

Leadership & Influence

Leadership for me is one position that I always aspire to attain. My enthusiasm for excellence coupled with my passion for human welfare motivated my choice of career path in Finance and Economics as it relates to man and the society.

One interesting leadership experience that I had was in the years 2014/2015 when I became the accountant of a tech company which basically made sales on **credit as its customers**. The company previously used Microsoft Excel sub-optimally, to record sales and expense. Records were disorganized and receivables could not be traced leading to huge bad and doubtful debts. I was able to convince management to invest in Sage 50 accounting package. I then transitioned the company's record to IFRS. This innovative influence increased my department's performance significantly as I was able to deliver reliable reports and provide the debtors with history of their transactions which led to a total bad debt recovery of 65%.

I also exhibited leadership, during my penultimate year at the university. Over 70% of students in my class, had grade points 2.5 downwards. As a first-class grader, I volunteered to head a study group of 20 students. I also led the student committee which sent a request to the school management that the Economics library be renovated and reopened to allow ease of access to study materials to complement that of the university's main library which was miles away from the faculty. This request was granted, and the department library was reopened. I was able to influence my group's reading habit by creating library hours and tutorial sections. The outcome of these hard works was that members of my group graduated with at least a 3.5 grade.

Lastly, acceptability being an important trait of a good leader, I was recently nominated as the treasurer of El-Impacto based on my character of honesty and transparency. El-Impacto is an NGO created in January 2021 to impact the lives of the less privileged in our society. Myself and other youths created the NGO from a realization of how inequitable income distribution has contributed to poverty in Nigeria. Therefore, we seek donations from individuals and organizations, thereafter, distribute same to people in rural communities and slums in the form of food, clothing, education, and medical support, which is in line with the SDG of the UN. We started with Lagos and have visited 9 local governments. In my capacity as treasurer, I ensure that funds are properly accounted for from the point of collection to distribution so that our goal of impacting lives never gets compromised.

It is evident from the foregoing that I am a change leader. I therefore believe that a postgraduate study in an international environment and the Chevening Scholarship will give me a competitive edge to expand my knowledge on leadership. I will be exposed to mentorship opportunity from global leaders in the Chevening community of which I also intend to contribute. This will groom me to become the desired growth leader in my country.

Networking

In my quest to successfully accomplish my goals, I have formed the habit of meeting highly intellectual and successful people. I build a chain of like-minded people who share the same strong passion for building a better human society.

In the year 2016, after I qualified as a chartered accountant. I and six other fellow members created a professional network comprising of students and associate members of ICAN. This group was borne out of the need to address the high rate of failure in the institute's examination. With my experience as a lecturer in some ICAN tutorial centers and collaboration with my colleagues we organize free lectures and Case Study solutions which was one of the highest failed subjects. As a result of this, we continue to record high level of success amongst our students and about 53 of whom have qualified. We also meet to discuss industry practices, changes in accounting standards and to share job opportunities. I have personally benefitted from 3 job offers through this network.

Similarly, being an advocate of egalitarianism who believes that corruption is a deterring factor to growth in any society. I willingly joined the Anti-corruption Community Development Service group during my mandatory National Youth Service. This group is coordinated by the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission. We were trained on the need to eliminate corrupt practices in our community and on how to whistle blow any case of corruption without any threat to our lives or properties. On periodic bases we visited schools, prisons, government ministries and agencies to sensitize people against involving in corrupt acts. This will help build a more transparent society and support national development.

Apart from group networking I have a chain of highly influential people. One of such persons is the distinguished Mr. Kunle Elebute. He is the Senior Partner, KPMG, Nigeria & Chairman KPMG Africa. I was introduced to him by Mr. Kunle Adeosun, the Chairman of Ogun State Internal Revenue Service, Nigeria who was my boss at the time. He was impressed by my outstanding academic, professional, and work performance. So, I got selected to write the KPMG aptitude test for graduate trainee via his referral. Unfortunately, I didn't perform so well in the test because I fell ill on the test day. I missed this opportunity, but lessons have been learnt so I would definitely get it right on my next try. I will also continue to maintain a positive professional relationship with these great personalities.

As a prospective Chevening scholar, I am excited about engaging my networking skills in the Chevening community. I will ensure to maximize all networking opportunities available to me during and after my study in the UK. I will use this global network of leaders to engage the Government and advocate for their contribution to support young entrepreneurs by developing our financial sector and credit structure to stimulate the growth of small businesses in Nigeria.

Studying in the UK

Financial inclusion and strengthening the credit structure has become an important development plan for emerging economies like Nigeria. According to World Bank's report on Doing Business 2020 index, the country is currently ranked 131 out of 190 countries after considering factors like access to affordable credit. This is not actually a resounding performance therefore to address this, there is a need for trained financial policy makers capable of applying research and theory to develop effective economic policies.

This is the major drive for my choice of postgraduate courses. My background in Accounting and Economics and my passionate desire in acquiring a master's degree related to these courses is because of their focus on finance for business and its multiplier effect on economic growth. The all-encompassing nature of these courses makes them my favorite and I cannot wait to start this exciting journey.

MSc International Finance and Economics taught at the University of Sussex is my first choice. This is because my previous financial analysis and quantitative skills gives me an edge of being selected for admission. The course offers me a unique opportunity to deepen my understanding of corporate finance and econometrics. It places emphasis on application rather than just theory. I will also gain useful insight from Professor L. Alan Winters, Director of the UK Trade Policy Observatory in the University of Sussex, a leading contributor to the debate on Brexit whose books I used during my undergraduate days. I am thrilled about the opportunity to learn from him in person.

My second choice is the Business Analytics & Finance from the University of Southampton, ranked among the top 100 of universities globally and member of the prestigious Russell Group. As a data enthusiast, I am eager to improve on this skill as it has become the most sort after in today's workplace. With this course, I will gain competence in data mining, econometrics software, simulation models and credit rating skills. It will give me a competitive edge over my peers as a tech savvy. The most interesting part of this course is the three months industrial placement, where I will be able to apply the acquired skills to a real-life business problem.

My third choice is MSc Economics from the Lancaster University, a top 15 university in all 3 UK league tables. One of the modules of this course which caught my interest is the research skills for economists. It will also extend my analytical and problem-solving skills. This course will enrich me with skills like game theory, econometrics, and modelling. I will gain practical knowledge in modules like Public Economics and Political Economy, Financial Economics which are areas covering my long-term goal.

In conclusion, studying in the UK will offer me the opportunity to gain advanced and technical knowledge of financial systems in line with global practices. Upon, my return to Nigeria, I shall collaborate with other economic experts to support Nigeria's goal of strengthening her credit architecture.

Long term Career Goals

My long-term goal is to become one of the builders of the Nigeria of our dream by contributing to the establishment of a strong financial system where businesses can access affordable credit to grow and expand their operations. This would help improve the aggregate output, aggregate income, and ultimately improve the standard of living of the average Nigerian. This goal is associated with one of the sustainable development goals of reducing poverty and unemployment in developing countries like Nigeria as designed by the United Nations of which the UK government is an active member.

My passion is to become a professional economist and development expert who will be working with or consulting for multilateral and bilateral organizations like the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the United Nations Development Programme, and the World Bank group. My core area of interest however is to solve the problem of inadequate provision of credit for small and medium sized firms which contributes a larger percentage of Nigeria's GDP. This passion is evidenced in my undergraduate research on “Impact of Agricultural finance and on Economic Growth in Nigeria”, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of bachelor’s degree in Economics. My focus there was on agricultural finance because agriculture used to be the main stay of the Economy before the oil boom of 1970s. The country’s attention has now been called back to diversification to Agriculture and other sectors with great growth potential if supported with adequate funding.

Upon completing my post graduate studies, I aspire to join the employment of a big four accounting firm in Nigeria, to gain practical experience in financial advisory. While on this job, I will start my CFA examination and hope to complete that by 2024.

Afterwards, I will proceed for my PhD. in Islamic Finance & Economics as I hope to join the Central Bank of Nigeria, as one of its policy makers with a vision of building models for credit creation and financial inclusion of SMEs. This will set Nigeria on the roadmap to diversify and grow her economy. These policies will also include building a strong positive relationship with the UK and making Nigeria her preferred Investment partner in Africa.

My long-term goal is to be the founder of an Islamic bank. The idea needs proper research to develop theories that will make its credit products gain global acceptance as an alternative to the conventional banking system. It is premised on the fact that risks and returns from a venture should be shared amongst participants. The proposed bank shall provide sharia compliant products and I will implement a massive enlightenment campaign about the benefits of patronizing and investing in its instruments. The vision is to provide affordable finance to businesses to facilitate their growth and expansion.

Building the right connections and making adequate use of my leadership and networking opportunities, I want to contribute to the growth of my country and foster lasting positive relationship with the Chevening community, and the UK.