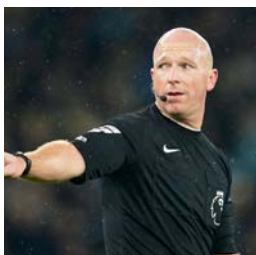


BUSINESS DAY WEEKENDER

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SPORTS

Five most controversial referee calls of 2023/24 Premier League season



INTERVIEW

How to know when a person is suffering from gender-based violence - Ibekwe

PUBLISHER/EDITOR IN CHIEF
Frank Aigbogun

EDITOR
Tayo Fagbule

DEPUTY EDITOR
Lolade Akinmurele

FOUNDING EDITOR BD WEEKENDER
Lehlé Balde

DEPUTY EDITOR BD WEEKENDER
Ifeoma Okeke-Korieocha

CHIEF SALES AND MARKETING OFFICER
Ijeoma Ude

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER
Queen Nkwocha

COPY SALES MANAGER
Florence Kadiri

DIGITAL SALES MANAGER
Linda Ochugbua

HEAD OF DIGITALS
Nduka Asoh

DESIGN AND ART DIRECTION
Emmanuel Odo
(officialedenis@gmail.com)

CONTRIBUTORS

Feyisitan Ijimakinwa
Udy Osaro-Edobor
Linda Ochugba
Chioma Onuh
David Ijaseun
Chigozirim Enyinnia
Charles Ogwo
Robert Awodu
Abubakar Ibrahim
Anthony Nlebem
Esther Emoekpere

Enquiries
weekender@businessday.ng

ADVERTS
Ijeoma Ude
+2348033225506

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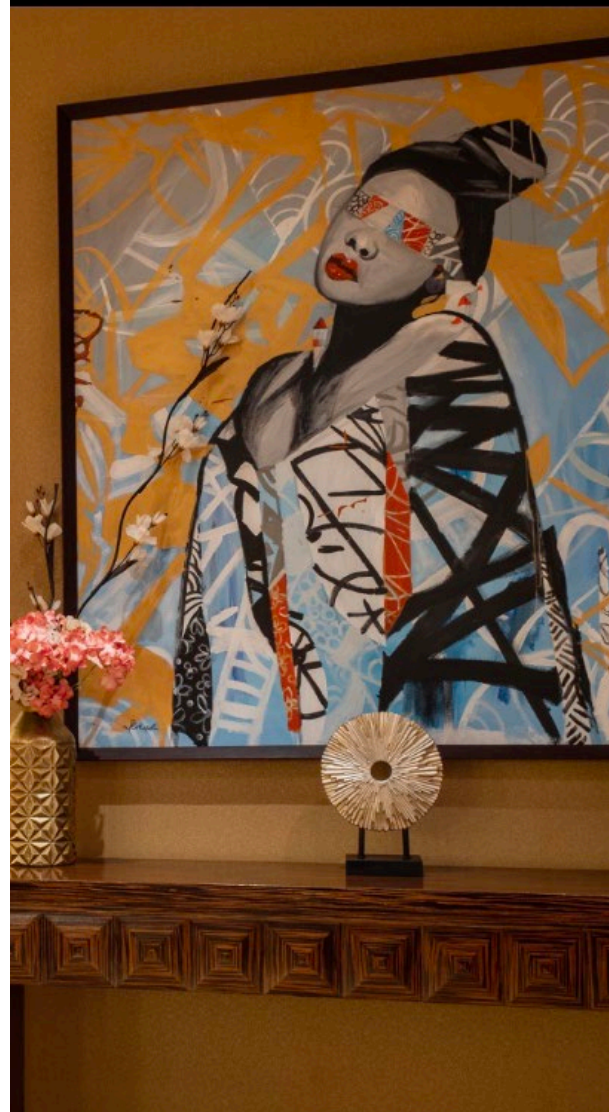
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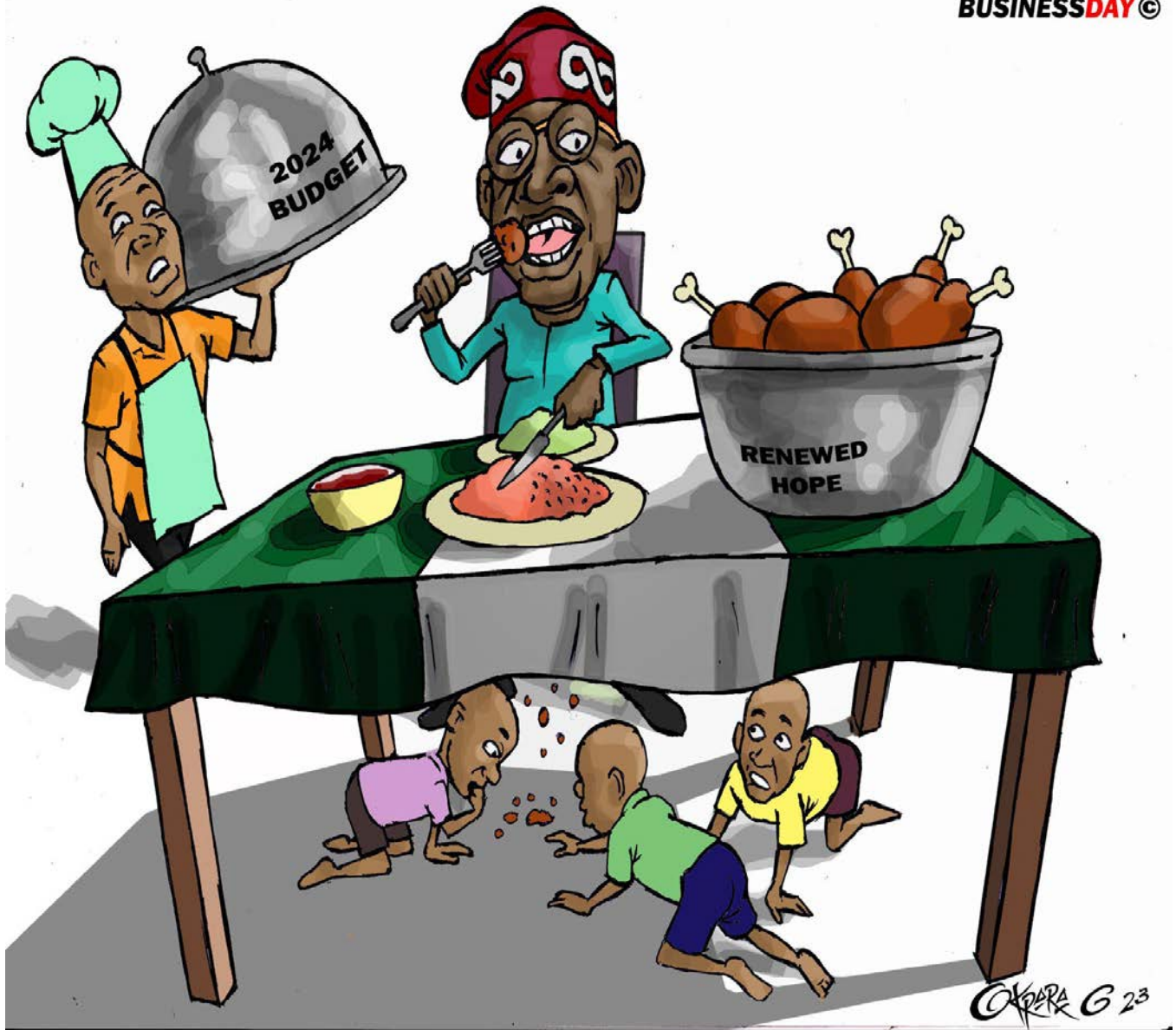
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Meet

OLAPEJU IBEKWE

How to know when a person is
suffering from gender-based violence
- Ibekwe



Olapeju Ibekwe is the Chief Executive Officer of Sterling One Foundation. The foundation recently partnered with Live Abundantly and the British Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria, to launch the 2023 edition of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria. As a movie producer, Ibekwe uses her work within the media and creative space to raise awareness about gender issues especially gender based violence, while actively supporting young girls through mentorship and providing business advisory for early stage entrepreneurs. In this interview with IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA, she speaks on how Sterling One Foundation through partnerships is actively raising awareness about violence against women and girls, and highlighting abuse of boys and men, and most importantly educate duty bearers and stakeholders on actions and strategies that will help to end the menace. She also hints on red flags to show that a woman is suffering from gender-based violence.

STERLING ONE FOUNDATION RECENTLY PARTNERED WITH LIVE ABUNDANTLY AND THE BRITISH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER TO NIGERIA, TO LAUNCH THE 2023 EDITION OF THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA. KINDLY TELL US ABOUT THIS PARTNERSHIP AND WHAT YOU AIM TO ACHIEVE.

As you may know, the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign that focuses on raising more awareness about violence against women and girls and highlighting strategies for its prevention and elimination. It kicks off on November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until December 10, Human Rights Day with activities that spotlight survivors, tell their stories, and advocate scalable solutions to reduce cases of abuse and violence. For our partnership with Live Abundantly and the British Deputy High Commissioner, we are not just hoping to raise awareness about violence against women and girls, but also to highlight abuse of boys and men, and most importantly educate duty bearers and stakeholders on actions and strategies that will help to end the menace. In line with this year's theme - "UNITE! Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls", we are living the theme and also looking to galvanize funding for the critical work that is needed to reduce and end the violence. We aim

to see a significant increase in awareness on the impact of GBV, improved access to essential services for women and girls who are survivors, improved confidence and knowledge base for women and girls to report unwanted sexual activity and/or violence and get help, an enhanced private sector engagement on gender-based violence, thereby strengthening GBV prevention and response interventions, improved effectiveness to prevent and respond to VAWG, access to funding, vocational skill acquisition, acceleration, and development of enterprise for survivors in partnership with responders and service providers, increased effectiveness of legislation, policies, and accountability systems to prevent and end VAWG.

MANY WOMEN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE HAVE CHOSEN TO KEEP QUIET AS A RESULT OF SOCIETAL PRESSURES AND OTHER FACTORS. WHAT ARE RED FLAGS TO SHOW THAT A WOMAN IS SUFFERING FROM GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

My experience leading advocacy against gender-based violence has taught me that people react to abuse very differently. Most people become withdrawn and try their best to stay away from forming bonds with people. This is often as a result of trauma and the loss of confidence in self. When you speak with women with abusive spouses, you might notice controlling behaviour from their husbands in how they allow them



to make personal choices. One surprising dynamic is how some victims become abusers themselves, and start to mete out abuse to people they believe they have some form of influence over. So it is a wide range of things, and this is why we need as many safe spaces as possible. Many of the pains and signs are not physical but psychologically, so we need to help more survivors break the silence and end this culture of shame and fear preventing people from getting the help they need.

AS A FOUNDATION, WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO JOIN THIS CAMPAIGN AND WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE AFTER THE CAMPAIGN?

Gender equality is one of the focus areas of the Sterling One Foundation and violence against women and girls is a huge threat to progress in this space. The cultural biases that continue to enable people to carry out violent and abusive acts in their different forms and get away with them help no one. We can't build a progressive society if they remain in place and that's what we hope this campaign helps us achieve. Reducing violence in the workplace also motivates us as the negative implications of such include productivity loss as GBV (Gender Based Violence) can lead to absenteeism and increased turnover among employees, impacting on the company's bottom line which can affect investor confidence and business sustainability in the long run, or lead to reputational issues that can be avoided. We need more people to understand that we are better off being inclusive and upholding values that make everyone feel safer and empowered enough to chase their dreams and contribute to building a better world.

STATISTICS SHOW THAT ONE IN THREE WOMEN AND ONE IN SIX BOYS HAVE EXPERIENCED VIOLATIONS, WHY HAVE THESE NUMBERS CONTINUED TO INCREASE INSTEAD OF DECLINE?

This is a question we get quite often and it is honestly a sad situation to see. Different socioeconomic factors contribute to the seeming increase and the first is the cultural bias I spoke of earlier. Culture doesn't change overnight. A lot of reorientation efforts go into changing how people think, and act, what they pass on and so on. Yes, there are projects addressing some of these issues, but these projects are not as widespread as the challenges are. We also have the consequence problem. What do I mean by this? Not many states in Nigeria have fully functioning organisations that tackle cases of abuse and mete out the right punishments to perpetrators. If there isn't consequence for action, some people won't feel the need to report their abusers, thus they remain free and most likely continue abusing more people sadly. Lagos is a model state when you think about having an agency with the structure to tackle cases of abuse, but the reach is still not on the level that can cater to the

number of cases we have within the state. Of course, there are other factors that heighten the problem such as poor economic situations as shown by the spike in abuse cases during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, so it is clearly a multifaceted problem.

KINDLY EXPLAIN HOW PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS CAN HELP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.

There are different aspects to the support partnerships like ours can provide, the first of which is awareness creation. Every organisation has their circle of influence and when we come together for causes like this, we help to create change within those circles. We educate them, we equip and empower them with the tools and tips to tackle the issues in their immediate environment. This way, we have more champions speaking up against violence and abuse. The theme of this year's campaign outlines the other key role private–public partnerships play which is around investments and support for projects and solutions that create an impact. Most of the projects leading the fight against gender-based violence are led by civil society organisations, many of which need funding to scale and this is where the private sector can help. As part of corporate social responsibility, more private sector players can help non-profits scale their message and their solution to more people. For instance, as part of this campaign, we helped raise funds for Mirabel Centre, a not-for-profit and Nigeria's first sexual assault referral centre, to help enhance the work they do and that's a gift partnerships like ours can give.

DO YOU THINK THERE ARE LAWS IN NIGERIA THAT NEED TO BE AMENDED TO AID THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, IF THERE ARE, CAN YOU MENTION SOME OF THEM?

Absolutely! Before I even get to specific laws, there is the problem of localization based on the fact that domestic violence laws fall under the state legislature and not the exclusive legislative list of the National Assembly. This leaves room for issues to be effectively handled in one state and have abysmal resolutions in some states. There is also the challenge organisations like the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), which are primarily focused on human trafficking but encounter a number of issues of abuse, face in terms of effectively operating in different states, based on the differences per state. Now, speaking to more specific laws, we still have sections of the country where issues of intimate partner violence such as beating your wife for "correctional purposes" is legal. There are other instances where the fines and penalties for rape are lax and reporting structures undefined. You see, legislation provides a solid



foundation for effective and coordinated legal action against violence against women and girls. Prior to the enactment of the VAPP Act, there was no comprehensive legislation on violence against women at the national level. Nigeria only had disparate pieces of legislation, which did not address violence against women or gender-based violence uniformly across the country. A few states had passed legislation on domestic violence, harmful traditional practices, or gender-based violence. A few others had attempted to do so unsuccessfully. Much of the existing legislation was outdated, not sufficiently comprehensive, not specifically directed to this grave problem, and not adequately enforced.

The coming together of more than fifty-five (55) different groups and individuals under the umbrella of the Legislative Advocacy Coalition on Violence Against Women, (LACVAW), eventually helped mobilize action to improve the legislative landscape for violence against women in Nigeria in 2002.

The result of that activism was the signing into law of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act on May 25, 2015, after about thirteen (13) years in the legislative process

The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act is a law that guarantees protection of the rights of citizens from all forms of violence in Nigeria. The main thrust of the Law is to eliminate violence in private and public life; prohibit all forms of violence against persons, particularly women and girls who are disproportionately affected; provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims; the punishment of offenders and for other related matters. There are still gaps in the laws, specifically relating to who to enforce the law in some of the states, and what specific penalties are attached to specific violations.

These need to be reviewed and clearly designated. For Example,

- *The VAPP Act does not offer a universal coverage to all Nigerian women and girls as the uptake by states is generally low across the country*
- *The challenges to the implementation structures set up by the government ranged from lack of synergy, intimidation, slow judicial process, to inadequacy of interventions specific to various needs or categories of victims.*
- *Although the Law seems to have helped in the decrease in the incidence of VAWG in some states, the implementation can still be observed*
- *The laws are more effectively implemented in states where the First Ladies take a keen interest in and contribute to efforts aimed at eliminating violence against women and girls.*
- *The intersection of disabilities, violence and gender is not often considered in the implementation of the VAPP Act and related laws. As such, response mechanisms do not prioritize persons with disabilities who may experience VAWG differently. I will recommend by re-enforcing the suggestions and calls made by various knowledge experts in this field and CSOs driving advocacy that.*
- *National and state governments must make provisions for and approve gender-responsive budgeting by providing the much-needed resources and infrastructure to critical agencies.*
- *There must be a multi-pronged approach to alleviate women's poverty to reduce their vulnerability to all forms of sexual and gender-based violence.*
- *Government should develop an emergency response policy with broad definition of emergency situations to include SGBV during public health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic.*





- *The role of First Ladies of states as advocates/champions of the VAPP Act and related anti-VAWG laws should be acknowledged and supported.*
- *Government agencies tasked with implementing the VAPP Act/Law and/or related laws at the national and state levels should collaborate with the agencies saddled with poverty alleviation to ensure that survivors have access to economic empowerment opportunities.*
- *There is need for sensitization of the citizens through awareness campaigns and the interpretation of the VAPP Act, including its simplification for citizens to understand.*
- *Government through the relevant agencies of the Ministry of Education should integrate the VAPP Act/Law in the school curriculum to broaden the minds of children and young people. These are some of the issues we highlighted in the course of the 16 Days of Activism campaign.*

As a movie producer, are there deliberate efforts you have made or are making to ensure your movies teach lessons centered around addressing gender-based violence?

My very first movie, CHATROOM, which we screened at different locations and with different audiences during the course of the 16 Days of Activism campaign is focused on addressing gender-based violence. It is a topic I am passionate about and eager to use every tool I have at my disposal to bring more awareness to and help design solutions for. The tagline of the movie is 'Break the Silence' and at every screening, I have been amazed and humbled at how survivors have been motivated to break their silence and commence the process of healing.

TAKE US THROUGH THE JOURNEY OF SETTING UP STERLING ONE FOUNDATION AND WHAT ARE SUCCESS STORIES YOU HAVE RECORDED FROM THE FOUNDATION ESPECIALLY AS IT CONCERNS THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

The Sterling One Foundation was set up in 2018 with the mission of tackling the root causes of poverty through investments in health, gender equality, education and youth development, food security and climate action. Our approach has been to be both convener and catalyst, prioritising partnerships with other organisations that share our vision of a more prosperous Nigeria and Africa, while designing interventions that enable progress in the different sectors we are focused on. As part of our work, we supported the launch of Giving.ng, Africa's first free



crowdfunding platform that helps organisations and changemakers eager to make an impact, raise funds seamlessly for their project. We also launched the Africa Social Impact Summit (ASIS) co-convened with the United Nations in Nigeria which brings together development professionals from the private and public sectors, the government, civil society, and international funders to accelerate action on the Sustainable Development Goals across Africa. These initiatives and other projects have helped us directly support over a 400,000 beneficiaries directly and over a million indirectly. Under our gender equality portfolio specifically, we have empowered women farmers in communities affected by floods to restore their livelihoods, helped some women entrepreneurs set up businesses as part of our partnership with Whitefield Foundation and the Coca-Cola Company, empowered women in coastal communities to rid their environment from plastic waste profitably, built the capacity of over 4,000 non-profits across the continent including female-led non-profits, partnered on the first physical Gender Lens Investing training with UNIDO Investment Technology and Promotion Office (ITPO) to deliver impact-driven investments and partnerships, are on the High Level Steering Committee of the Private Sector-led GBV Fund launched by the United Nations Women, supported a STEM bootcamp for girls for two years, while ensuring we mainstream gender balance across every other initiative of ours.

We are also very intentional in galvanizing partnerships to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in our clime across our chosen thematic focus areas.

AS A WOMAN, HOW DO YOU HANDLE GENDER STEREOTYPES THAT HAVE CONTINUED TO BE A CONSTRAINT IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES INCLUDING NIGERIA?

It is a sad part of being a woman in Nigeria, and I dare say the whole world. Every day, you are faced with systems that work against you, cultural practices that don't work in your favour, even perceptions and comments from people who see your hard work or progress as an outcome of some other factor other than your brilliance or grit. This is why my advocacy knows no boundaries. Wherever I find myself, I do my best to speak up for women and girls and endeavour that they have safe spaces to be heard and supported.



WHAT WOMEN REALLY WANT: SPILL 2023 Reimagines the Feminine

Feyisitan Ijimakinwa

It was the Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, who stood on a stage in a faraway land and reminded us all that stories mattered. "Many stories matter", she went on to emphasize. "Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower, and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity."

The breaking of feminine dignity, the denial of the woman's humanity, and the derogation of her essence, is a historical - indeed a proverbial - reality. It has been with us for so long that we have, for the most part, become numb to its subtle and not-so-subtle effects. The cultural or institutional constructs that have over the ages of man conspired to hold back the woman from her true potential, to prevent her from expressing her unique human essence and from playing her God-given role in the family, the community and the nation, have been with us for ever.

But they are beginning to fray at the edges, thanks to the buffeting they are receiving at the hands of a number of insistent female voices and stories. Increasingly, women are telling their own stories of what it means to be a woman, and they're doing so, not in the sanitized, politically correct language of yesteryears (as prescribed for her by patriarchal institutions whose aim, it seems, is to derail, or delay, or otherwise set a timetable for her full flowering as an equal human

before God), but in the textured lingo (and sometimes salty vernacular) without which she cannot fully express her truth.

It is a truth that has bubbled below the surface of human evolution for millennia, waiting for humanity to awake from its slumber and give it a hearing, to give it a place to stand so it can move the world in the direction it ought to go in.

Since its debut in 2017, SPILL (Short for Speaking Intelligently, Ladies Lead) has offered womanhood just such a place to stand - and tell her story. SPILL is a pan-African speaking platform created with a view towards giving women of African descent the opportunity and ability to share their authentic stories and ideas of value for developmental purposes. The annual event - and the influential, knowledgeable and inspiring women who have graced its platforms since 2017 - are not merely making another protest at the aggravations of the male-dominated world they live in. SPILL does not aspire to set the stage for a gender confrontation or some game of one-upmanship between the sexes.

Quite the contrary - its Convener and main driving force, after all, is a MAN (or more to the point, a He advocate for She) in the person of Tomide Oluokuade, a writer, media entrepreneur and life coach.



SPILL speaks primarily to women, urging them to be the best version of themselves, to find that spark within themselves that makes them special, and to rethink their approach to the issues of life. For too long, women have responded to these issues in a passive and reactive (rather than in an active and proactive) manner. They look outwards – to an entity, a person or circumstance outside of themselves – for solutions to the challenges they face in their roles as daughters, wives, mothers, students and career women. They hope, for example, for a reorientation in the hearts of the men in their lives or in positions of authority – fathers, brothers and uncles, husbands, male colleagues and bosses at work, as well as policymakers – for the change they want to see occur. But history and experience have shown that while such a change is always a welcome breath of fresh air, waiting for it is like waiting for the proverbial Godot – or for NEPA to 'bring light' when you don't have an alternative source of power. That change might eventually come – in its own sweet time – but there are too many variables you simply cannot control, which messes up with your emotional and mental health (sadly, the lot of many women today).

SPILL 2023, which was held on Sunday, October 21, 2023 at the magnificent Terra Kulture Gallery on Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria, featured a galaxy of seven powerful women who came to speak power to every woman's truth. They were:

- Morenike Molehin, Founder & Creative Director of Oak & Teak;
- Ronke Posh Adeniyi, Director, Le Poshe, Ikoyi;
- Taiwo Dayo-Abatan, Regional Head, HR, Sub-

Saharan African, VFS Global;

- Yetunde Bankole-Bernard, CEO, The YBB Company;
- Fadekemi Olumide-Aluko, Actor, Lawyer, Educator & Poet;

- Olatowun Candide-Johnson, Founder & CEO of GAIA Africa; and
- Dr. Kafayat Shafau, the Dancepreneur known to her fans across the globe as Kaffy.

Welcoming guests to the gathering, the Convener, Tomide Oluokuade lauded the accomplishments and impact of women who have already 'found their voice and taken their place in the comity of maximized humans.' Lamenting, however, that these ones were still too few and far between, he warned that in the times we face, communities, societies and entities that discounted the value of the woman's contributions, or dismissed her innate worth, risk sliding into irrelevance.

Oluokuade stressed the many objectives of SPILL to include bringing to light the previously untold stories that empower not only the teller of, but also the listener to, these stories, as well as bringing about a more holistic social balance and harmony. The scope of SPILL's aspirations and projections, he disclosed, are not only multi-dimensional but also pan-African (with events planned in the coming year, 2024, for Accra, Ghana; Kampala, Uganda, as well as Abuja, Nigeria, etc).

In their respective presentations, each speaker made an impassioned case for authenticity and self-affirmation (rather than waiting for external validation



and allowing the granting or withholding of such validation to define one's sense of self) and the need for mutual affirmation among women. With provocative topics like 'The Audacity to be Me'; 'I Reserve the Right to be Stupid'; and 'All That I Need To Be, I Am, ' and so forth, each speaker charted for her audience a path to empowerment on the wings of self-knowledge, the search for, (and actualizing of) one's essential purpose, the awakening of one's creative gifts, and the daring to go where the imagination may lead.

It is when she treads that path, the speakers said, that the woman bestows upon her family, community, workplace, society, nation and humanity the full benefits of her grace, her intuitive ability to make positive connections among the nuances of life and relationships, and her nurturing and restorative powers. As the Convener had said in his Welcome, society can no longer afford to downplay its own feminine essence and expect to survive, let alone SUCCEED. As we all make our way into a future that is increasingly being defined by changing paradigms of work, lifestyle choices and relationships, as well as the advent of new and potentially disruptive technologies, the SPILL experience is a reminder that we'll achieve the full measure of our infinite human potential as a society only if we give full play to, and stay in constant touch with, both our masculine and feminine sides. Like any living organism seeking to operate in a dynamic ecosystem, our vibrancy, going forward, will lie in our ability to breathe with both of our metaphorical lungs.

With every annual edition - and the ancillary activities between editions - SPILL is erecting the building-blocks of that desired social ecosystem, one story at a time.





Ife Orioke (Chief Commercial Officer, Flutterwave), Chinedu Azodoh (co-founder and Chief Growth Officer, MAX), Ireayomide Oladunjoye (Managing Director & CEO, Endeavor Nigeria), Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu (Governor of Lagos State), Deepankar Rustagi (Co-founder & CEO, OmniRetail), and Moses Babatope (Co-founder, Group Deputy Managing Director/Managing Director, FilmOne).



Christian Wessels (CEO, Daystar Power), Bolaji Balogun (CEO, Chapel Hill Denham & Chairman, Endeavor Nigeria Board of Directors), Ireayomide Oladunjoye (Managing Director & CEO, Endeavor Nigeria), Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu (Governor of Lagos State), Atedo Peterside CON (Chairman, Anap Foundation), Jaideep Gulab (Endeavor Nigeria Board Director), and Sari El-Khalil (Chief Transformation Officer of Seven-Up Bottling Company and co-founder of W Motors).



Obi Asika (Convener, The Omniverse), Oswald Osaretin Guobadia (Managing Partner - DigitA), Tunbosun Alake (Commissioner for Science and Technology, Lagos State), and Tubosun Alake (Co-founder and CEO, Qore).



Tunbosun Alake (Commissioner for Science and Technology, Lagos State), Adaye Sokan (Program Lead, Mastercard Foundation), and Oswald Osaretin Guobadia (Managing Partner - DigitA).



Moses Babatope (Co-founder, Group Deputy Managing Director/Managing Director, FilmOne), Ojoma Ochai (Managing Partner of The Creative Economy Practice at CcHUB), and Godwin Tom (Managing Director, Sony Music Publishing, Nigeria).



Chinedu Azodoh (co-founder and Chief Growth Officer, MAX), Eloho Oname (Partner, TLcom Capital), and Dr. Adeyemi Osindero (Managing Partner, Uhuru Investment Partners).

DAVIDO TO HEADLINE BEERWITHUSFEST 2

Anthony Udugba

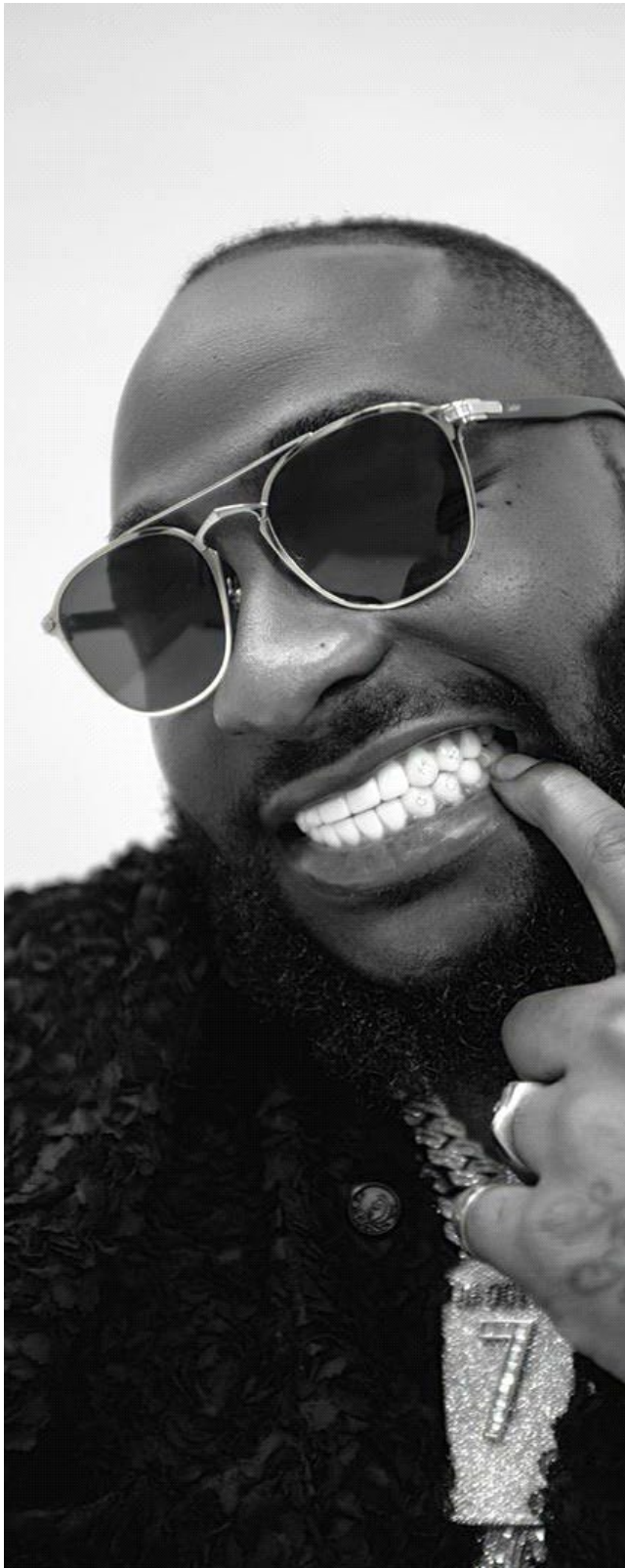


David Adeleke, known professionally as Davido, is scheduled to headline the second annual BEER WITH US FESTIVAL (BWUFEST2) on December 27, 2023, at Landmark Beach, Oniru Lagos. This marks his return to the stage after more than a year, making it highly anticipated by fans eager to see him perform live.

Achievas Entertainment Limited, the organizers, promises a high-quality festival experience with

DJs and surprise artists. The inaugural event back in January 2023 saw the performance of Seyi Vibe, Black Sherif and headlined by Asake. The show drew hundreds of music fans from all over the country who came to see their favorite artists perform on stage.

Chiori Daniel Cole and Paul Cole Chiori, the driving force behind Achievas Entertainment, ensure a show that will garner attention.



Speaking on the upcoming event, Chiori Daniel Cole mentioned that efforts are focused on delivering a night of entertainment with attention to detail. He also noted that partnership slots are available, and early tickets can be purchased through the Landmark Citizen App.

Davido's musical career, spanning from "Back When" in 2011 to the recent acclaim of "Timeless," establishes him as a prominent figure in the music scene. His recent Grammy nominations further affirm his musical prowess, showcasing sustained success over a decade in the industry.



How Steven Ndukwu redefines Africa's single story one video at a time

DAVID IJASEUN

In the bustling realm of social media, where content creators strive for attention and influencers vie for engagement, Steven Ndukwu stands as a beacon of change, reshaping the narrative of Africa one captivating video at a time.

Niched in travel and tourism, Steven, with over 30 million views and 600,000 followers across various platforms, is not just a storyteller but also a revolution in motion.

In the words of acclaimed Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the peril of the 'single story' weighs heavily upon Africa—a continent rich in diversity, housing 54 countries and an array of distinct cultures.



Drawing inspiration from Adichie's cautionary tale of the 'single story' that has stereotyped Africa, Steven embarked on a mission to unveil the continent's hidden beauty.

"Most things people hear about Africa paint a picture of struggle, poverty, and hardship," Steven remarks. "My journey began with a desire to dismantle this narrative, to reveal the beauty and opulence often overlooked."

His storytelling journey started when he unveiled the luxury side of Lagos through a video that astonished viewers, opening their eyes to a facet of the city seldom showcased. "The response was incredible," he recalls. "That motivated me to embark intentionally on a quest across the continent, capturing its enchanting cities and cultures through the lens of my passion for cinematography and video production."

However, the path to redefining Africa's story is paved with both triumphs and trials. "Achievements, for me, stem from enlightening viewers, offering them a peek into a different Africa, something beyond the stereotypes," Steven explains. His accolades, from the "Best Digital Content Curator in Nigeria" award to nominations at prestigious events, affirm his impact.

Yet, challenges persist. "Being a Nigerian presents hurdles—visa limitations, currency fluctuations, and stereotypes. Some brands hesitate to collaborate solely because of my nationality," he says.

Despite these obstacles, Ndukwu remains resolute in his mission to amplify Africa's narrative globally. "Africa's diversity is my canvas," he says. "From encountering the Himba tribe in Namibia to understanding varying aspirations across African regions, each experience reshapes my perception."

In his globetrotting, Steven advocates for Africa's untapped tourism potential. "Countries like Botswana, Mauritius, and Kenya are making strides, promoting their allure," he states. "My videos aim to unveil these hidden gems, urging travelers to explore beyond conventional destinations."

His vision extends beyond mere videos. "I aspire to bring these stories to television, reaching broader audiences," Steven shares. "Establishing an academy to train aspiring storytellers is my next endeavor—to multiply voices championing Africa's narratives."

To budding travelers, his advice echoes wisdom and experience: "Remain open-minded, share the positives, and strive for continuous learning. And remember, evolving strategies often leads to transformative outcomes."

As Steven Ndukwu traverses Africa, his lens captures not just picturesque landscapes but the heartbeat of a continent yearning to rewrite its story. A journey fueled by passion, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to paint a diverse, vibrant Africa—one story at a time.



Celebrating Nigeria's best in digital marketing

DAVID IJASEUN

In the realm of marketing, connecting with your audience at the right time and place has always been key. In today's landscape, that locale is the internet.

Digital marketing, also known as online marketing, encompasses all promotional endeavours carried out on the Internet. Leveraging platforms like search engines, social media, email, and websites, businesses connect with both existing and potential customers. This mode of marketing also includes communication through text or multimedia messages.

The digital marketing market size hit USD 322.3 billion in 2022, according to GlobeNewsWire. It is projected to reach USD 366.1 billion in 2023, with an anticipated annual growth rate of 13.6% until 2032, where sales could soar to USD 1,118.9 billion.

One of the advantages of digital marketing lies in its capacity to deliver personalized messages directly to specific target audiences. This approach has led to increased engagement rates, and conversion rates, and subsequently, augmented revenue and profits for businesses.

In recognition of these advancements, the Association of Digital Marketing Professionals (ADMARP) in Nigeria recently honoured 25 digital marketers at the ADMARP Awards 2023. This



prestigious accolade spotlights individuals who have exhibited excellence, innovation, and leadership within Nigeria's burgeoning digital marketing landscape.

The recipients were presented with their awards at the ADMARP Day 2023 event held on November 9, 2023. The event served as a platform to gather digital marketing professionals, experts, and enthusiasts from Nigeria and beyond. It featured keynote speeches, panel discussions, workshops, and networking sessions, focusing on industry trends, strategies, challenges, and more.

Expressing his gratitude, Daniel Chukwu, one of the awardees, said, "I am honoured and thrilled to receive recognition from ADMARP for my contributions to the

digital marketing industry. This award is a motivation to continue pushing boundaries and delivering exceptional results."

Ogunseye Israel Oladipupo, another recipient, added, "This recognition is a delight and an honor. Marketing presents both fun and challenges for me, and I'm proud of the diversity and complexity it offers."

The event also recognized other outstanding digital marketing professionals, including Omokehinde Thomas, Adetunji Adelekan, Lekan Lawal, Babatunde Ogunnowo, Chisom Bikawei, Leonardo Okpeh, Ebuka Chidube, and Elizabeth Ogunseye, among others.

ADMARP Day 2023 not only acknowledged the achievements of these professionals but also highlighted the association's efforts in promoting digital marketing excellence. Established in 2018, ADMARP aims to provide a structured platform for digital marketing practitioners, offering professional membership, training, certification, resources, and advocacy within Nigeria's

digital media landscape.

The ADMARP Awards 2023 event was sponsored by Eskimi, Collect Africa, Dochase, and Appsflyer, further underscoring the significance of these accolades within the digital marketing community.

Additionally, ADMARP highlighted the benefits of becoming a member, stating on its website, "Joining the Association of Digital Marketing Professionals provides exclusive access to various benefits, including industry recognition, reports, networking, job opportunities, and use of ADMARP designations (AAM & APM) in professional titles. Membership is open to all working or interested in digital marketing."

White Christmas party:

Rejuvenating joy after a tough 2023

DAVID IJASEUN



Planning Committee 2023 White Christmas Party

As 2023 draws to a close, reflections on the year's challenges and triumphs resonate within many circles. While some define this year as tough, shadowed by economic uncertainties, others see it as a blend of victories and setbacks. In the midst of this, a beacon of hope emerged as people sought solace in unwinding and celebrating the season.

The fourth annual White Christmas Party, organised by the Young Christian Workers (YCW) Movement of the Holy Family Catholic Church, lighted up Festac town, providing a haven for unwinding and festivity.

The event, a blend of camaraderie and exhilarating experiences, unfolded with music, games, dance, and a myriad of other engaging activities.

Speaking with BusinessDay Weekender, Efe Egieya, Chairperson of the organizing committee for the White Christmas Party Season 4, shared the event's core purpose: "The essence of this event is for everybody to just come on and have fun at the end of the year and raise funds because of the organization that we belong to," she said

Highlighting the charitable aspect, Egieya stated: "We help school children, pregnant women, or new mothers who cannot afford to pay their hospital bills. We also use this program to raise funds and have fun."

The festive occasion aimed not only to celebrate but also to give back to the less privileged, according to Chima Amandibuogu, President of the Young Christian Workers' Holy Family.

Sharing previous charitable initiatives, Amandibuogu said: "We went to the hospital and cleared the bills of about eight people. We also go to the schools. So the proceeds we get here are what we use to do all these charity works."

Encouraging altruism, Amandibuogu advised: "The most important thing is that charity begins at home. Let's try our best to reach out, help each other and contribute to ending poverty in Nigeria."

Hilary Ogunyemi, Chaplain of YCW, expressed admiration for the event's spirit of togetherness: "This kind of program is what brings all of them together to have fun and enjoy each other's company."

Furthermore, Melvis Mayaki, Parish Priest of Holy Family Catholic Church, shed light on the event's roots: "White party started just after COVID to celebrate God's goodness... And the main aim, as far as I know, is to celebrate God's goodness every Christmas to us."

Mayaki also underscored the deeper significance of the celebration: "It's not just a celebration for the sake of celebration, but a celebration because of Jesus Christ."

Amid challenges and uncertainties, the White Christmas Party emerged as a testament to unity, spreading joy, and supporting those in need within the community, embodying the spirit of the festive season.

TRAILBLAZING WOMEN

who transformed aviation industry globally

CHIGOZIRIM ENYINNA

The aviation industry has long been considered a male-dominated field, but throughout history, numerous exceptional women have defied the odds and left an indelible mark on aviation.

Their courage, talent, and relentless determination have not only shattered glass ceilings but have significantly contributed to the growth, development, and safety of modern aviation.

Here, the remarkable achievements of some of these pioneering women who have played a crucial role in transforming the aviation industry will be highlighted.

AMELIA EARHART:

Amelia Earhart was one of the most influential female aviators in history. In 1932, she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean, inspiring countless women to pursue careers in aviation.

She completed the journey in approximately 15 hours, flying from Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, to Culmore, Northern Ireland.



Earhart was also the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California. On January 11, 1935, Earhart successfully flew solo from Honolulu, Hawaii to Oakland, California. This 2,408-mile flight made her the first person to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean.



BESSIE COLEMAN

Bessie Coleman made history as the first African-American woman to earn a pilot's license. Born in 1892, Coleman had to overcome numerous obstacles and discrimination to achieve her dream of becoming a pilot.

In pursuit of her dreams to become a pilot, Coleman faced discrimination in the United States. She subsequently moved to France and enrolled in a prestigious aviation school, where she earned her international pilot's license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) in 1921.

After earning her pilot's license, Coleman became known for her electrifying aerial stunt performances. She captivated audiences with her incredible skill and daring maneuvers. These performances brought her fame and recognition across both the United States and Europe.



VALENTINA TERESHKOVA

Valentina Tereshkova, born in 1937, holds the distinction of being the first woman to enter space. In 1963, she completed a solo mission aboard the spacecraft Vostok 6, thus breaking barriers for women in the field of aerospace.

She piloted the spacecraft Vostok 6, orbiting the Earth for nearly three days during her mission. Her flight lasted a total of 70 hours and 50 minutes, making her a pioneer in space exploration.

Tereshkova's journey into space was part of the Soviet Union's Vostok program, which aimed to demonstrate the capabilities of their manned spaceflight program and the prowess of Soviet women.



EILEEN COLLINS

In 1995, Eileen Collins became the first female Space Shuttle pilot, defying gender stereotypes and successfully leading the STS-63 mission. Later, in 1999, Collins made history again by becoming the first female commander in the history of NASA's Space Shuttle program. Her exceptional leadership skills and expertise in spaceflight earned her the trust and respect of her colleagues.

Collins participated in a total of four Space Shuttle missions during her career as an astronaut.

HÉ LÉ NE BOUCHER

Regarded as one of France's greatest aviators, Hélène Boucher began her career in the late 1920s. Displaying exceptional talent, she set various aviation records and earned her pilot's license at just 22 years old. Her remarkable achievements and pioneering spirit served as an inspiration to female aviators in France and beyond.



JERRIE COBB

Jerrie Cobb, an American aviator, in the early 1960s, Cobb became the first woman to undergo the same physical and psychological tests as the male astronauts for NASA's Mercury program.

Although she performed exceptionally well, the program was ultimately canceled, and none of the women involved were given a chance to fly in space.

In 1959, she set three world records by flying a civilian aircraft, a twin-engine plane called the Aero Commander, around the world in a total time of 8 days, 10 hours, and 20 minutes.





PATTY WAGSTAFF

Patty Wagstaff is a renowned aerobatic pilot who broke through traditional gender roles with her exceptional flying skills. She achieved numerous national and international aerobatic championships and introduced thousands to the world of aviation through her breathtaking performances.

Wagstaff is a highly accomplished aerobatic pilot known for her success in competitions and her representation of the

United States on the international stage. The aviation industry owes a great debt to the pioneering women who have defied stereotypes and made monumental contributions throughout history.

From Amelia Earhart's legendary flights to Valentina Tereshkova's groundbreaking space mission, these trailblazing women have left an indelible mark on aviation.

5 top places to visit in Africa this Christmas

CHISOM MICHAEL



As the seasons shift and the enchantment of travel beckons, Africa, the second-largest and second-most populous continent, emerges as a treasure trove of awe-inspiring landscapes, diverse cultures, and abundant wildlife. It stands as the ultimate destination for those seeking the best places to visit in Africa.

This vast continent offers a captivating array of destinations to explore, ranging from the expansive savannas of the Serengeti to the majestic heights of

Mount Kilimanjaro, making it an unparalleled haven for discerning travelers.

Each country has its own unique culture, history, and natural beauty, making it a continent worth spending time in. This season, consider exploring the following five destinations that promise not just a vacation but an unforgettable adventure.

ACCORDING TO U.S NEWS REPORT RANKING, HERE ARE THE TOP 5 BEST PLACES TO VISIT IN AFRICA THIS SEASON

Serengeti National Park



For those who love animals, the Serengeti National Park, which is located in Tanzania, is the ideal getaway. Famous for the yearly migration of gazelles, zebras, and wildebeest, the park provides a front-row ticket to one of the most amazing natural shows on the planet.

Acacia trees dotting the broad savannah plains, framed by far-off horizons, provide a stunning backdrop for hot air balloon safaris and game drives. Watch the cycle of life in action as predators and prey live side by side in this wild paradise.

Victoria Falls



Victoria Falls, which spans the boundary between Zimbabwe and Zambia, is a monument to the raw beauty and strength of the natural world. The falls, often called the "Smoke that Thunders," produce a captivating display of mist and rainbows as they tumble down a mile-wide basalt valley.

Adventurers can experience bungee jumping, white-water rafting, and helicopter excursions; those looking for peace and quiet can take a leisurely Zambezi River sunset cruise. Victoria Falls offers visitors an immersive experience with the forces that sculpted the African landscape, it's more than just a place to visit in Africa.

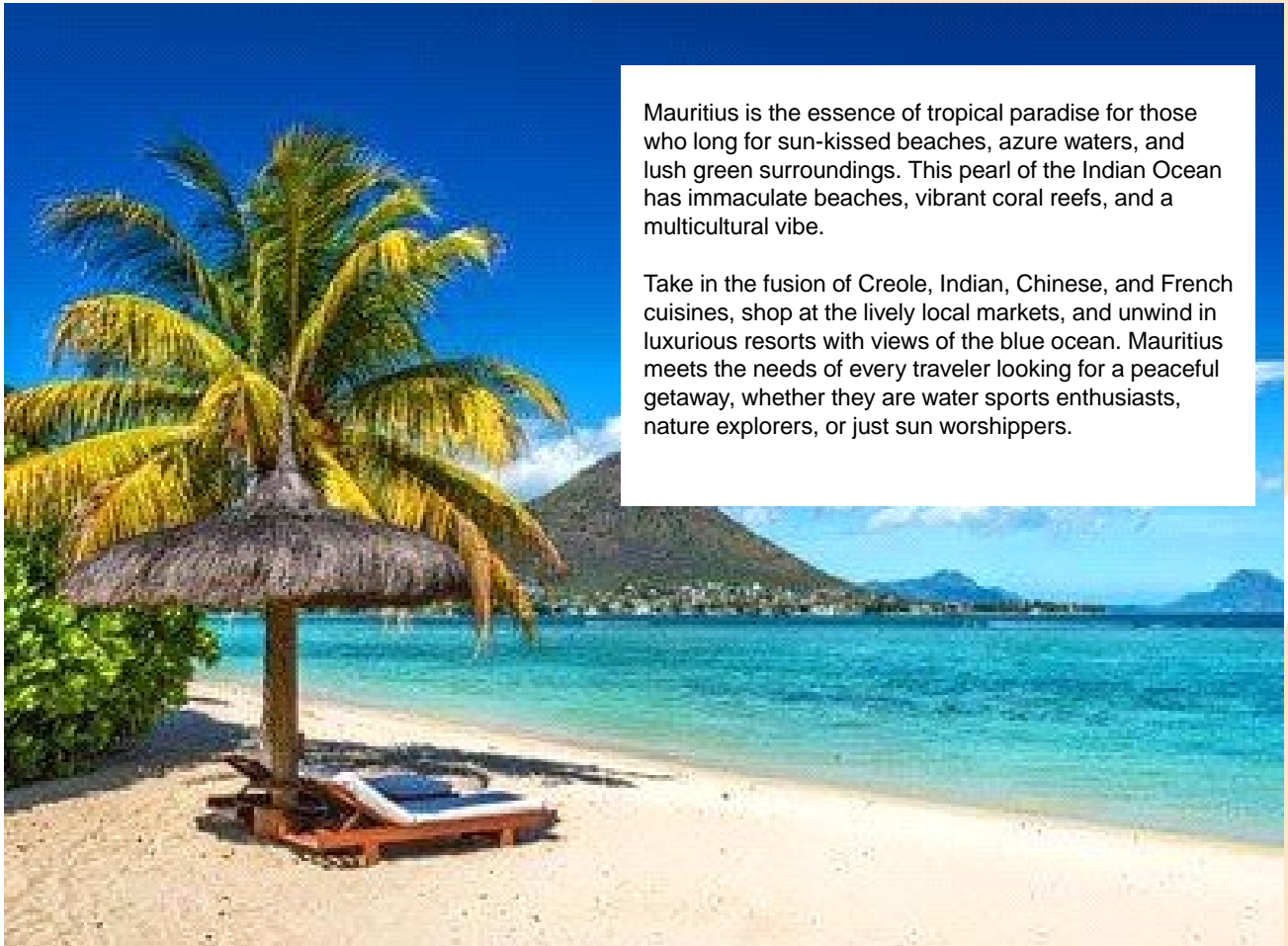
Tanzania

Tanzania provides a tapestry of experiences that encompasses both natural beauty and cultural richness outside of the Serengeti. Discover the ancient Stone Town in Zanzibar, where Swahili customs coexist peacefully with influences from the Persian and Arab eras.

Climb Africa's highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, for an amazing view of the continent. Dive into the bright coral reefs and a variety of marine life found in the crystal-clear waters of the Zanzibar Archipelago. Tanzania is a place that appeals to those seeking adventure, culture, and the great outdoors.



Mauritius



Mauritius is the essence of tropical paradise for those who long for sun-kissed beaches, azure waters, and lush green surroundings. This pearl of the Indian Ocean has immaculate beaches, vibrant coral reefs, and a multicultural vibe.

Take in the fusion of Creole, Indian, Chinese, and French cuisines, shop at the lively local markets, and unwind in luxurious resorts with views of the blue ocean. Mauritius meets the needs of every traveler looking for a peaceful getaway, whether they are water sports enthusiasts, nature explorers, or just sun worshippers.

Masai Mara National Reserve



Located in Kenya, the Masai Mara National Reserve is widely recognised as the epitome of the classic African safari experience. The reserve, which is home to the "Big Five" which are lions, elephants, buffalo, leopards, and rhinoceroses, displays the abundance of species found in East Africa.

Watch as zebras and wildebeests brave the crocodile-infested waters of the Mara River to experience the drama of the Great Migration. Interact with the Maasai, a group distinguished by their vivid culture and garish clothing. For those looking for a genuine connection to the natural outdoors, the Masai Mara offers a haven and a photographer's paradise.

**5 best places
to visit in Africa
this Christmas**



A NIGHT OF WHISKY BLISS: Unveiling the luxury gifting experience with guests

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA

It was a night of Whisky bliss which brought together whisky enthusiasts, connoisseurs, and distinguished guests.

The event unfolded with the grand unveiling of the luxury gifting boxes, adding a touch of sophistication to the upcoming holiday season.

William Grant & Sons, the Single Malt distillery, known for its commitment to producing the whisky blends and Seinde Signature Salon De Perfume, hosted an

event at the exquisite Centre Pointe in Lagos, Nigeria.

The spotlight of the evening shone brightly on Glenfiddich and The Balvenie whiskies, each bottle standing as a testament to precision and a distinctive flavor profile.

Complementing the whiskies, guests were treated to a carefully curated selection of finger foods that enhanced the nuanced notes of the spirits. The elegant ambience of Centre Pointe Lagos served as a fitting



backdrop for the launch, providing an elevated experience for all guests.

Eddie Madaki, Prestige Manager at William Grants and Sons, expressed his enthusiasm, saying, "We are delighted to present the luxury gifting boxes, a perfect blend of craftsmanship and opulence.

"This collaboration with Seinde Signature Salon De Perfume allows us to transcend traditional gifting, providing an exquisite selection that marries the world of fine fragrances with exceptional whiskies."

Adding an extra layer of exclusivity, these luxury gift boxes will be available exclusively at Seinde Signature Salon De Perfume. Oreoluwa Olusola, General Manager of Seinde Signature Salon De Perfume, stated "As the first and only exclusively niche retailer in Nigeria, we exclusively distribute all our fragrances ensuring that each scent embodies a unique narrative of sophistication and exclusivity".

"Extending this experience to William Grant & Sons luxury gifting boxes, we are happy to craft an exclusive experience where the worlds of fine fragrances and exceptional whiskies converge " she added.

The opulent gifting experience presented by William Grant & Sons is poised to redefine the art of gifting, offering a blend of sophistication, craftsmanship, and the finest spirits.

As the holiday season approaches, these exclusive offerings are set to become the epitome of elegance and distinction, making them a coveted choice for those who appreciate the finer things in life.

The luxurious affair showcased the pinnacle of whisky craftsmanship. The brand's commitment to excellence was evident in every aspect of the evening, leaving guests with a profound appreciation for the art of whisky making and of course tasting.





CULTURATI:

Celebrating Africa's rich and diverse cultural heritage

ABUBAKAR IBRAHIM

African culture is varied and manifold, consisting of a mixture of countries with various tribes depicting their unique characteristic and trait from the continent of Africa.

Africa has numerous ethnic nationalities all with varying qualities such as language, dishes, greetings, dressing and dances. However, each of the regions of Africa share a series of dominant cultural traits which distinguish various African regional cultures from each other and the rest of the world.

Culturati, Africa's largest cultural fusion has been fostering the development of Africa's tangible and intangible cultural assets as a means of developing comparative advantages in an increasingly competitive tourism marketplace, and to create local distinctiveness in the face of globalization.

It has sustained the fusion of arts, culture and tourism as major drivers of destination attractiveness and competitiveness.

Culturati 2023 had exciting and educating activities that weave around African culture, with Culturati food fiesta portrayed the rich assortment of African food and beverages, connecting various people to African food delicacies, components and economic opportunities, while boosting the local tourism and hospitality sector.

The fiesta programmed to herald the annual Culturati celebration brought tourists closer to locals through a delightful variety of foods and beverages and flavour the local economy by creating jobs around local food products.



The fiesta provided identify conservation and authentic brand development with food items regarded as culturally embedded symbols and markers of place identity.

In many senses, the Culturati Food Fiesta can be considered a real-time platform to promote and enhance place identity to a wide range of target groups.

Idris Aregbe, the organiser of Culturati, who spoke during the 2023 Culturati said as an African cultural enthusiast with a penchant for creating value, he believes African Culture can be translated into a sustainable vehicle for youth empowerment, tourism promotion and other economic initiatives that resonate with global sustainable development goals (SDGs), given the latent economic potentials therein.

"The dire unemployment situation precipitated the cultural movement SISI-OGE in 2006 to bring attention to the potentials in African culture.

"Over the course of a decade SISI-OGE metamorphosed into Culturati which has become Africa's largest cultural fusion, continually creating business opportunities for many young cultural buffs to leverage on rewarding cultural excellence while celebrating Africa's rich and diverse cultural heritage," Aregbe said.

He said this year, the event was a lot more robust in terms of brands and audience engagement with a number of interactive segments that amplified the beauty and diversity of African culture with the Culturati market showcasing the ingenuity of craftsmen, the Culturati food Court saturated with an assortment of delicacies portraying the richness of African cuisine, the Culturati Fashion Show, with the best dressed African of the evening carting home a prize.

Aregbe noted that the whole essence is to open up economic opportunities in African culture for youth empowerment, tourism promotion and general economic development.



Lagos Continental: Redefining hospitality, luxury and travel in Africa

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



The travel and hospitality industry in Nigeria has been a very big source of income to the Nigerian economy, fueled by a strong economy, rising global consumer purchasing power, and technology.

This growth has not been limited to traditional travel and hospitality plays, as digital innovation has created entirely new travel segments and competitors, such as new accommodation models, ride-sharing, reservation apps, hotel, and airline apps, and other new entrants.

These newcomers and the traditional industry players have shared the benefit of strong global growth to re-define the travel and hospitality landscape.

More importantly are the hotels.

The hotel chain development pipeline Africa report, according to the W Hospitality Group says "West Africa has the main pipeline activity with 20,624 rooms (46 per cent of the regional total), followed by East Africa with 29 per cent.

The six sub-Saharan African countries in the top 10 account for 54 percent of the region".

Nigeria is seeing a surge in hotel investment. According to the W Hospitality Group report titled Hotel Chain Development Pipeline Africa, it has been ranked second-highest in Africa.

The hotel industry in Africa is growing rapidly, and several factors, including increasing tourism, rising incomes, investment in infrastructure, and an attractive investment climate, are driving this. Stakeholders have said amid the growth of hotels in

Nigeria is the need for quality, attention to details and delivering luxury to clients.

One of the few hotels redefining hospitality in Nigeria is the Lagos Continental, a 5-star luxury hotel located in the heart of Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria, has long been a beacon of luxury and hospitality in the West African region.

With commitment to excellence, dedication to customer service, cutting-edge use of technology, and pursuit of innovation, Lagos Continental have positioned itself as a trailblazer in the hospitality industry.

"As we reflect on our past achievements and performance, it becomes clear why Lagos Continental is not just a hotel but a symbol of sophistication and success," the hotel stated.

Growth and expansion:

Lagos Continental has witnessed remarkable growth over the years. It currently stand as the tallest hotel in West Africa, with 23 floors featuring 358 rooms and suites, offering guests breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean, Lagos Creek, and the city. Its prime location, within the heart of Lagos's central business district, makes it the preferred choice for both business and leisure travelers.

"We are strategically situated just 28.9 kilometers from Murtala Muhammed International Airport, ensuring convenient access for our global clientele. Moreover, our proximity to embassies, museums, leisure centers, shopping malls, and local markets allows our guests to



explore and experience the vibrant culture of Lagos with ease," the hotel management states.

State of the Art Facilities

Lagos Continental boasts a range of world-class facilities that set new industry standards. The centerpiece is our 1,400 square-meter Grand African Ballroom, perfect for hosting grand events and conferences.

In addition to the ballroom, we offer six smaller meeting and breakout rooms, equipped with the latest technology to ensure productive and successful gatherings/meetings.

Its fifth-floor recreation center houses an infinity pool, beauty spa, hair salon, and health & fitness center called Continental Fitness, all dedicated to rejuvenating our guests. The 24/7 operating gym is a testament to our commitment to providing guests with top-tier amenities, no matter the hour.

For food enthusiasts, Lagos Continental offers six food and beverage outlets, each specializing in Nigerian, Continental, and Asian Cuisine. Our Chinese culinary offerings, led by Chef Chua Kong Ngiap at Soho Restaurant, ensure an exquisite dining experience that caters to a wide range of tastes and preferences.

Innovation and Technology

In the digital age, Lagos Continental is keeping pace with technology. It recognises that technology is essential in providing guests with seamless and convenient experiences.

High-speed internet access, smart room controls, and digital check-in are just a few examples of its tech-savvy approach to hospitality.

"We are continuously innovating and investing in cutting-edge technologies to enhance the guest experience. From contactless check-in to mobile room keys, we are dedicated to providing a modern, hassle-free stay for our discerning clientele," the hotel stated.

Sustainability and responsibility

Lagos Continental takes its commitment to sustainability seriously. It understands the importance of protecting the environment and the local community. From energy-efficient lighting to waste reduction and recycling programs, we strive to minimize our environmental footprint.

Furthermore, it is actively engaged in corporate social responsibility initiatives, contributing to the betterment of the community in which we operate. Lagos Continental believes in giving back and making a positive impact on society.

Awards and Achievements

Lagos Continental's journey to success has been punctuated by numerous accolades, with its recent victories at the Hotel Managers Awards and World Chefs Championship 2023 Award.

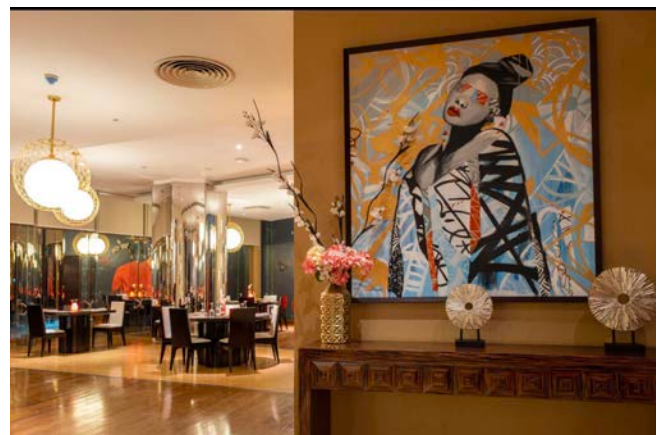
At the 2023 Hotel Managers Awards, Lagos Continental was recognized as the "Best Luxury Business Hotel in Nigeria." The hotel stood out among the best hotels worldwide by offering exceptional services, a luxurious ambiance, state-of-the-art conference facilities, and high-speed internet access, catering to the needs of modern business travelers. This recognition reinforces its position as a paragon of luxury and service in the Nigerian hospitality landscape.

Notably, Chef Chua Kong Ngiap, the culinary genius behind Soho Restaurant, our signature Chinese restaurant, was awarded the prestigious "World Chefs Championship 2023 Award." This distinction, widely regarded as the highest honor in the culinary world, is a testament to Chef Chua Kong Ngiap's dedication, exceptional culinary skills, and his passion for Chinese cuisine. His achievement mirrors our commitment to culinary excellence and innovation.

Customer Service

At the heart of its success is its unwavering commitment to delivering unparalleled customer service. Its staff are trained to ensure that every guest's stay is memorable and enjoyable. It believes in going the extra mile to exceed expectations, which has resulted in a loyal and satisfied customer base.

Our 24/7 concierge service, multilingual staff, and personalized attention to each guest's needs are some of the ways the hotel ensure the highest level of customer satisfaction.



From Idea to solutions:

How getLinked.ai supports start-ups to success ...presents N2.2m to Hackathon winners

FRANCIS ONYEMACHI



From generating an idea to building human resource solutions that would eventually transform into a successful tech start-up business from Nigeria to the world, getLinked.ai, Nigeria's pioneer artificial intelligence powered platform is supporting startups to succeed.

Dedicated to connecting exceptional talents with forward thinking employers, getLinked.ai recently presented the sum of 2.2million naira as winning incentives to the top three finalists of its hackathon 1.0 initiative in Lagos.

Highlighting its position as a frontrunner in the HR Tech industry, getLinked.ai has developed scalable solutions designed to assist employers in pinpointing the ideal candidate from a vast

pool of applicants through the use of its Applicant Tracking System.

This system goes beyond mere identification, conducting assessments on chosen candidates through a set of off-the-shelf questions endorsed by leading academics and thought leaders worldwide. Incorporated within the assessment process are proctoring services that furnish comprehensive reports on the activities undertaken during the evaluation.

Additionally, getLinked.ai offers Interview-as-a-Service and an employee management system, providing a comprehensive suite of tools for effective human resources management.



The overall winner, team TechTornado clinched the top prize of One Million Naira for building 'Recruitn' platform that reimagines recruitment with personalized and efficient features for job seekers and human resource professionals. TechTitans won the 2nd prize of Seven hundred thousand Naira with their 'HeasyResource' human resource management system designed to streamline processes, enhance communication and drive growth through user-friendly technology.

Team 'Incorp' won five hundred thousand Naira 3rd prize for their innovative work which aims at streamlining human resource operations, AI-powered applicant screening and seamless onboarding experience for recruitment efficiency.

At the grand finale of the getLinked.ai Hackathon 1.0 in Lagos, the ten finalists selected from a pool of 20 qualifiers from over 400 initial entries presented a demo of their innovative products built in just 30 days while professional judges in the tech industry gives valuable feedback and verdict on the ideas showcased.

According to Igbene Otimeyin, Chief Executive Officer of getLinked.ai, all the finalists started

with an idea and built innovative human resource solutions not only to convince the judges but to eventually transform into a successful tech start-up business from Nigeria to the world.

"We are extremely proud of the works put in by all the teams in such a period of 30 days since we announced and opened entries for the first of its kind getLinked.ai hackathon 1.0 initiative in Nigeria. Our ultimate goal is to continuously provide support for all participants to transform their solutions into a successful tech business venture impacting not only Nigeria and Nigerians, but the world at large," Otimeyin explained.

Adesanya Yemisi, front-end engineer and lead, team TechTornado expressed gratitude to getLinked.ai for the wonderful initiative that sees young techies collaborating and competing in developing innovative human resource solutions.

The finalists of the first edition of the getLinked.ai hackathon included Pathfinders, Inventus, Dev Combos, Xavier, Team Success, Taiwo Software, TechTitans, Incorp and eventual winners, TechTornado.

Celebrating Tradition and Community:

Burukutu, the Iconic Palm Wine of Northern Nigeria

CHIGOZIRIM ENYINNIA



Burukutu, the Palm wine of the North, is a traditional alcoholic beverage that holds significant cultural importance in the Northern region of Nigeria.

This local beer is a millet-based alcoholic drink that has been enjoyed for centuries, and has become deeply intertwined with the social and cultural fabric of the region.

In Northern Nigeria, Burukutu is not just a drink; it is a symbol of community, celebration, and hospitality. It is often prepared and enjoyed during special occasions such as weddings, festivals, and religious ceremonies.



Janet Suweeba, a simple girl from the North, shared with enthusiasm how Burukutu was also a form of goodwill currency in her village.

“When my mother needs people to help her work on the farm, my father will call men to come and work on it and she will make plenty Burukutu for them to drink and they will be happy with that as payment,” she said.

She revealed that “In our village, women don't usually farm. If they have a farm, it is the men that will help farm for you and you pay them.”

The process of making Burukutu involves soaking and fermenting millet grains, usually in a clay pot or calabash, until the fermentation process is complete.

Different variations of the drink exist across different ethnic groups, each with its own distinct flavors and preparation methods.

One of the cultural significance of Burukutu lies in its communal consumption. It is a drink that encourages people to come together, share stories, and strengthen social bonds within the community.

Janet further enlightened that in the midst of labour, the traditional drink inspires a jolly vibe

that in turn takes away the stress of the farm work.

“You see as they are working and drinking Burukutu, they will just be talking and laughing together o!,” She said.

It is also often consumed in large gatherings, where people gather around a central pot or bowl and pass it around, taking turns to sip from a shared cup.

The act of sharing this traditional drink communicates a sense of warmth, friendliness, and acceptance in the Northern culture.

It is interesting to note that the art of brewing Burukutu is often passed down through generations, with the techniques and recipes being kept within families or communities.

The preservation of traditional knowledge and craftsmanship is highly valued and adds to the cultural significance of the drink; for It is not just a drink but a symbol of community, celebration, hospitality, and cultural heritage.

It reflects the shared values, traditions, and history of the people, making it an integral part of Northern Nigerian culture.

Here are foods to avoid pairing with bananas as diet

CHARLES OGWO

Human beings often are enemies of their health by the food combos they eat consciously or unconsciously.

In many homes and events, people serve fruit combos without really having proper knowledge of the fruits that should not go with some others.

As good as it is to eat fruits in combos, it is best to know what to combine or not to combine with some fruits, especially at this yuletide season.

According to Ayurveda, some food combinations can have many side effects, from weight gain and indigestion to bloating and blood sugar spikes.

Bananas are undeniably one of the most loved on-the-go fruits, which are loaded with health-enriching proteins and other vital nutrients. However, pairing bananas with certain foods can work adversely and impact negatively on the overall health and well-being of people. Here are foods that you must avoid pairing with bananas at all costs.

The Nutrition

Bananas, a nutritional powerhouse, are rich in potassium, supporting heart health and regulating blood pressure. Packed with vitamins C and B6, they boost immunity and aid metabolism.

The soluble fibre aids digestion, and natural sugars provide a quick energy boost. Bananas are a convenient, nutrient-dense snack promoting overall well-being.

Milk and Dairy products

Bananas are naturally loaded with proteins, fiber, and other essential minerals like magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, and vitamin B, which makes it a filling as well as nutritious fruit.

However, when combined with the milk fats and other nutrients it increases the dose of nutrients making it difficult to digest and may trigger bloating or uneasiness.

High protein foods

Many people stick to a high protein diet, wherein they combine meat or eggs with bananas, which may slow down the digestive process. Bananas are relatively quick to digest, and combining them with slow-digesting proteins may cause fermentation and gas in the digestive tract. Processed carbs

Consuming bananas with processed carbohydrates such as sugary snacks or baked goods, may lead to a quick spike and sudden drop in blood sugar levels. This can result in feelings of fatigue and hunger shortly after eating.

Green bananas

This may sound strange, but ripe bananas are generally easy to digest, but pairing them with green bananas or unripe bananas can cause digestive discomfort as green bananas contain more resistant starch, which can be harder to digest and may cause bloating or gas in some individuals.

Citrus fruits

Combining bananas with citrus fruits like lime, oranges or grapefruits, may lead to indigestion or discomfort for some individuals.

This is because both bananas and citrus fruits contain acidic nutrients and the combination can be harsh on the stomach.

Sweets

Combining bananas with other sweets and desserts can lead to excessive sugar intake, which may contribute to weight gain and other health issues.

Avocado

Bananas and avocados are high in potassium, which can cause hyperkalemia, a disorder marked by excessive potassium levels in the blood. Hence, one should avoid pairing them together.

Excessively cold foods

Eating very cold foods, such as ice cream, immediately after consuming bananas may lead to stomach discomfort for some individuals.

THE IMPERATIVES OF INCULCATING SOCIAL SKILLS ON STUDENTS

CHARLES OGWO

Children all over the world are born without social skills, it is not something they will grow and just adapt into. They learn from the environment where they are nurtured with either good or bad behaviours.

Social skills play a vital role in a child's emotional health and well-being. They are linked to the quality of the school environment and safety.

Social skills learning improves students' positive behaviour and reduces negative behaviour. Hence, according to Elizabeth Ohaka, an early childhood educationist, "They have to be deliberately taught, of course children learn by observation, association and interaction. And all of these are ways of inculcating social skills."

However, it is rather ironic that in Nigeria, parents are often seen yelling at their children to retaliate whenever their peers hit them or exhibit any anti-social behaviour towards them.

This an eye-for-an-eye philosophy tend to infuse in children rather a hostile attitude and extinguishes the ember of growing together in love.

The home is no doubt the primary socialisation institution for every child. This is because children observe the display of social skills by their parents, siblings, uncles, aunts and other adults within their ecosystem.

"Children learn by repetition, and for them to learn social skills, you need to keep repeating to them how to greet, how to use your magic words such as thank you, you're welcome, and pardon me, among others. They need to be taught all over again to help inculcate these social skills. Adults should be ready to keep repeating these words, and not be tired until they grab it. It takes a lot of time before a child can learn one social skill," Ohaka said. Social skills can be taught as a lesson, subjects like social studies, health education and/or through extra-curricular activities. When schools have sporting activities, it is an opportunity for children to learn social skills.

That is why it is not only in classrooms that children should learn social skills. They learn both in the classrooms and outside classrooms. When they have career day, colour day and cultural day, among others are avenues for children to learn social skills.

Social skills enable children to measure up with their equals on the high level, and gives them confidence to face challenges in life. Besides, social skills help build a child's self-discipline.

Social skill with the fear of God produces children with high moral standards and excellence.

Hence, giving children appropriate social development can be equated to laying an enduring foundation of personal and social success for such a child.

From childhood to adulthood social skills are an essential part of man's daily life that significantly affects almost every aspect of his life.

Social skills are the skills required to interact with other people for almost anything and everything, such as getting needs met, playing, learning, collaborating, and working together.

Consequently, teachers, especially at the basic school levels, need to take the time and effort to teach appropriate social skills to students to help them understand and manage themselves during class and to be able to optimise their learning too.

According to Pooja Harlalka, head of counselling, network head of SEL & Counselling, The Acres Foundation, here are some of the methods inculcate social skills on students:

Set clear expectations of how they should behave in class that will help them to be respectful towards themselves and each other and be responsible for the role they play in creating a harmonious learning environment that is safe and comfortable.

This can be done by creating a class contract and class agreement, with a set of norms that everyone in the class sets together, knows and can follow.

Modelling is a powerful way students learn from their teachers. Students of all ages observe their teachers and often tend to learn from watching and listening to them. Therefore, how a teacher interacts with students and peers is a way to teach students to do the same too.

Explicitly teach students the skills of how to interact with each other in appropriate and healthy ways. Some of these skills include the theoretical concepts and skills for important topics such as;

Teaching about emotions, how to identify them in one's self, and accepting all feelings. Inculcate in them how to manage reactions to their emotions and feelings, especially when it does not favour them.

Besides, teaching them how to build and maintain friendships, collaboration and working together in teams. It is ideal to teach a child how to embrace respectful communication which includes disagreement, receiving and providing feedback, and conflict resolution.

10 BUDGET-FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILY FUN

ESTHER EMOEKPERE

Christmas is almost upon us once again, though this year's celebrations might dance to a slightly different tune, due to the present economic situation and rising inflation that has made people reconsider their regular indulgence.

Just because your wallet might be feeling a bit like Ebenezer Scrooge, doesn't mean you can't have a jolly time with your family. This year, ditch the shopping sprees and embrace the spirit of togetherness with these 10 fun, engaging, and totally affordable Christmas activities, and it just might be your most memorable Christmas ever.

Family Sports Day

Organize a day of outdoor games and sport activities at a nearby field or just outside your home. With options ranging from classic games like "ayo" or "ludo" to easy relay races, this is an enjoyable way to keep active and strengthen family ties.

Karaoke

What better way to embrace the Christmas spirit than gathering with family on Christmas Eve and singing classic Christmas carols? Organize a karaoke at your place and let the festive tunes ring out, spreading joy and holiday cheer.

Gift Exchange

Swap out expensive gifts for a creative and budget-friendly gift exchange. Set a low-budget limit for gifts or opt for homemade presents to inspire thoughtfulness and creativity in your family.

Volunteering

Christmas is a time for giving. Volunteer as a family at a charity or community center. Whether it's distributing food to the less privileged or participating in community clean-ups, spreading cheer through acts of kindness can be incredibly fulfilling.

Movie Night

Turn your living room into a mini theater by bringing in pillows

and blankets, dimming the lights, and setting up cozy seating. It's a chance to cuddle up and strengthen relationships in a relaxed and intimate environment with those you love. Be sure to include popcorn and drink for everyone.

Free Holiday Events

Explore various free holiday events, like caroling in the neighborhood or local church. Attend one or two of these events with your family to immerse yourselves in the Christmas spirit without needing to spend any money.

DIY Home Decoration

Gather the family for a craft day using locally available materials. From handcrafted decorations to paper flowers, involve everyone in transforming your home into a festive wonderland. As you decorate, don't forget to create a festive Christmas playlist for everyone to enjoy.

Family Cook-a-thon

Involve the family in preparing local festive delicacies. Cooking together reduces costs and strengthens family ties through shared culinary experiences, whether it is jollof rice or traditional soups.


Storytelling

Gather the family for storytelling sessions, sharing folklore, and tales passed down through generations. Encourage the older members of the family to narrate traditional Christmas stories, imparting wisdom and cultural values.

Family Picnic

Explore the outdoors, and organize a picnic with homemade snacks. This is a budget-friendly way to enjoy family time.

And there you have it—10 fantastic ways to enjoy Christmas without breaking the bank. Capture the moments with lots of pictures and videos to cherish these memories. Wishing you an early Merry Christmas!



Christmas: Surprise a loved one with any of these affordable, thoughtful gift ideas

CHIOMA ONUH

The holidays are quickly approaching, and you don't have to spend a fortune on presents especially with the state of the economy. Take a look at these considerate and reasonably priced Christmas gift suggestions that will make someone happy without breaking the bank.

1. **Culinary Delights:** Spread the happiness of baked goods like small chops with a bottle of wine or any affordable food tray of local dish. Present them in festive containers.
2. **Local handicrafts:** Look for exquisitely made traditional goods like as basket weaving, ceramics, and beaded items in the local markets. These handcrafted gifts may look like nothing but they have deep cultural meaning and lend an air of genuineness to the festive season.
3. **A Nigerian snack hamper:** You can assemble a gift basket with regional delicacies like chin-chin, groundnut sweets, or spices.
3. **Personalised Ankara Accessory:** Nigerians love the

vivid colours and patterns of ankara material. Think about using these vibrant fabrics to make or buy reasonably priced accessories like headwraps, earrings, or bags, notepads or even the ankara material itself.

4. **Movie Night Package:** Put together a gift card for a streaming service, popcorn, and a few vintage DVDs for a cosy movie night at home.
5. **Make your own beauty goods:** Utilise organic components that can be gotten from the market to craft beauty goods. These handmade products, which range from shea butter to coconut oil and liquid soap are thoughtful and affordable.
6. **Book Lovers' Delight:** Look for used books or investigate inexpensive e-books for your list of voracious readers. By including a handwritten note or bookmark, you can add a personal touch.
7. **Plant Gifts:** Give miniature potted plant as gift. It's a revitalising and environmentally friendly gift that adds a little touch of nature to the recipient's house.



8. Personalised Calendars or Planners: Create calendars or planners with images and sayings that are specific to the recipient's preferences. It's a lovely and useful present for the upcoming year.

9. Artistic Expressions: Print a digital drawing, frame a favourite quotation, make a straightforward artwork or get an affordable art piece from a local artist. Handcrafted artworks are thoughtful gifts.

10. DIY Nigerian Recipe Book: Gather your best family recipes or Nigerian foods. Give the book a personal touch

and some bright colours to make it a meaningful and affordable gift.

The sweetness of Christmas is in the cosiness of times spent together and kind deeds. These gift suggestions embrace the diversity of our culture while ushering us into holiday season. However, it is the intention behind a gift that makes it truly meaningful.

Merry Christmas in advance!!!



15 Elegant hairstyles to enhance your appearance this Christmas ...braids and wigs

CHIOMA ONUH

As the holiday season draws near, making 'Christmas hair' is an important part of our Christmas preparation. Braided hairstyles which are renowned for their elegance and adaptability have a special place in the hearts of many people.

While the wig market in Nigeria is still developing, with both domestic and foreign companies providing a large selection of styles to suit people's varied tastes, braids are making a comeback in 2023, but with a contemporary spin. These braided hairstyles are striking a bold figure

on red carpets and in street style. Let's examine the braided looks and wigs that are popular this year, from the busy streets of Lagos to the tranquil settings of Abuja.

GODDESS BRAIDS

Though they were fashionable a few years ago, box braids are having a bohemian rebirth in 2023. The current style of braids is looser and a little messier than the sleek and tight appearance. For a playful and diverse look, add vibrant threads, ribbons, or tiny accessories to the style.



BUBBLE BRAIDS

This is a major trend these days. It elevates the traditional ponytail. This style gives a braided ponytail a stylish and dynamic look by braiding multiple small sections, or bubbles, along its length. It's the ideal option for people who want to give their regular hairstyle more volume and flair. It is a great choice for kids.

JUMBO KNOTLESS BRAIDS

The jumbo knotless braid has become a very popular protective style. Larger braids that progressively get smaller toward the ends are used in this style to resemble the way hair naturally grows. It is a preferred choice for people who place a high value on their hair's health because it is not only aesthetically pleasing but also gentle on the scalp.

GHANA WEAVING PONYTAIL

This year, Ghanaian weaving which is renowned for its elaborate designs near the scalp will be

updated to include a sleek ponytail. This look is a favorite for people who want to look chic and sophisticated at the same time.

FULANI BRAIDS

The traditional hairstyles of the Fulani people are the inspiration for the modern twist on Fulani braids. It's fashionable to add vibrant beads to the ends of braids, which contrast strikingly with the hair's natural tones. This look updates a traditional appearance and looks very good on kids as well.

KIKO BRAIDS

In Nigeria's hairstyling scene, kiko braids which are distinguished by their delicate and intricate appearance are becoming increasingly popular. These tiny braids have a sleek and elegant appearance while showcasing accuracy and attention to detail. Kiko braids can be worn long or in an updo; they are a flexible option that works in both formal and informal settings.



CORNROWS

This is the closest look to being naturally beautiful. it gives your hair time to grow out. Wearing a cornrow will make you look younger. Braided Wigs: In Nigeria, braided wigs are a mainstay, providing the elegance of elaborate hairstyles without the time and work involved in braiding natural hair. These wigs are available in a variety of braid styles, such as twists, cornrows, and box braids, so people can experiment with different looks without committing to a particular braid style.

AFRO AND CURLY WIGS: Curly wigs, which embrace natural curls and afro textures, are very fashionable in Nigeria. These wigs allow people to display the beauty of Afro-textured hair in a variety of lengths and styles by simulating the appearance of natural curls, kinks, and coils.

LACE FRONT WIGS: Because of their adaptability and natural-looking hairline, lace front wigs have become incredibly popular. A seamless and realistic appearance is made possible by the lace front's ability to resemble a natural hairline. These wigs are available in a variety of textures and styles, ranging from wavy and straight to kinky and curly.

Pixie cut wigs: For those who wish to look bold and fashionable without committing to a short haircut, short and stylish pixie cut wigs are a popular option. These wigs allow for customization and artistic styling because they are available in a variety of colors and textures.

STRAIGHT WIGS: Straight wigs are still a common option in Nigeria since they are classic and timeless. Straight wigs give off a refined and



elegant look, whether they are silky and smooth or textured and full. They are appropriate for both formal and informal settings because of their versatility and ability to be styled in different ways.

COLOURED AND OMBRE WIGS: A fun and expressive way to experiment with different hair colors is with ombre and colored wigs. With the help of these wigs, people can alter their hair color without having to dye their natural hair, offering a range of subtle ombre transitions to striking and bright colors.

BOB WIGS: For those who would prefer a shorter length, Bob wigs provide a chic and stylish option. Regardless of whether it's a layered, textured, or sleek bob, this style is

adaptable and works well for both formal and informal settings.

TWIST AND LOC WIGS: These low-maintenance wigs mimic the appearance of twists, braids, or locs, providing a natural and textured look for those who prefer it. There are many different lengths and styles available for twist and loc wigs, providing a wide variety of options.

This Christmas, let your hair steal the show with these stylish braid hairstyles or wig styles that combine classic elegance with festive flair. These looks will make you the belle of the holiday ball, whether you decide go for a wig or crown yourself with a braid.



Five most controversial referee calls of 2023/24 Premier League season

ANTHONY NLEBEM

The 2023/24 Premier League season has been clouded by several contentious refereeing calls. The most recent one occurred in the high-profile Manchester City vs Tottenham Hotspur game, in which the referee, Simon Hooper, stopped the game for a foul on Man City's Erling Haaland when Jack Grealish had a clear advantage.

Here, we examine the five most controversial refereeing calls in the ongoing Premier League season.

WOLVES 2-2 NEWCASTLE

Referee Anthony Taylor on October 28, 2023, awarded Newcastle a penalty right at half-time, which helped Newcastle secure a point from the encounter. However, a replay

showed Hwang Hee-chan's kick on Callum Wilson was a rather soft one.

Wolves manager Gary O'Neil later said, "It was a terrible on-field decision, and terrible that VAR didn't intervene, so I thought they got it badly wrong."

Manchester United 1-0 Wolves

A league match between Manchester United and Wolverhampton Wanderers on August 14, 2023, at Old Trafford saw United goalkeeper Andre Onana slammed into Wolves' Sasa Kalajdzic, which would have been a penalty, but all appeals by the Wolves' players were ruled out by referee Simon Hooper.

TOTTENHAM 2-1 LIVERPOOL

In one of the most controversial decisions of VAR in recent years, this heated match between Tottenham and Liverpool, took place at Tottenham Stadium on September 30, 2023.

The Reds were already down by one man and saw a clear-cut goal by Luis Diaz being disallowed by Simon Hooper, who was the officiating referee

Again, VAR did not step in to correct the decision as well. The situation worsened for Liverpool when they lost another player at the fag end of the match, which led to Tottenham scoring a late winner.

NEWCASTLE 1-0 ARSENAL

Another controversial game of the 2023/24 season was this fixture between Arsenal and Newcastle on November

4, 2023., which left Arteta fuming in the post-match conference. Among the many disputes in the match, the most contentious was Anthony Gordon's goal.

The referee and VAR had to decide on three different calls: whether Gordon was offside, whether Joelinton had fouled Gabriel Magalhaes, and whether the ball had gone out of play.

To Arteta's dismay, the latter was rather simple, but for the first two, there wasn't much clarity. At the end of it all, Newcastle's goal stood, leaving the Arsenal manager fuming.

FULHAM 3-2 WOLVES

Also, in another controversial match when Fulham hosted Wolverhampton Wanderers at the Craven Cottage on November 28, 2023, Referee Michael Salisbury had acknowledged that he had erred in awarding a penalty to the Cottagers following a challenge by Nelson Semedo on Tom Cairney in the penalty area. It was just one of several injustices Wolves have had to deal with this season.

Tim Ream also appeared lucky to escape a second yellow card for pushing Hwang, and Carlos Vinicius may also have been sent off for violent behaviour after his collision with Max Kilman.

NPFL manager of the month: *Who does the cap fit?*

CHARLES OGWO



As the Nigerian Premier Football League (NPFL) organisers are poised to announce the manager of the month for November, the question jostling for answers in the mind of many pundits is who will be announced the winner.

The NPFL Manager of the Month is an association award just like is obtainable in the English Premier League's award that recognises the best-adjudged league manager each month of the season.

Four enterprising coaches have so far been nominated for the Nigeria Premier Football League Manager of the Month award.

The nominees are Eugene Agagbe (Lobi Stars), Edith Agoye (Sunshine Stars), Akinade Onigbinde (Doma United), and Daniel Ogunmodede (Remo Stars).

EDITH AGOYE

Agoye is leading the Sunshine Stars in the right direction, the team has garnered 16 points from 12 matches, winning four, drawing four, and losing four as well, and is safely placed 11th on the table.

The team recorded an unbeaten run in the month, beating high-rising Sporting Lagos 1-0.

Agoye, Sunshine Stars' head coach, said he was happy his team secured the maximum three points at home.

"I am happy with this result because there is no more home advantage in the league."

AKINADE ONIGBINDE

Onigbinde's Doma United is currently third on the NPFL table with 22 points having played 12 games, winning six, drawing four, and losing two.

In November, Doma United were unbeaten in six matches out of the six played that month, beating Gombe United 0-3 in their local derby.

EUGENE AGAGBE

Agagbe has continued to impress at Lobi Stars, having led the club to four wins in five matches in November. The team is currently placed second on the table with 23 points after 12 matches, winning seven, drawing two, and losing three.

DANIEL OGUNMODEDE

Ogunmodede has piloted Remo Stars to the top of the table with 23 points after 12 games, winning seven, drawing two, and losing three.

Remo Stars has won 58 per cent of its matches. Their home form is very good, having recorded 5 wins, 1 draw, and 0 loss. And their away form is considered excellent, as a result of 2 wins, 1 draw, and 3 losses.

No matter who wins, the four enlisted four coaches have proved that they are capable of turning the fortunes of their various clubs around for the better.

For instance, Akinade Onigbinde has in a way taken after Claudio Ranieri who against all odds guided Leicester City to winning the EPL with little and/or unknown players in 2016, just after being promoted from the championship level.

Ogunmodede on the other hand has shown his transformative ingenuity in the round leather managerial task by lifting the Sagamu-based team to the zenith of the log in just 12 matches.

Agoye and Agagbe are also worthy winners of the awesome display of their teams in November.

We say congratulations to whoever wins!

Brand Sponsorship Made Easy

FEYISITAN IJIMAKINWA



Brand sponsorship is a marketing technique whereby brands contribute to social events to gain more exposure. Sponsorship combines corporate social responsibility with advertising to develop a deeper connection with the target audience.

How does it work?

Before you sponsor an event or pay an influencer, you should look at the reach of the recipient. Your primary objective is to persuade more people to engage with your brand. If you're sponsoring a community event, find out how many people use your brand? More people means better sales. Spend money on something that will guarantee multiple leads.

Next, adopt a relevant method of advertising. If you sell an energy drink, sponsoring a sports event or team is ideal. Get into a win-win deal with the sports team to partly sponsor their brand. Ask the company to use your stickers on their cars and in return you'll give them rewards if they come out on top. Winning creates more exposure for your brand.

Spend money on something that will guarantee multiple leads. It's critical to strategise where your money should go when sponsoring your brand. Another sponsorship method is product donations. Let's say a secondary school football or basketball team needs new jerseys, uniforms and equipment. You can donate uniforms with your brand name and logo.

You can also choose custom lanyards, add the logo of the event or organization sponsored by your company on them, and let your employees wear them and give it to those who participate in the event and those who receive sponsorship.

Your own employees are participating in donations. It can be worn on the body, such as donating supplies during natural disasters elsewhere, or by sponsored people, such as members of a school house team, to wear it on the chest during the school's inter-house sports games or activities. This will let more people know about your company.

Another way to sponsor your brand is through cash donations. Write a cheque in your company's name to a charity organisation.

You can also approach influencers within your niche. This technique can be extremely effective, but it's also the riskiest. Social media is filled with fake influencers looking to make quick money. They buy followers and steal other people's posts to establish a following. Before you get into a deal with an influencer, find out if they're genuine. Study their posts and profile. How often do they post? How many people reply to their posts? Someone can have five hundred thousand followers, but get only one thousand people to comment or like their posts. On the other hand, another person can have ten thousand followers and have all of them like or comment on their posts. Here, you're better off working with the influencer that has ten thousand followers because they have more engaged users.

When you Need Sponsorship

If your business is relatively new, you can benefit from sponsoring events. Sponsorship is the swiftest way to shift public perception in your favor. People don't know what to think of you until you provide something of value to them. Sponsorship allows you to influence the buyer without asking them to purchase your products. The act of doing something that makes them happy helps you gain their favor.

Sponsorship is useful when you're introducing a new product on the market. It helps to boost awareness and sales. For example, if you're sponsoring an award ceremony, you can give the novel products to the top three best performers. 'Exclusivity' leads to more curiosity from the buyers. People will purchase the novel product because they want to grasp how the champions felt.

Products do well according to geographic regions. Sponsoring events in your best-selling areas can boost customer loyalty. You need sponsorship to retain customers. Show them you're still around and always prepared to serve them.

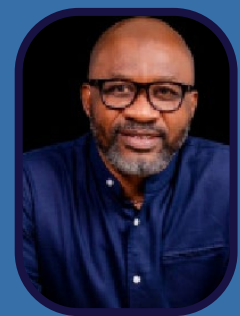
What's the Real Value of Brand Sponsorship?

With conventional advertising, you'll spend thousands or millions on billboards, television commercials, and online ads without the guarantee of a sale.

With sponsorships, you'll invest an enormous fixed amount on an event, and reap maximum value through word-of-mouth referrals. The free merchandise given out at the event will consistently remind people of your brand and encourage them to buy, long after you're gone. That's the real value of sponsorships. It leads to long-term customer loyalty and less spending for the business. Sponsorships help you forge relationships with the recipients. They allow you to understand the audience from their perspective. The audience also gets to learn more about you as a brand.

LAST LINE

Sponsorship is a way for brands to advertise their products without urging people to buy from them. They are more social and less commercial. Here's how it goes; the sponsor agrees to fund an event or project for the community and in return, they place their brand name and logo on all promotional items associated with the undertaking.



Feyisitan Ijimakinwa

Feyisitan Ijimakinwa is a Reputation and Perception Management expert. He is a prolific writer and researcher who, at different times, served as Head of Corporate Communications of top brands quoted on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. A versatile communications specialist, he practiced extensively as a print journalist and was variously engaged in the broadcast media, working on radio and television. Feyisitan continues to write on corporate communications, brand reputation and perception management, and brand intelligence, among others. He organises the 'Brand Intelligence and the Marketplace' masterclass. Feyisitan advocates a pollution free and sustainable environment



KILLED BY LOVE

UDY OSARO-EDOBOR

We grew up in the same neighborhood. We attended the same schools. We studied the same course at the University. We even got married the same year and had our kids almost simultaneously. Ifeoma and I were like twins.

She had a tough demeanor but she was a softie inside. Ifeoma could cry a river at the slightest provocation so she tried as much as she could to avoid things that'd make her get upset to the point of breaking down and because of that she was loved by everyone because she was such a joy giver and peace lover. She was beautiful inside out.

After having her third child, she started experiencing symptoms that pointed to uterine fibroids. Because

I'm not medically inclined she didn't believe me when I told her what I thought it was. She preferred to manage whatever was going on in her body than see a doctor.

When her periods became heavier, she looked anemic and gaunt and her stomach became abnormally big, Ifeoma decided that it was time to see a doctor.

Just as I had suspected all along, it was confirmed that Ifeoma had multiple uterine fibroids that had to be taken out urgently as they could become life threatening but my friend refused because she was afraid of dying. She had an awesome marriage with an amazing man and she couldn't imagine dying and leaving him alone.

..."Chima cannot survive without me, he will be useless if I die. I can't afford to die because of a surgery and leave Chima alone"....this became her anthem.

She also cited several instances of people that died after having the surgery.

Chima called for a family meeting where he pleaded with her family and his to help tell his wife to go and take the fibroids out but she stood her grounds. At this time, I couldn't be at that meeting physically because I had relocated to Canada so I had to join via Zoom. I watched as Chima broke down as his wife continued to insist that she would not go for the surgery.

About a year later, I was woken up by Chima's phone call. Ifeoma's health had worsened and she was going for an emergency surgery. He was scared because the situation looked really bad. I could only encourage him to be strong as we continued to hope for the best. Hours later, after a successful surgery, Ifeoma was taken from the theatre to recovery but the doctors were very worried about her.

After all kinds of tests were done, Ifeoma was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer of the stomach which had spread to her organs. We were told that this could have been averted if she had taken out the fibroids at the very early stage.

The rate at which she began to fade away after that diagnosis was alarming. I knew after face timing with her that it was only a matter of time before she left is. And yes we did.. we lost her eventually. What she feared most had caught up with her. Ifeoma loved her husband and didn't want to die and leave him alone and that's exactly what happened to her.

It's been three years since my twin sister died. The pain is still fresh each time I think about her. I can't help but think that some terrible things that happen to us can be avoided if we do the right thing but then again, we are sometimes the architect of our misfortune. Sometimes, I want to hate Ifeoma because I think she killed herself.

So, I was in Nigeria recently and this trip made me think about the fickleness of life and how we must be intentional about the things happen to us. I traveled to attend Chima's wedding. After mourning his wife for three years, he decided that it was time to move on and rightly so.

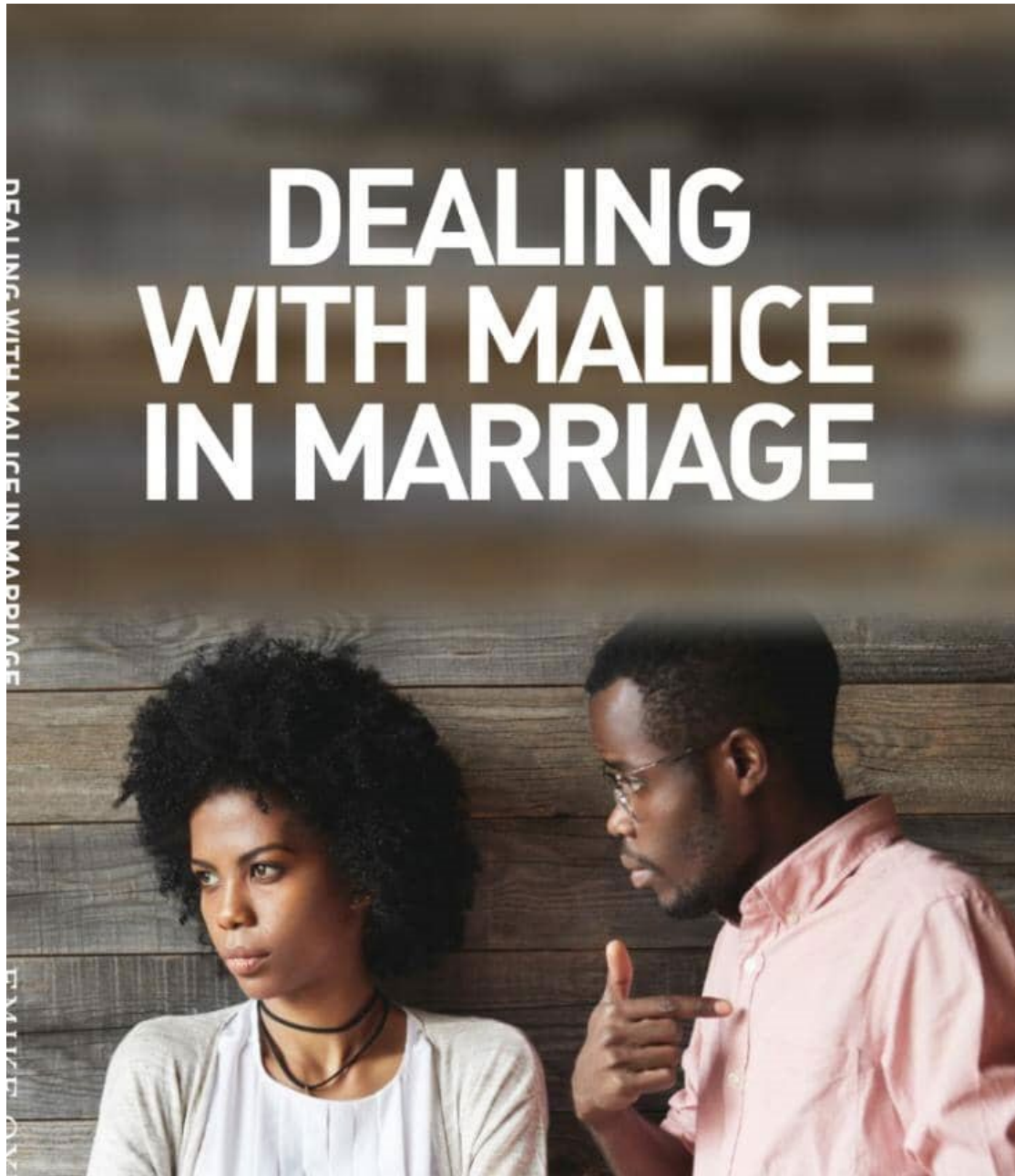
If only my sister and friend had known that life will still go on without her, should would have been more intentional about taking care of herself.



Udy Osaro-Edobor

Udy Osaro-Edobor is the Content Creator for SoTV (Supernatural Online TV) Nigeria. She is a movie/ scriptwriter, editor, and proofreader. She has several stories to her credit which she posts for free on her Ebook called Udy's Chapter. She is currently working on two short movies. Udy is also a wife, mother, and a "serial entrepreneur".

udy1717@gmail.com



Exercise Caution; As the Minor Disagreement with Your Partner May Lead to a Major Conflict -A Review of Emike Oyemade's Dealing with Malice in Marriage

Title: Dealing with Malice in Marriage
Author: Emike Oyemade
Publisher: Jotham Publishing
Year of Publication: 2023
Number of Pages: 74

DEALING WITH MALICE IN MARRIAGE

TITILADE OYEMADE

The book “Dealing with Malice in Marriage” digs into the unexpected challenges that many couples face, like disagreements and lingering resentment toward their partners. It talks about this reality in the context of the initial infatuation that usually marks the early stages of romantic relationships.

Emike Oyemade, the author, talking about common marriage experiences, acknowledges that you'll definitely hit a few bumps in the road. But what makes her book stand out is its unique perspective, firmly stating that despite these expected challenges, they don't have to turn into a full-blown grudge.

The book emphasizes the author's positive outlook, suggesting that with the right insights and strategies, couples can handle the ups and downs of marriage without letting them turn into long-lasting and harmful hostilities. At the beginning, the author defines malice, especially for readers who might not fully understand the term. As you get into the content, you start discovering seemingly small issues that could potentially turn into conflicts, making this book very informative.

If you're not married yet, count yourself lucky—this book equips you with the skills to handle conflicts, especially dealing with malice, before jumping into marriage.

The author gives practical steps for handling malice in your marriage, but it's more than just tips; she urges her readers to take charge of their marriages, advising them like a supportive older sister.

As you read on, you realize you and your partner aren't alone, as the author shares stories of various couples facing conflicts in their marriages. She provides down-to-earth advice, drawing on her experience as a counselor who's probably seen many couples and understands their marriage challenges. Her approach is empathetic, recognizing and addressing the feelings of her readers.

The author doesn't leave you hanging; instead, she guides you on how to fix things if you're unsure about your next steps. She gently advises her readers not to be passive but to actively take control of their marriages for success. It's clear this concise yet impactful book isn't just meant for personal possession; instead, it should also be obtained for friends who are eager to improve their marriages.

In conclusion, the author stresses that it's possible to be in love and still have minor conflicts. However, there are different levels of malice, and this book can help you recognize the early stages when you or your partner might be tempted to start trouble, letting you avoid it altogether.

Titilade Oyemade

Titilade Oyemade is a business executive in a leading organisation and holds a degree in Russian Language. She's the convener of the Hangoutwithtee Ladies Event and the publisher of Hangoutwithtee magazine. She spends her weekends attending women conferences, events and book readings. She loves to have fun and to help other women have the same in their lives.
Email: titi.oyemade@gmail.com
Social: [@tiipreeofficial](#)



WEEKENDER

MOVIE REVIEWS

FAMILY SWITCH (2023)

We'll remember it's the season of Christmas and we will be having loads of Christmas movies, every week. I wasn't so sure what to expect from this movie, but I decided to see it anyway, as I have created my preferred list for the season. I initially had assumed that it would have a story where 2 different families swap for Christmas but I was wrong. The Walker family all complained bitterly about their roles in the family as parents and kids, one day they go out to see a Christmas telescope and boom, they switch bodies the mum becomes the daughter and the daughter the mum, the father becomes the son and the son the father, it was really wild, but they tried to pass a message across, stop complaining about your role and just live your best life, by the time they returned to their bodies they were more grateful about life. Do check out this lovely Christmas movie and thank me later. The 105m comedy/family movie was directed by McG, they featured actors like Emma Myers, Brady Noon, Jennifer Garner, Matthias Schweighofer, Ed Helms, Rita Moreno, Vanessa Carrasco and many more



HEATWAVE 2022

Initially I thought this was going to be something close to an action movie, I guess I was wrong as I didn't see the twist revealed in this movie at all, wait till the very end in order to understand the movie totally. Claire was a young pretty lady, who desperately wanted to work with Scott Crane, who was the best real estate agent in town, she felt working with him would change her life and make her better, she had studied everything about him and was clear on how she will rise to the top swiftly. The movie took an entire new twist, when she met Eve Crane, who was very strange and mysterious, she fell in love with her, and thought that things will go well for them both, little did she know, she was being used and had being played all along, do check it out to see the length she had to go to, to vindicate herself from her boss's date. The 105m mystery, thriller, romance movie was directed by Ernie Barbara's, they featured actors like Kat Graham, Merritt Patterson, Sebastian Roche, Cardiff Wong, Roger Cross, Aren Buchholz and many more.



65 (2023)

Having seen this for a while I summoned the courage to watch the movie, I felt the story was a bit unrealistic and dragged for too long, it could have being made a bit shorter and the message would still have being passed, but anyway if you are a great fan of science friction movies, you might want to try this out. So pilot Mills was on a mission to take some passengers to their home planet, when a catastrophe occurred and made them land in an unknown planet, then he realises later that they were stranded in Earth with no help in site, this was technically 65 million years ago, Mills and Kao the only surviving passengers will have to battle through the wild forest, wild animals and Dynasosaurs to get to the other part of the space ship on the mountain and see if they can make their way out to their home planet. Go check it out to see if they made it out at the tail end. The 93m Sci-Fi, Adventure, Action, Mystery and thriller movie was directed by Scott Beck and Bryan Woods, they featured actors like Adam Driver, Ariana, Chloe Coleman, Scott Beck.



Linda Ochugbua

WEEKEND QUOTES



1

Leadership is not a position or title its a daily commitment to a process

.....WhispersbyTEN

3

You must first be vulnerable to be trusted so you can rightly lead

.... WhispersbyTEN

2

Before leadership, develop yourself. After leadership develop others

.....WhispersbyTEN

4

No empathy no transformational leadership

..... WhispersbyTEN