuals with astounding results who were actively committed to the society's activities. This was enough a motivation to pursue excellence in my academics regardless of my commitments or schedule.

CONCLUSION

The Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria, Lagos State University, Epe Campus is an institutional branch of the Lagos State Area Unit entrusted with the task of bringing all Muslims into close union and inculcating in them the true Islamic spirit of brotherhood and absolute faith in Allah as the only basis for the achievement of peace among mankind.

We establish an Islamic Ummah governed by the principles and rules of the SHARIAH and as well encourage the study of the Quran as the book of guidance and the Arabic Language as the Lingua Franca of the Islamic world. We promote the welfare of Muslims on campus, safeguard fundamental human rights and champion the cause of the oppressed in any community.

Our core values are SPIRITUAL UPLIFTMENT • PROMOTING ACADEMIC VIBRANCY • HUMAN CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT • PROFESSIONALISM • MORAL RECTITUDE.

A special acknowledgment to everyone who contributed to the success of the magazine.
The executives and all our members.

The MSSN Lasu Epe Editorial Board led by Otubanjo AbdulHameed Kayode the editor and the secretary Makanjuola Fadheelah and also the members of the editorial board Ishola AbdulRahman, Odulate Toheeb, Otun Islamiyyah, Tajudeen Aromashaun, Vincent Shamsudeen and Yusuf Ahmad.

The Designer; Samuel Olatunbosun

Art done by; Saheeb adebola ilias

Revision Team; Makanjuola Fadheelah, Odusola Oluwafikunayomi, Otubanjo AbdulHameed Kayode.

The Interview Respondents, Oyeyinka Barakat, Babajide Milton, Rafiu Raheemat.

Writers in the Magazine; Abdullah Solahudeen, Abati Patrick, AbdulBasit AbdulSalam, Abolaji AbdulRahman, Adebisi Hamed Adewale, Aisha Ewa-Ade Popoola, Aisha Olamide Hussein, Ajibola Habeebullah, Ashafa AbdulSobur, Ayinde Ayomide, Hamdalat Anthonio, Idowu Sodiq, Iduwe Benjamin, Lawal Aishat, Lawal Simbiat, Mariam Balogun, Mariam Ibrahim, Moshkur Ajikobi, Mulero Esther, Olasunkanmi AbdulHameed, Olatunji Fatimoh, Oluwafunmilayo, Ogundeko AbdulAzeez Adebola, Shitta Ahmed and Zokoro Peter.

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Thank you for being a part of this experience and we look forward to having you join us for future editions.

Signed

MSSN Lasu Epe editorial board.

GALLERY



A group picture of all the 20/21 executives



Brothers having fun during the 20/21 picnic



Lecturing students during the school outreach



Professional seminar 20/21



Sisters having fun during the 20/21 picnic



LASU EPE