

BUSINESS DAY WEEKENDER

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Wealth
on the
Move The
world's top
wealthiest
cities in
2025



PRESS RELEASE

The Afrobeat, World's First Afrobeats Tribute Restaurant Opens at EbonyLife Place



WOMEN

Neya Kalu: Redefining Business Leadership, Social Impact, and Women Empowerment in Nigeria

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WEALTH ON THE MOVE: THE WORLD'S TOP WEALTHIEST CITIES IN 2025

CHISOM MICHAEL



The United States continues to lead the global millionaire map in 2025, with 11 cities featured in the Top 50 Cities for Millionaires, according to the latest World's Wealthiest Cities Report by Henley & Partners and New World Wealth.

The fourth edition of the report shows New York holding the top position, with 384,500 high-net-worth individuals, including 818 centi-millionaires and 66 billionaires.

The Bay Area — covering San Francisco and Silicon Valley — follows in second place with 342,400 resident millionaires. While it has fewer millionaires than New York, it now has more billionaires, with 82 in total. The Bay Area also recorded 98% growth in its millionaire population over the past decade, reflecting its position as a global technology centre.

Tokyo retains third place with 292,300 millionaires, while Singapore takes the fourth spot with 242,400. Los Angeles, with 220,600 millionaires — including 516 centi-millionaires and 45 billionaires — now ranks fifth, pushing London into sixth place with 215,700 millionaires, 352 centis, and 33 billionaires.

London and Moscow were the only two cities on the Top 50 list to record negative growth in their millionaire populations over the last 10 years. London saw a decline of -12%, while Moscow dropped -25%, now sitting in 40th place with 30,000 millionaires, 178 centis, and 23 billionaires.

Paris remains in seventh place with 160,100 millionaires, while Hong Kong takes eighth with 154,900, surpassing Sydney, now ninth with 152,900. Chicago, with 127,100, enters the top ten for the first time, pushing Beijing and Shanghai down to 12th and 14th places respectively.

Dubai's climb and Asia's surge

Dubai climbed three places in the rankings, moving from 21st to 18th with 81,200 millionaires. It also recorded one of the highest growth rates over the decade at 102%. Other cities with higher growth than the Bay Area include Shenzhen (28th) with 142% growth, now hosting 50,800 millionaires, and Hangzhou (35th) with 108% growth and 32,200 millionaires.

Shenzhen is emerging as a powerful technology hub in Asia. Andrew Amoils, Head of Research at New World Wealth, said, "Asia's top tech hub, Shenzhen is the base city for global tech giants Huawei, Tencent, BYD, DJI and ZTE and has experienced especially strong wealth growth over the past 20 years. It is now arguably the world's leading city in a number of key tech sub-sectors including computer hardware, electric vehicles, Wi-Fi dongles, mobile phones, flying drones, 5G, energy units and electronics."

Fastest-growing wealth hubs

Scottsdale in the US leads the fastest-growing wealth hubs with 125% millionaire growth. Bengaluru, often referred to as the "Silicon Valley of India", recorded 120% growth, followed by West Palm Beach (+112%), Miami (+94%), Washington DC (+92%), and Austin (+90%). Other cities like Warsaw (+83%), Abu Dhabi (+80%), and Riyadh (+65%) also saw significant increases.

Centi-millionaire cities on the rise

The report also identified future centi-millionaire hotspots between 2025 and 2035. Dubai and Abu Dhabi are expected to see their centi-millionaire populations — currently 237 and 75 respectively — more than double in the next decade.

Other cities with projected 100%+ growth include Delhi (125 centis), Bengaluru (43), Warsaw (32), and Athens (42). Smaller locations like St. Julian's and Sliema in Malta, Lugano in Switzerland, and Riga & Jūrmala in Latvia are also expected to see growth in their centi populations.

African and Central American cities are not in the Top 50, but some are expected to grow significantly. These include Cape Town (34 centis), Marrakesh (14), and Nairobi (10), as well as George Town and Seven Mile Beach in the Cayman Islands, San José and Santa Ana in Costa Rica, and Hamilton Parish in Bermuda.

Wealth and migration policies

Dr Juerg Steffen, CEO of Henley & Partners, noted a key trend in 2025: "These urban centres share common DNA — robust legal frameworks, sophisticated financial infrastructure, and perhaps most critically, investment migration programs that welcome global talent and capital. Seven of the Top 10 wealthiest cities are in countries with residence by investment programs, creating direct pathways for entrepreneurs and investors seeking access to these wealth hubs."

Monaco remains the world's most expensive city, with average prime apartment prices exceeding USD 38,800 per square metre for spaces between 100 and 200 m .

The data shows that cities offering tax advantages, business access, and ease of movement are becoming the preferred locations for the world's wealthiest individuals.



THE AFROBEAT, WORLD'S FIRST AFROBEATS TRIBUTE RESTAURANT OPENS AT EBONYLIFE PLACE



On Thursday 29 May 2025, EbonyLife Place will redefine the dining and cultural experience with the grand opening of The Afrobeat, a culinary sanctuary inspired by the spirit, rhythm, and soul of afrobeats music. Nestled in the heart of Victoria Island, Lagos, this groundbreaking restaurant is not merely a place to dine, but a living tribute to Africa's most influential music genre.

At The Afrobeat, guests are invited to embark on a journey through the rich landscape of modern African cuisine, where each course—salad, soup, mains, and dessert—stands as a loving tribute to the bounty of the land, sourced from local farmers. The menu is a celebration of heritage, a harmonious fusion of traditional Nigerian flavours and diasporic influences.



As guests enter the space, they will be greeted with an ambience steeped in the essence of Africa. The vibe of afrobeats is summoned through memorabilia and music videos from iconic superstars, curated by Trace, an originator and promoter of the world-famous genre.

Furniture adorned in warm hues of red clay and terracotta, textured walls of wood and mud, and Afro-futuristic chandeliers casting a soft glow. At one end of the room, a sculptured mask of an African king stands watch, a sentinel of identity and pride. At the other, an abstract mural comes alive, echoing the spirit of rhythm, rebellion, and renaissance.

In attendance will be legendary artistes, next-generation creators, cultural historians, and global figures, who have all helped to shape the afrobeats movement.

“The Afrobeat is a reflection of who we are and what we value,” said Mo Abudu, CEO of EbonyLife Place. “This restaurant is a bold move to celebrate the culture, curate its story, and give it a home in the city where it was born.”

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About EbonyLife Place

EbonyLife Place is an entertainment and lifestyle resort situated in Victoria Island, Lagos, comprising the White Orchid Hotel, Jinja Asian restaurant, Turaka rooftop restaurant, Pizza Garden, Jasmine Room private dining, Vortex gaming lounge, and EbonyLife Cinema, the no.1 cinema location in west Africa.

About The Afrobeat

The Afrobeat is the world's first tribute restaurant dedicated to afrobeats music and African culinary heritage. It is a sensory experience where food, design, and storytelling converge to honour the global rise of afrobeats.

About Trace

Launched in 2003 and originating from an iconic magazine, Trace has grown into an Afro-Urban cultural entertainment force with 350 million fans and a mission to empower and uplift young people globally. Trace media, digital, entertainment and education platforms are available in 162 countries and are segment leaders in Africa, Brazil, France, UK, Caribbean, and Indian Ocean. More about Trace: www.TRACE.COMPANY

A portrait of Neya Kalu, a woman with long, dark, curly hair, wearing a vibrant, patterned blazer over a white top. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a dark, solid color.

NEYA KALU: REDEFINING BUSINESS LEADERSHIP, SOCIAL IMPACT, AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN NIGERIA

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



In Nigeria's evolving business and leadership landscape, few names stand out as distinctly as Neya Kalu. An astute Serial Entrepreneur, Business Executive, and Philanthropist, she embodies a new generation of visionary leaders shaping the nation's future. With a first degree in Law and an MSc. in Financial Services Management from the University of Buckingham, United Kingdom, Neya has garnered over 13 years of experience across various industries, crafting and implementing business initiatives that drive growth and transformation.

According to a report by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS), women-owned businesses contribute approximately 40 percent of Nigeria's small and medium enterprises (SMEs), yet they face significant challenges in access to funding and leadership roles. Neya Kalu's success exemplifies the rising influence of female leaders in Nigeria's economic transformation.

Business Acumen & Corporate Leadership

Neya Kalu has made significant strides in the business world, particularly in the media sector. As Chairman of The Sun Nigeria, she has played a pivotal role in steering the publication towards greater editorial excellence and commercial success. Under her leadership, the brand has continued to thrive in a competitive media landscape, adapting to digital transformation and new-age journalism trends.

Data from PwC Nigeria's Media Outlook Report indicates that Nigeria's digital news media industry is projected to grow by 6.8 percent annually, with mobile and online platforms driving this expansion. Her strategic approach to digital transformation aligns with these market trends, ensuring The Sun Newspaper remains competitive.

Beyond media, Neya Kalu is also Chairman of Sun Heavens Hotels and Resorts, reinforcing her influence in Nigeria's hospitality industry. The Nigerian hospitality sector has seen a 15 percent annual growth in recent years, with increased investment in tourism and luxury accommodation. Her strategic positioning in this industry reflects her keen business insight and ability to capitalize on emerging trends.

Neya's entrepreneurial portfolio extends further as the CEO of Base Coat (@basecoat.nailsng), a premium chain of Nail Salons in Nigeria. The beauty and wellness industry in Nigeria has grown significantly, with market analysts projecting a CAGR of 8.2 percent in the next five years. With Base Coat, Neya has successfully created a brand that offers luxury experiences while setting new industry standards.

Her strategic thinking and ability to drive corporate growth make her a sought-after leader in boardrooms and investment discussions. According to the International Finance Corporation (IFC), companies with female leadership see a 21 percent increase in profitability, reinforcing the impact of leaders like Neya Kalu in driving business success.

Personal Brand: Beyond the Kalu Legacy

While she carries the renowned Kalu name, Neya has successfully built her own identity as a businesswoman, investor, and thought leader. She has leveraged her platform to establish herself as an independent force, focusing on driving value and impact. Unlike many second-generation leaders who remain in the shadows of their predecessors, she has embraced her role as a key player in the business ecosystem.

Her personal brand exudes confidence, professionalism, and a progressive approach to leadership. Whether in media engagements, industry conferences, or corporate decision-making, she is known for her articulate perspectives and visionary outlook. Harvard Business Review highlights that strong personal branding can enhance corporate influence, and Neya's ability to maintain a distinct identity has positioned her as a thought leader in Nigeria's business community.

Social Impact & Philanthropy

Beyond business, Neya Kalu is deeply committed to social impact and philanthropy. As the founder of the Neya Kalu Foundation, she has actively supported initiatives that focus on education, women empowerment, and community development. Through strategic partnerships and philanthropic efforts, she has helped create opportunities for young Nigerians, particularly women, to excel in various sectors.



Her work in promoting financial literacy, business mentorship, and capacity-building for women entrepreneurs is noteworthy. A recent report by the World Bank states that increasing female participation in the workforce could boost Nigeria's GDP by 19%, underscoring the importance of women's economic empowerment. She understands that economic empowerment is key to national development and has invested in programs that equip young people with the necessary skills to thrive.

Neya believes in the development and empowerment of women as they are major players in national and world development. Her passion for solving social issues affecting women has led her to champion causes that advocate for gender equality and economic inclusion.

Leadership & Influence

Neya Kalu's influence extends beyond boardrooms and business circles. She is a role model for young professionals and aspiring entrepreneurs, proving that leadership is about vision, discipline, and impact. Her ability to navigate complex business environments while maintaining strong ethical values sets her apart as a leader of integrity and influence.

Additionally, her voice is increasingly being recognized in policy discussions, governance, and advocacy for women in leadership. By championing the cause of female professionals and entrepreneurs, she has become a beacon of inspiration in Nigeria's business ecosystem. A statement by the United Nations Women Organization emphasizes that "Women's leadership in business and politics leads to more inclusive policies and economic stability," a testament to the significance of leaders like Neya Kalu.

The Future: What's Next for Neya Kalu?

As Nigeria's business and economic landscape continues to evolve, Neya Kalu remains at the forefront of innovation, transformation, and social progress. Her next phase of leadership is expected to encompass expanding her business portfolio, deepening her impact in corporate governance, and playing a more prominent role in shaping policies that affect women and youth in business.

With a legacy of excellence and a future defined by purpose, Neya Kalu is undoubtedly a name to watch. She represents the perfect blend of business intelligence, social responsibility, and leadership excellence, making her a key player in Nigeria's journey towards economic and corporate transformation.

A portrait of Femi Olayebi, a woman with long dark hair, wearing glasses and a blue patterned top. She is sitting and looking towards the camera with a slight smile. Her hands are clasped in her lap, and she is wearing a bracelet and rings.

**FROM DIAPER BAGS
TO LUXURY LEATHER:
FEMI OLAYEBI'S
INSPIRING STORY**



Femi Olayebi stands as the visionary force behind the prestigious FemiHandbags brand. With over three decades of expertise in leather craftsmanship, Olayebi has evolved from her early handbag designs in 1992 to become one of Africa's most respected authorities in luxury leather goods.

Her talent and design expertise earned recognition as a Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women scholar in 2008, while her masterful creations gained international acclaim at the Pure London handbag showcase in 2010. By 2012, her business success had become a case study at Lagos Business School, cementing her reputation as an industry pioneer. In 2017, Olayebi revolutionised Nigeria's leather industry by establishing the Lagos Leather Fair, creating the first dedicated platform connecting designers with stakeholders across the leather value chain. Her international influence expanded in 2019 through representation at New York trade shows via SheTrades, demonstrating her status as a global industry voice.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Olayebi demonstrated her versatile expertise, partnering with the Mastercard Foundation to produce vital PPE across five Nigerian states. Her commitment to industry advancement continues through Kafawa, a training program developed with the Mastercard Foundation's Young Africa Works initiative. Recently honoured with the prestigious Legatum Foundry Fellowship from MIT's Legatum Centre for Development and Entrepreneurship, Olayebi continues to balance her professional achievements with family life in Ibadan, Nigeria, where she resides with her husband Bankole, a book publisher, and their three daughters.

In this interview with IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA, she takes us through her journey of little beginnings to building a strong brand aesthetic. She also speaks on why she established the Lagos Leather Fair and some of its success stories since the event started.

What inspired you to start designing handbags in 1992, and how has your design aesthetic evolved over the years? My journey began quite unintentionally, and from a very personal space - one that I didn't realise would become so significant years down the road. I was expecting my first daughter and went in search of a diaper bag that would not just be functional, but stylish and cute. Unfortunately, I couldn't find any that I liked, so I decided to make one myself. I had just learnt how to use a sewing machine, so I had the basic sewing skills required to put one together.

I headed to the market, bought some pretty fabric and proceeded to cut and sew my very first bag. But that's not the story. To my surprise, friends and aunties started making requests for diaper bags, and before I knew what was happening, I was selling diaper bags, then exploring and experimenting with different fabrics to create regular everyday handbags, and registering and running a business the best way I knew how! It's been thirty-something years, and naturally my design aesthetic has evolved from creating simple, functional albeit quirky pieces to more refined, expressive pieces that blend traditional production methods with contemporary elegance. Today, we've built a strong brand aesthetic, we're telling stories through texture, form, bold colour palettes, and handcrafted details, and cultivated a strong customer base that not only believes in the brand but proudly champions it.

How did your early experiences shape your approach to luxury leather goods?

Those early years were about exploring, experimenting and learning on the job. I didn't have any formal training in fashion or design, so I simply figured things out as I went along. For many years, fabric was my medium of choice — first of all it was more readily available and secondly, pretty easy to render. But I was always really fascinated by the beauty and the richness of leather as a material, the potential it held, and the level of meticulousness and craftsmanship it demanded. And so, when in 2010, I had the opportunity to participate at my first international exhibition and create my very first collection, I decided that leather would be my canvas. This of course meant that I had to be even more intentional not just about the design, but about the quality and the finishing of the pieces I was creating. I believe that it has been that drive for excellence right from the beginning that has helped shape my brand's approach to creating luxury, and because we are a value-driven brand, the focus is constantly on the highest quality materials, well-crafted classic silhouettes, meticulous attention to detail, and great customer service. These are simply non-negotiable.

What motivated you to establish the Lagos Leather Fair, and what impact do you hope it will have on the industry? Having operated within the leather space for many years, I found that significant gaps existed throughout the

Nigerian leather value chain, and that the industry faced widespread misconceptions and a general lack of misunderstanding among the general public. At the time, industry reports suggested that Nigeria's leather sector had the potential to generate one million USD by 2025, yet, limitations such as fragmented supply chains, lack of visibility, and poor infrastructure limited the ability of leather creatives to scale their operations and realise their full potential. Not only that, I also realised that there was no specialised retail and networking platform in Nigeria that was exclusively dedicated to the leather sector. I was inspired by the numerous international leather Fairs I had attended over the years, but probably the most by Lineapelle in Milan — and decided to create a similar concept back home in Nigeria. Lagos Leather Fair was designed to provide visibility for leather designers, showcase local talent, bring together industry stakeholders, and connect designers, producers, policymakers, investors, etc. It was also a great avenue to shine a spotlight on not just the pressing challenges, but also on the huge potential within the industry. The Fair has created massive awareness of the happenings within our industry, changed the narrative around Made-in-Nigeria leather goods, and given incredible exposure to designers. I hope that LLF will continue to serve as a catalyst for change, and drive investment (from government or otherwise) that supports artisan training, access to raw materials, and the provision of modernised production facilities.

How does the fair support emerging designers and promote industry growth?

LLF has always provided a platform for emerging designers to showcase their work, and learn from seasoned professionals. This comes from a deeply personal place and a good understanding of their pain points — I started out with no support, no role models, and no mentors, and for a long time simply coursed along and figured it all out as I went along.

LLF is very big on training, and we do that through workshops, masterclasses, and insightful discussions facilitated by industry experts. Last year, we launched the LLF Accelerator, a 6-week programme designed to empower emerging leather entrepreneurs and equip them with essential skills, resources, and mentorship opportunities. This is done with the help of a comprehensive curriculum covering product design, branding and marketing, e-commerce strategies, business operations and so much more. The second edition is already on-going, and this year, we are bringing Waridi Wardah Schrobendorff, a seasoned fashion enthusiast based in Berlin to run a 3-day interactive workshop that will focus on the principles of building a unique brand identity in order to achieve growth. The goal of all this is to help the younger ones move from being passion-driven entrepreneurs to industry-ready brands.



What challenges do you see facing the African leather industry, and how can they be addressed?

The challenges facing the leather industry are multi-layered, but in my opinion, and this is more specific to my end of the value chain, the most pressing challenge of all is the lack of skilled artisans. Many of the ones available lack formal training, which affects product quality and consistency. This is closely followed by poor access to quality raw materials, including finished processed leather and specialised accessories and hardware, inadequate machinery and equipment which limits production efficiency, limited training opportunities, a fractured supply chain, and poor infrastructure. Added to these is poor access to financing and limited market exposure. Many leather businesses struggle to scale because of the lack of a support system, while many others depend heavily on imports. To address these, we need more collaboration across public and private sectors, we need to invest in high quality training and skills-development programmes to develop a skilled workforce, we need to take a long, hard look at the supply chain from production through to distribution and see how we can fix what's broken, we need to establish small, manageable manufacturing hubs as a starting point, and finally, industry-specific platforms like Lagos Leather Fair need increased support to amplify their impact, scale planned initiatives, and provide greater access to training, market exposure and investment opportunities for leather entrepreneurs across the continent.

How important is sustainability in leather production, and what practices do you promote?

Sustainability is non-negotiable. For us at FemiHandbags, sustainability is not just a trend or a buzzword; it's at the core of what we do daily. Sustainability is not just about materials — it's also about mindsets, systems, and people. At the FemiHandbags atelier, we embrace slow fashion, we're mindful of how we produce, and we focus on quality over quantity. Zero waste is standard at the factory, and I believe that African designers have generally practiced sustainability long before it became fashionable. To a large extent, creatives rely on local materials where possible, we're very resourceful when it comes to the production methods we employ, we upcycle materials to avoid waste, and we use various handcrafting techniques to create our products. So sustainability is a practice that is rooted in necessity and one that we, creatives have long embraced, naturally.

How does it feel to have your business success featured as a case study at Lagos Business School?

It's deeply humbling. I started with an old sewing machine, a baby by my side, a can-do attitude, and a deep desire to create beautiful things with my hands. I wasn't thinking about case studies — or ecosystems for that matter.



I never imagined that what started as a small experiment would one day become a subject of academic study at one of Nigeria's most respected institutions. It's truly surreal. It simply affirms the power of staying true to your vision, even when you haven't the faintest clue where your journey is taking you. And to think that I'm still a work in progress! It is also a gentle reminder that, as cliché as this may sound, we must never underestimate or despise the value of small beginnings.

What does the Legatum Foundry Fellowship mean to you, and how will you leverage this opportunity?
Being part of the Legatum Foundry Fellowship is such an honour and one that I do not take for granted. Being at a growth phase and at an inflection point in my business, it was a powerful opportunity for me to step back, reflect and use the learnings during the 5- to 6- month stint to gain more clarity in terms of business direction. Beyond that, it offered a fantastic opportunity to meet and network with some of the most incredible entrepreneurs on the continent. I have continued to leverage the knowledge, the networks, and resources to keep refining my business model, not just for FemiHandbags, but also for what I refer to as my passion project — Lagos Leather Fair.

How do you balance your professional achievements with family life?

Balancing my professional achievements with family life definitely requires intentionality and a great deal of grace. I've come to understand that I can't do it all at once, and

that's okay. I won't say that I haven't dropped the ball here and there, but I am extremely blessed to have such a strong support system — both at work and at home. My husband is my greatest champion, and my daughters are my constant source of inspiration and 'grounding', and then I have a great team that believes in the vision and shows up with passion and excellence every single day. It's a delicate dance, and I do agree that the demands of running my business can be intense, but I am very intentional about being present for my family and my friends, and pulling myself back when I find myself 'overdoing' the work aspect. It's not always easy, and as I grow older, it's not just about professional wins, but more than anything, it's about nurturing the relationships that matter most with intentionality.

What advice would you give to young entrepreneurs seeking to build a career in the creative industry?

Start small, but think big and stay deeply connected to your "why" — it will be your compass when everything else feels uncertain. Build slowly, and like I'm fond of saying, don't try and build a million dollar business when you have not perfected your start-up. Keep learning, stay the course, stay focused, and don't try and run someone else's race. Trust your gut and don't be afraid to take the road less travelled, to push the envelope and like they say, to colour outside the lines. Also as creatives, it's easy to get caught up in the excitement of bringing our ideas to life and forget that creativity alone isn't enough. As creatives, we tend to



overlook the importance of structure, strategy and numbers — so it's very important to remember that it's the business side of things that will sustain our vision and help turn our passion into profit. Your purpose and your passion will carry you far, but you will also need a huge dose of patience to keep you going. So, stay grounded, seek mentorship where you can and let your watchwords be excellence and integrity — those are non-negotiable assets you must possess. But, most important of all, trust the process! There is no such thing as an overnight success!

What's next for FemiHandbags, and how do you see the brand evolving in the future?

What's next for FemiHandbags is scale — scaling our production, expanding our retail presence, strengthening our digital footprint, and entering new markets, with wisdom and with intention. We have built a strong design identity, and I see the brand evolving into a globally recognised label that continues to tell compelling stories through the authenticity and craftsmanship of every piece we create. We will invest more in talent, in tech and establish collaborations to drive growth, while staying true to our design ethos and brand culture. At the heart of it all, I want FemiHandbags to remain a proudly Made-in-Africa brand, and continue to represent the symbol of excellence that has come to be synonymous with our brand.

How will you continue to contribute to the growth and development of the African leather industry?

Over the past seven years, Lagos Leather Fair has become the leading platform dedicated to showcasing the talent of leather creatives, transforming Nigeria, and by extension, Africa's leather industry and changing the narrative within a misunderstood sector. It has brought together thousands of attendees, industry experts and decision makers, and served as an avenue for connections and collaborations amongst industry stakeholders. It's our 8th year, and we're opening our doors to more brands from Ghana, South Africa and Senegal. I remain committed to scaling the work that we do at LLF through strategic partnerships to create long-term solutions through the Fair's ecosystem approach.

I will keep championing Made-in-Africa excellence, training artisans, providing mentorship for younger designers, and investing in local production — the more skilled hands we have, the stronger the industry becomes. The future for me is about impact, and I believe there's room for all of us to grow. When the ecosystem thrives, we all win.

WE'RE USING PHOTOGRAPHY TO FRAME PERCEPTION, TELL DEEPER BRAND STORIES — ADEBAYO

CHISOM MICHAEL





Felix 'Crown' Adebayo, award-winning creative photographer, AI enthusiast, and founder of Felix Crown Fotografi. He is a creative strategist shaping the future of visual storytelling through his lens.

In this interview with Chisom Michael, he reflects on his journey from NYSC to building a premium creative brand. He shares thoughts on the evolution of photography, the role of AI, and the value of authentic storytelling. He also highlights how he mentors young creatives to navigate the industry. Excerpts:

Can you describe the transition from your National Youth Service Corps experience to establishing yourself as a professional photographer?

NYSC was the turning point. I wasn't just serving; I was also studying people, understanding what moved them and what they valued. That was the season I realised photography wasn't just an art form; it was a business of perception. I

started charging during NYSC, even if the pay was low, but I showed up like I was worth 10x. That mindset made the transition smoother. I didn't wait for a perfect moment; I built as I grew.

With over a decade of experience in photography and creative strategy, how have you seen the industry evolve? It's changed drastically. Back then, it was about owning a camera. Now, it's about owning a vision. Clients are more informed, aesthetics are sharper, and digital storytelling has taken over. We've gone from just taking pictures to creating full experiences. The biggest shift? People now buy how you make them feel, not just how good the photo looks.

How do you define a client's 'natural essence,' and in what ways do you capture or reflect that in your work?

Essence is who they are when the world isn't watching. It's in their pauses, their insecurities, and their confidence. I listen before I shoot. I ask questions that have nothing to do with photos. Once I understand who they are, I let that lead the direction, light, styling, expression, posture, everything is shaped around that truth.

In what ways do you believe AI is transforming the relationship between the photographer and the subject?

AI is forcing us to rethink and elevate. But that's not a threat, it's an invitation to deepen connection. If used well, AI doesn't replace intimacy, it enhances experience and storytelling. It can remove technical distractions so I can focus more on the person. The mistake is thinking AI should lead the process. No, it should serve it. It's just another tool.

How do you ensure authenticity in your work while integrating advanced technologies such as AI into your creative process?

Authenticity starts from intention. Every AI tool I use is guided by a clear creative purpose. I never let the tech drive the story, I let the story dictate the tech. Whether it's enhancing a background or manipulating lighting, I make sure the final image still has the human story. It has to evoke something real. If it doesn't, I discard it.

Could you elaborate on the strategic considerations you apply when choosing projects or collaborations, especially early in your career?

At the start, I looked beyond money. I asked: Will this build my credibility? Will it align with the brand I'm building? Some projects are paid in visibility, others in relationships. But I was always intentional. I avoided jobs that diluted my vision just because they paid. That's how I stayed consistent and built a premium perception from the ground up.



What challenges have you encountered in elevating commercial photography standards for major brands, and how have you addressed them?

Many brands didn't understand the value of premium visuals at first. They were used to quantity over quality. I had to educate, not just execute. By showing real-life examples and creating moodboards, I gave context to each image. And most importantly, I aligned the visuals with their brand goals. Once they saw that great photography could boost perception and sales, the conversation shifted.

How do you mentor young creatives to navigate the evolving landscape of the creative industry?

I teach them to think beyond the lens. Master your craft, yes, but also understand branding, systems, and psychology. I'm big on helping creatives build structure. I don't sugarcoat the journey, but I show them that with clarity and strategy, they don't have to starve to be artists. Most importantly, I lead by example. They see my process, not just the results.

What insights can you share about leveraging photography as a tool for storytelling in brand campaigns?

Storytelling is the difference between a photo that looks good and a photo that works. I ask brands: What do you want people to feel, remember, and act on? Because



photos don't just freeze memories, they shape perception. Whether it's a fashion label, a celebrity rebrand, or a corporate campaign, I create images that reinforce identity and spark connection. That's where storytelling begins, in the details.

Looking ahead, what future trends excite you the most in creative services, and how do you plan to lead or influence those developments?

Three things excite me: immersive visuals, AI-human collaboration, and brand personalisation at scale. I see a future where creative services are more experiential, like interactive galleries, hyper-realistic virtual sets, even branded AI avatars. But while the tech will evolve, the human story must stay central. That's where I come in. I plan to lead by blending emotion, innovation, and cultural relevance, creating legacy visuals that move people and shift perception.



FROM LAW TO LUXURY: AISHA'S JOURNEY TO INTERIOR DESIGN STARDOM

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



In a country battling high import costs, unemployment, and a struggling manufacturing sector, one Nigerian entrepreneur has found a sustainable solution that combines art, job creation, and national pride. Aisha Yusuf Ishaku, lawyer-turned-designer and CEO of Designtactics Limited, is helping solve Nigeria's economic puzzle by championing locally made interiors through production, education, and innovation.

According to Statista and 6Wresearch, Nigeria's home decor market is projected to reach \$1.14 billion by 2025, and the furniture segment is expected to generate \$5.11 billion in revenue.

However, local producers face steep challenges, including poor access to raw materials, high importation costs, and dependency on foreign-made goods.

Determined to bridge that gap, Ishaku recently launched two new ventures: Joel's Place, a content creation hub, and Jo-1 Residence, a boutique short-let apartment, both built and furnished entirely in Nigeria.

"Everything you see here is proudly made in Nigeria," Ishaku told BD Weekender during the launch held in Lagos recently. "We are creating jobs, building capacity, and proving that Nigerians can produce quality just like anyone else."

These latest additions are part of the Designtactics ecosystem, a group of businesses designed to train artisans, manufacture furniture, provide design services, and now, offer creative and hospitality solutions. For Ishaku, design isn't just about aesthetics. It's a strategy for rebuilding Nigeria from within.

From Legal Briefs to Moodboards

Aisha Yusuf Ishaku never planned to run a design empire. Her academic roots are in law, and she still serves as Company Secretary and Director of Legal and General Services at Faton Capital. But a childhood love for architecture lingered. Encouraged by her father to study law, she did, but never abandoned her dream. "I'm a lawyer by training, but a designer by choice," she said. "My heart was always in creative spaces."

Over time, her passion matured into Designtactics Interiors, then into a full-blown group comprising a design academy, a manufacturing facility, and now short-let and content creation arms.

An Expanding Ecosystem

What started as an interior design business now employs dozens of Nigerian artisans, furniture makers, and decorators. Two years ago, Designtactics launched its factory in Lagos, where it now produces over 80% of the items used in its projects, from beds and chairs to lighting fixtures and cabinetry.

"People don't believe we made this in Nigeria," Ishaku told BD Weekender. "But we did. With our hands, our people, and our vision."

Changing minds, Changing lives

Many Nigerians still view imported furniture as superior, but Designtactics is proving otherwise. "Before, we imported everything. But when I compared the quality, I realised our local materials are actually stronger," Ishaku said. "Our people also need to believe in what we can produce here. We can compete globally, but we need to start at home."

To that end, Designtactics Academy trains aspiring designers and artisans, creating a pipeline of talent. Support Systems and Structural Barriers

"From day one, I believed in Aisha's vision. Watching this business evolve from a home-based design passion into a manufacturing and hospitality hub has been incredible," said Yusuf Ishaku, the Chairman of Designtactics Group.

Ishaku, who also serves as MD of WFP Global Investments, brings decades of financial and business management experience to the table. "There's a lot of economic potential in creative industries like interior design," he continued. "What we need is strategic support to help scale operations and export Nigerian-made excellence."



Elizabeth Kings- Wali, CEO 4STONE Capital; | Aisha Yusuf Ishaku - CEO Designtactics Interiors Ltd; | Yusufu Ishaku; MD/ CEO WFP Global Investment Ltd; Raliat Ibrahim Oyetunde - CEO Prinsult Global Consulting Ltd; | Hawa Magaji- Media Personality; | Nnena Nwizu ; Nnamdi Nwizu - Co- Managing partner Comercio partners

He noted that interior design is not just an aesthetic luxury but an economic opportunity. “Interior design creates a ripple effect, from raw material suppliers to artisans and service providers. If we invest in it as a nation, we multiply our economic growth avenues.”

A ripple effect of empowerment

For clients like Raliat Ibrahim Oyetunde, CEO of Prinsult Global Consulting, Designtactics isn’t just a design firm. “They’ve furnished my home, my office, even my children’s rooms,” she said. “And they source and produce everything locally.”

Oyetunde, who was also at the launch of the new venture, believes Designtactics is a model for national renewal. “This one business feeds over 100 families directly and indirectly. Multiply that by more local manufacturers, and you’re changing the economy,” she said.

Speaking further, she called on policymakers to maintain bans on imported furniture and promote stable policies. “If we stay the course, businesses like this will thrive, and our youth will have a reason to stay and build here.”

Mentorship and movement

The Designtactics CEO urged young designers to stay the course. “Be resilient. Stay focused. Find a mentor,” she stated. The tools are in your hand, literally, on your phone, on YouTube. Learn. Build. Start.”

Through Designtactics Academy, she continues to mentor the next generation. “It’s not just about design. It’s about national identity, dignity, and opportunity.”

From courtrooms to content hubs, Ishaku has turned her vision into a national blueprint, one that speaks of hope, hustle, and homegrown potential. “If we can make this here,” she said, “we can make anything.”

A portrait of Adefarayo Olugbemisola, a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a black turtleneck. She is smiling and looking directly at the camera. The background is a plain, light color.

HOW ADEFARAYOLA OLUGBEMISOLA IS LEADING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ACROSS GOVERNMENTS, INDUSTRIES

CHISOM MICHAEL



Adefarayola Deborah Olugbemisola is a recognised leader in business transformation and digital strategy. She is the CEO and Founder of Fael Ltd, a UK-based consultancy focused on IT and digital business transformation, business separation, and integration strategy across public and private sectors. With over two decades of experience, Deborah has worked on large-scale projects for government departments and multinational corporations in highly regulated environments.

Her approach to transformation is guided by three principles: clarity of purpose, operational discipline, and human-centred design. She explains, "Transformation must never be driven solely by technology. It must be strategically aligned to business outcomes, compliant with regulatory obligations, and designed around real user needs." She begins every project with a strategic blueprint that aligns legal, operational, and digital objectives, ensuring stakeholders are clear from the start.

Deborah stresses the importance of governance and agile delivery models. "Transformation is not just infrastructure. It's about people and outcomes." She embeds governance structures, agile teams, and business-led change control to ensure solutions are efficient, meaningful, and widely adopted.

Her role in the UK Government's Brexit programme involved navigating intense complexity and pressure. The programme required replicating EU-managed capabilities across departments under tight deadlines. Deborah's work focused on translating policy into technical and operational outcomes. She used agile frameworks and scenario-based architectures to manage legal and technical demands. She states, "The success came from treating technology not as a support tool, but as an active enabler of political and economic continuity."

Looking ahead, Deborah sees artificial intelligence and automation reshaping public services and financial institutions. She expects AI to move from efficiency tools to strategic assets. "We will see AI-powered case routing, benefits optimisation, fraud detection, and intelligent routing of citizen enquiries," she says. In finance, AI will transform fraud detection and customer onboarding.

However, she highlights that trust is essential. Organisations must build AI systems that maintain transparency, explainability,

and comply with regulations. "Organisations that treat AI as a standalone feature will fall short. Those that embed AI within digital cores, process intelligence layers, and compliance systems will lead," she adds.

Her experience across different sectors has taught her to adapt leadership and transformation strategies based on the unique regulatory and cultural context. "Adaptability begins with contextual listening and ecosystem mapping," Deborah explained. "What stays constant is my focus on technical governance, agile architecture, and cross-functional leadership—regardless of the domain."

Her journey began under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme in the UK. Deborah emphasises the importance of opportunity and support for global talent. "Global talent flourishes when given real opportunity, meaningful recognition, and an enabling environment," she says.

She urges organisations to create clear leadership paths and fair promotion systems. Governments should provide immigration programmes that support people to lead and build businesses. "I started as a migrant, and today I support government departments and global companies on national and digital strategy. That journey has shown me that when people are given a fair chance, they don't just do the job—they make a lasting impact."

Finally, Deborah speaks about the legacy she wishes to leave, particularly for African and female tech leaders. Her impact rests on three pillars: Excellence, Access, and Diligence. "Excellence means delivering at the highest level. Access matters deeply, especially for women. I want more women—especially African women—to see themselves in decision-making spaces," she says.

Diligence ties it all together, requiring focus and integrity to create sustainable results. She concludes, "Digital transformation is not just a technical field—it's a leadership space. It's about designing systems that shape how people live, work, and access opportunity."

Deborah's firm, Fael Ltd, is known for designing and implementing enterprise-wide digital transformation solutions, focusing on intelligent automation, strategic change, and scalable technology frameworks. Her leadership has consistently led to operational improvements, risk reduction, and enhanced digital capability for clients operating in high-stakes environments.



A portrait of Akinyemi Ayinoluwa, a man with a goatee and sunglasses, wearing a light-colored suit jacket over a light blue shirt. He is smiling and sitting in front of a textured, orange-brown curtain. The background is slightly out of focus.

FROM LAGOS TO BILLBOARD: HOW AKINYEMI AYINOLUWA IS RESHAPING GLOBAL MUSIC LAW FROM AFRICA

IFEOMA OKEKE-KORIEOCHA



Long before Akinyemi Ayinoluwa's name landed on Billboard's prestigious 2025 list of Top Music Lawyers, he was quietly building a career that would help define a new era for African music on the global stage.

When Akinyemi first stepped into the world of law nearly two decades ago, the Nigerian music industry was just beginning to hum with global promise. Afrobeats was catching fire, but behind the scenes, many of the architects of the sound - the producers, the songwriters - lacked the legal muscle to truly own their futures. Ayinoluwa saw the gap and decided to build the bridge.

His early career followed a traditional legal path: associate roles at Ogunde & Co., rising to head key departments at Akinola Ayinoluwa & Co., where he sharpened his skills in contract negotiation, intellectual property, and corporate law. But it was clear that his ambitions stretched beyond courtrooms and corporate boardrooms. As a creative who has been in love with music from age 10, he was drawn to the pulse of creativity, to the artists whose work was shaping a new African narrative across the world.


In 2014, Akinyemi founded Hightower Solicitors and Advocates with a radical mission: to become a fortress for African behind-the-scenes creatives in an industry that often left them exposed.

Today, the results speak for themselves. Akinyemi's client roster reads like a who's who of Afrobeats hitmakers: Magicsticks (the sonic architect behind Asake's rise), Ragee (Produced Davido's biggest hits of 2023), Rexxie (who shaped Zlatan and Naira Marley's sound), Blaq Jerzee (longtime collaborator with Mr. Eazi), and many others. Under his guidance, Hightower recently brokered a landmark publishing agreement between Empire Music and Ragee, co-producer of Chris Brown's "Sensational" - a song that clinched a Grammy nomination for Best African Music Performance.

For Ayinoluwa, the deal wasn't only a win for his client. It was proof of concept: that African music professionals could and should play on the world's biggest stages, on their own terms.

Yet, negotiating high-profile deals is only a part of the story. At his core, Akinyemi is a builder. Through the AKINYEMILAW Songwriters Contest, he has created a respected platform for emerging talents, offering both prize money and a gateway into an industry that often seems closed to outsiders.

He also advocates for independence in a rapidly consolidating global music landscape. As major labels absorb once-independent distributors and service companies, Ayinoluwa is vocal about protecting the space for independent African voices - ensuring that the next

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a dark coat and a scarf, stands in front of a red door. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background shows a building with a window and a balcony.

generation of producers and songwriters aren't locked out of the wealth and ownership their talent deserves.

Now recognised by Billboard as one of the world's Top Music Lawyers for 2025, Ayinoluwa stands tall as a Lagos-based lawyer with a global footprint, a protector of Africa's creative legacy, and a strategist crafting new futures for music professionals across the continent - proving to anyone who dares to dream and do the work that greatness shines true and through, from anywhere in Africa to as far as the sky covers.

The world is listening and thanks to Ayinoluwa and the work he does, African music's architects are finally being heard, protected, and celebrated.

THE LIMITS OF INFLUENCE PEDDLING: WHY SUBSTANCE ALWAYS SURPASSES STATUS

EMMANUEL OKOROAFOR



In business and in life, influence can feel like a magic key. It opens doors, secures meetings, fast-tracks approvals, and brings attention where others struggle to be noticed. Connections to power—be it through elite networks, political access, or strategic patronage—have always played a role in how opportunities are distributed.

But there's a truth that time, markets, and history eventually reveal influence has limits. It may get you started, but it won't carry you forever. At some point, your product, service, work ethic, or personal integrity must take center stage. What you offer must speak for itself.

Influence peddling often looks like name-dropping, leaning on powerful allies, or using personal relationships to secure contracts and attention. It can feel efficient—and at times, even essential—in environments where competition is fierce and visibility is scarce.

But influence is not a strategy. It is a tactic, and a fragile one. Once a product or service enters the marketplace, no number of handshakes or boardroom favours can hide poor performance. Customers vote with their wallets, users spread their experiences online, and the market rewards value, not vanity.

The same goes for individuals. Those who climb through sponsorship rather than competence may find themselves exposed when the training wheels are taken away. Over time, talent, hard work, and results are what sustain success. Without them, influence becomes a hollow shell.

In many societies, especially where informal networks and patronage are deeply entrenched, people often rise through the support of so-called “godfathers”—political patrons, senior executives, or powerful figures who lend their weight to someone’s ascent. This system can seem like a fast track. But it’s also a trap.

The problem is that the godfather’s power doesn’t transfer competence. It doesn’t bestow skill or innovation. And when conditions change—when the godfather loses influence, retires, or simply grows tired of defending underperformance—the individual is left exposed. What remains at that point is the person’s own capacity to deliver. And if that isn’t strong, the fall can be swift and unforgiving.

Proof that Influences isn’t everything. Nowhere is this principle clearer than in the rise of China as a global economic force. When China began opening up and engaging with the world economy in the late 20th century, it had virtually no global influence. Unlike the West, it had no former colonies, no global financial institutions under its sway, and no geopolitical alliances built on dominance.

While Western countries often traded on influence—relying on historical relationships, colonial legacies, and privileged access—China did something different. It produced. It manufactured,

scaled, and exported. It focused on delivering value—first in cheap labour, then in complex manufacturing, and later in infrastructure and technology.

Today, China is a dominant player not because it peddled influence, but because it earned relevance. It made itself impossible to ignore by producing what the world needed—faster, cheaper, and increasingly better. That influence, once absent, is now built on economic performance.

Value endures, while influence fades. Influence is most dangerous when people begin to mistake it for real capability. It creates the illusion of success, masking the hard work and continuous improvement required for lasting impact. Worse, it can breed complacency: why innovate or improve when connections keep bringing in opportunities?

But the world is too fast-moving—and too transparent—for influence to sustain poor value. Digital platforms amplify feedback. Global competition intensifies scrutiny. Today’s market won’t tolerate mediocrity for long, regardless of who is backing you.

The long game is to let your work speak. In the 21st century, durable influence is not bestowed; it is built. It is not negotiated behind closed doors but earned in open markets. The world is listening—not to who you know, but to what you deliver.

The most successful people and businesses use influence as a lever, not a crutch. They may tap networks to gain early momentum, but they build their foundation on quality, reliability, and consistent delivery.

If you’re in business, let your product speak. If you’re in leadership, let your results build your reputation. And if you’re trying to rise in any field, make sure you’re doing the work that makes you indispensable—with or without anyone pulling strings for you.

Because when the lights are brightest and the stage is yours, you don’t want to be seen as someone who simply knew the right people. You want to be known as someone who earned the right to be there.

WHAT THE VIVAJETS AIR OPERATOR CERTIFICATE MEANS FOR NIGERIA

CHUKWUERIKA ACHUM





Just two years ago, we stood at the starting line with little more than a bold idea. No aircraft. No Air Operator Certificate, not even a step-by-step manual on how to launch a business aviation company in Africa. What we did have was belief; a belief in the potential of African aviation and the determination to make something meaningful from the ground up.

We look forward to a service that would not only connect major cities but also bridge the gaps in business, innovation, and opportunity across Africa. We didn't want to build just another aviation brand; we wanted to build one for Africa, one rooted in the continent's needs, ambitions, and future.

That dream has just taken flight in a very real sense. With the recent award of our Air Operator Certificate (AOC), VivaJets is now officially licensed to operate commercially.

This is not limited to Nigeria; it extends across 34 African nations under the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). The AOC is more than a regulatory requirement; it is a transformative tool. It gives us the permission, the structure, and the legitimacy to do what we have always set out to do: connect Africa on African terms.

People often ask what exactly it is we do at VivaJets. "You operate jets, right?" Yes, we do, but that explanation only scratches the surface. What we're really offering is time. We are in the business of giving time back to people who are constantly on the move, who need flexibility, who are building empires and breaking barriers. Time is a rare commodity, and we have created a service that returns some of it to our clients, allowing them to do more, experience more, and grow more.

Our mission is not just about luxury, it's about access, about making private aviation a practical and reliable solution for African entrepreneurs, diplomats, creatives, and innovators. Through various innovations, we are introducing new ways for people to access air travel. We have intentionally made private aviation more open and more inclusive, so that it serves a broader spectrum of Africa's movers and shakers.

Since inception, we have been unique about our intention and identity. That is why we collaborated with celebrated designer Loza Maleombho to design our crew uniforms. It was not just about aesthetics, though the results were stunning; it was about sending a message. African excellence deserves to be seen, respected, and celebrated on a global stage. From the way we fly to the way we dress, we are making the statement that Africa deserves, and can deliver world-class standards.

The AOC marks a new chapter, and with it comes the ability to fly across a vast part of the continent with commercial rights. This means faster, more direct connections between cities like Lagos, Nairobi, Accra, and Kinshasa. For the business traveler who cannot afford delays, for the government official whose schedule changes on a dime, for the artist or entrepreneur who needs to be in three countries in a week, these matters. It means real choices, real speed, and real convenience.

There is also an economic story here that is often overlooked. VivaJets' is more than an aviation company; we are an exporter and a foreign exchange earner for the Nigerian economy. Every time one of our flights takes off between countries, the revenue we earn contributes to Nigeria's foreign exchange reserves. This is non-oil export in action. It is a sustainable, service-driven stream of foreign exchange that supports the economy without depleting natural resources.

Nevertheless, as proud as I am of our jets and our routes, the real heartbeat of VivaJets is the team behind it all. Our pilots, engineers, ground crew, logistics planners, salespeople, and customer service reps—they are the ones who make the dream work every single day. It is their skill, their energy, and their professionalism that keep us not only in the air but also ahead of the curve. When I'm asked what makes us different, my answer is always the same: it's the people.

At the moment, our fleet has just grown into three with a recent acquisition. And by the end of this year, we're aiming for eight. To support that expansion, we're in the process of raising \$25 million in funding. But let me be clear—this is not growth for growth's sake. Every move we make is anchored in safety and compliance. Our operations are thoroughly vetted, not only by our internal standards but also by Nigeria's Civil Aviation Authority. Our leaders in operations report both to our management and directly to the regulator, ensuring transparency and accountability at every level.

Looking ahead, we're developing new service offerings, trying out new routes, and crafting new ideas that changes what air travel feels like in Africa. We are not just taking our business global; we are also taking the advocacy for business connectivity global. This May, VivaJets was Gold sponsor and exhibitor at the Africa CEO Forum in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, where I advocated for the urgent dismantling of long-standing barriers within Africa's aviation industry. Our team also provided a unique perspective on the intersection of private aviation and economic development, showcasing how mobility and connectivity can shape Africa's financial landscape.

We're not just building an airline, we're building an aviation platform- one that supports Africa's next generation of leaders, dreamers, and doers. And we're just getting started.

Chukwuerika Achum is the CEO, Falcon Aerospace Limited.

STAYING INFORMED, STAYING AHEAD: A REVIEW OF THE INVESTMENT AND SECURITIES ACT 2024

ADERONKE ALEX-ADEDIPE

Introduction

On March 29, 2025, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, signed into law the Investment and Securities Act (the "Act") 2024, repealing the Investment and Securities Act ("ISA") of 2007. The Act introduces significant changes to the Nigerian capital market which aims to expand the regulatory oversight of the Securities and Exchange Commission, strengthen market regulation and enhance investor protection.

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In this newsletter, we highlight some of the notable provisions of the Act.

Merger Notification by Public Companies

A key change introduced by the Act is the modification of SEC's regulatory oversight concerning mergers. Under the previous ISA, SEC had regulatory oversight over mergers and restructuring of all companies. However, with the enactment of the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Act which empowers the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) with regulatory oversight over mergers of all companies, the authority of SEC has now been streamlined to oversee mergers and restructuring of only public and listed companies.

In addition, the Act empowers SEC to assess whether all shareholders involved in a transaction are treated fairly and equitably. For instance when a takeover bid is proposed as outlined in the Act, SEC shall ensure that shareholders and directors of an offeree are aware of the identity of the acquirer and offeror, they have reasonable time to consider the take-over offer and are supplied

with sufficient information necessary to assess the merits of such takeover offer. The Act aims to ensure transparency in acquiring voting rights and control of a company.

Classification of Exchanges

The Act introduces a new classification of securities exchanges, categorizing them as either (i) composite securities exchange or (ii) non-composite securities exchange. A composite securities exchange permits the listing of all types of securities, financial products and instruments on its platform, for instance, shares, bonds or virtual assets. A non-composite securities exchange, on the other hand, may be registered with SEC to list a single type of security, such as either shares or virtual assets but not multiple types of securities. It may also operate as an alternative trading system, a platform or facility that enables or facilitates the trading of securities between buyers and sellers. In addition, the Act expressly provides that any person intending to operate a securities exchange must first register the exchange with SEC. Failure to comply may result in a term of imprisonment of up to five years or a fine of not less than the prescribed paid-up share capital of an exchange, or a daily penalty of at least 100,000 for the directors or promoters of the company. Furthermore, the company will be prohibited from continuing its operations.

The Act also introduces specific responsibilities for securities exchanges to ensure the proper governance of their operations. These responsibilities include: (i) conducting business in a fair and transparent manner, with due regard for the rights of members, participants, and their clients; (ii) ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Act by its members and participants in

relation to listed securities; (iii) promptly notifying the SEC of any issue that may pose a risk to the financial markets upon becoming aware of such issue; and (iv) informing SEC immediately upon the commencement of any insolvency proceedings, among other obligations.

Virtual Assets

Another significant addition to the Act is the regulation of virtual assets. In the previous ISA, securities were limited to debentures, stocks or bonds issued by the government or by a corporate body. They also included rights or options in respect of any such debentures, stocks, shares, bonds or commodities futures. In the wake of the adoption of cryptocurrency transactions worldwide, SEC in 2022 issued the Rules on Digital Assets Issuance, Offering Platform, Exchange and Custody with the aim of regulating digital and virtual assets. The Act, however, strengthens the credibility of crypto assets backed transactions by expanding the definition of securities to include virtual assets.

Prohibition of Ponzi Schemes

The Act expressly prohibits the operation of Ponzi schemes and other unregistered investment schemes. It describes a Ponzi scheme as an investment arrangement in which returns are paid to existing members from funds contributed by new members, typically with a promise of high returns and little or no risk. It also includes any scheme where participants earn money primarily by recruiting new members. The Act provides that operators of such schemes will upon conviction be liable to imprisonment for up to ten years, a fine of five million naira or both.

Access of User Data

In addition to its regulatory functions, the Act empowers SEC to obtain subscriber's data or records held or maintained by internet service providers, mobile network operators, and other electronic communication service providers in Nigeria in the event of a violation or suspected violation of the provisions of the Act by the subscriber. This may include payment details, or the content of communication connected with the violation.

Investments and Securities Tribunal

There are also significant amendments and additions made to the Investments and Securities Tribunal (the "Tribunal") in relation to the constitution of the tribunal and resolution of capital market disputes. In the previous ISA, the Tribunal was constituted by 10 persons appointed by the Minister of Finance, however in the Act the Tribunal will now be constituted by 12 persons appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister of Finance. The Minister also possesses the power to recommend disciplinary actions to the President against the members of the Tribunal.

Secondly, the Act has also provided a breakdown of the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, providing matters the tribunal has original jurisdiction over and matters it has appellant jurisdiction over. In respect of its original jurisdiction, the Tribunal shall exercise original jurisdiction over matters such as (i) complaints against a direct action of SEC; and (ii) a matter referred to SEC where SEC fails to act on such matter within sixty days of filing a complaint. While in respect of its appellant jurisdiction, the Tribunal shall handle matters such as (i) disputes involving stakeholders in the capital market e.g. between SEC and any person in respect of the capital market, capital market operators and their client or an investor and a securities exchange etc; (ii) matters arising from the management or operation of collective investment schemes; and (iii) matters arising from the approval, regulation of mergers, takeover and restructuring of public companies.

Conclusion

The Act introduces key reforms aimed at improving market transparency, and regulatory clarity. The Act also intends to protect investors by totally prohibiting Ponzi schemes and other similar investments thereby creating trust in the Nigerian capital market. With stronger provisions and regulatory clarity, the Act positions Nigeria's capital markets for sustainable growth and investments.

THE GOOD MAN'S BURDEN: MORALITY AND POWER IN MODERN POLITICS

EYESAN TORITSEJU

In the run-up to Nigeria's 2023 presidential election, then-vice presidential candidate Kashim Shettima dismissed the idea of moral virtue as a prerequisite for effective leadership. "Nice men," he claimed, "are good for selling popcorn and ice cream." His words resonated, not just because they were brazen, but because they struck a chord in a society where political survival is often associated with ruthlessness, not righteousness.

Shettima's statement was more than political posturing. It reflected a deeper anxiety that runs through many postcolonial democracies: is morality a liability in leadership? Must political effectiveness always come at the expense of personal virtue?

This is not merely a philosophical question. It has direct consequences for how societies govern, how power is distributed, and how leaders are held accountable. In Nigeria and arguably in many parts of the world, we are witnessing a crisis of belief: a creeping skepticism that goodness and governance can coexist.

The Evolution of Leadership: From Virtue to Strategy

Historically, the idea of leadership has always been entwined with morality. Ancient societies often conflated rulership with divinity. Egyptian pharaohs were seen as gods. Chinese emperors governed with the "Mandate of Heaven," a moral license that could be revoked by corruption or tyranny. In these frameworks, a leader's legitimacy depended as much on ethical conduct as on administrative competence.

Even in secular traditions, moral philosophy was central to political leadership. Plato's ideal ruler was the "philosopher-king": wise, just, and selfless. Aristotle argued that good leadership

required virtue, both in private character and public duty. The Greeks, of course, did not always practice what they preached, but the ideal persisted.

With the rise of modern statecraft and Machiavellian realpolitik, however, the paradigm shifted. Leaders were judged less on virtue and more on results. Military strength, political stability, and economic growth. In Machiavelli's world, it was "better to be feared than loved," and ends often justified means.

Today, we see this tension play out in democracies struggling with populism, corruption, and authoritarian creep. In places like Nigeria, where institutions are weak and political power often trumps legal or ethical norms, the tension becomes even more acute.

Goodness vs. Competence: A False Dichotomy

In public discourse, particularly in the Global South, there is a recurring narrative that moral politicians are either ineffective or short-lived. They are seen as naive, idealistic, or out of touch with the brutal realities of governance.

But this narrative presents a false dichotomy: that one must choose between being good and being competent. History offers several counterexamples.

Nelson Mandela was deeply moral, but also politically shrewd. His leadership in post-apartheid South Africa combined forgiveness with institutional reform. Mahatma Gandhi mobilized millions through a moral vision of nonviolence, yet he was also a strategic communicator and master of symbolic politics. Even Winston Churchill, hardly a saint,

understood the moral stakes of leadership during the Second World War and used rhetoric not just to persuade, but to inspire moral clarity in a time of chaos.

Goodness in leadership, then, is not weakness. It is a form of competence, a capacity to lead not just through force or cunning, but through integrity, vision, and public trust.

Why Morality Struggles in Nigerian Politics

And yet, in Nigeria, morality in politics is often viewed with suspicion. Leaders who attempt to act ethically are perceived as either powerless or performative. Part of this stems from the country's political culture: a post-colonial elite that inherited a system of extraction and patronage rather than democratic accountability.

Over time, political office became a means to wealth and influence, not service. In such a system, moral restraint is not rewarded, it is punished. Elections are won through alliances, not ideals. Legislatures serve as bargaining chambers, not custodians of the public interest. Under these conditions, to be moral is to be vulnerable.

This is compounded by a public that is often disillusioned. When governance fails repeatedly, citizens recalibrate their expectations. Instead of demanding integrity, they look for competence, even if it is tainted. "At least he gets things done," becomes a more powerful slogan than "he is a good man."

The Case for Moral Leadership

But this resignation is dangerous. When we strip leadership of moral expectations, we normalize impunity. We excuse abuses of power in the name of efficiency. We erode public trust.

The irony is that moral character can be a stabilizing force in volatile democracies. A leader who is seen as honest is more likely to command legitimacy. A leader guided by fairness can bridge ethnic or religious divides. A leader committed to justice can build institutions that outlast them.

Moreover, moral leadership is not incompatible with political savvy. It does not mean perfection.

It means a conscious effort to place public interest above personal gain; to lead with empathy, humility, and accountability.

As Nigerian writer and philosopher Chinua Achebe once said, "The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership." That failure is not just about capacity, it is about character.

Reclaiming the Moral Imagination

In an age of cynicism, the call for moral leadership may sound naive. But democracy itself is built on idealism, the belief that societies can choose better, demand better, and be better. If we abandon that belief, we reduce politics to a mere contest of predators.

What is needed is not a return to utopian thinking, but a more holistic definition of leadership: one that sees virtue not as a liability, but as a core strength. One that understands that good governance is not just about roads and bridges, but about justice, equity, and dignity.

In the end, the question is not whether good men belong in politics. The question is whether we can build a political culture where they can survive and thrive.

Until then, we will keep mistaking ruthlessness for strength, and in doing so, keep choosing leaders who win elections but fail the people.

Eyesan Toritseju is a graduate of Civil Engineering from Covenant University turned serial entrepreneur and corporate strategist. Passionate about society and the cultural ideologies that shape us, he explores how these forces propel or inhibit progress through his writing. In his column, *Cosmopolitan Nigeria*, Eyesan examines how young Nigerians navigate the complexities of culture, religion, and identity in a rapidly evolving world.

GLOBAL CITIES INDEX 2025: NEW YORK AND LONDON MAINTAIN TOP POSITIONS

CHISOM MICHAEL



Oxford Economics ranks the world's leading cities based on economy, governance and quality of life

New York has retained its top position in the 2025 Global Cities Index published by Oxford Economics. The index ranks the 1,000 most populous cities in the world using 27 indicators across five key categories: economics, human capital, quality of life, environment and governance.

This year, New York scored a perfect 100, placing first overall. The city ranked highest in the economics category, driven by a large GDP, high income per capita and a concentration of corporate headquarters. However, it ranked lower in the environment and governance categories, coming in at 168th and 161st, respectively. The report noted high housing costs, limited economic diversity and income inequality as major concerns.

London followed in second place with an overall score of 98.5. Like New York, it was noted for its strong economic performance and human capital. The city was recognised for its large number of universities and lower emissions intensity. Still, it shared some of New York's weaknesses, particularly in housing affordability and governance.

Paris took third place with a score of 94.4. The French capital performed well in human capital and quality of life, supported by access to education, health care and cultural facilities.

The rest of the top five included San Jose and Seattle, both located in the United States. In total, eight American cities made it into the top 20, reflecting the country's continued dominance in economic indicators.

Australian cities Melbourne and Sydney ranked sixth and seventh, respectively, while Tokyo, San Francisco and Los Angeles also featured in the top ten. Dublin, Stockholm, Seoul, Zurich, Oslo and Copenhagen represented strong performances from Europe and Asia.

Oxford Economics' index goes beyond lifestyle to assess the deeper structures that shape cities. It evaluates long-term sustainability and global competitiveness, not just tourism appeal.

The rankings aim to support governments, businesses and researchers in planning and investment decisions. The methodology is designed to capture the strengths and weaknesses of each city, allowing for comparisons that go beyond surface-level features.

The full report is available on the Oxford Economics website, providing detailed insights into how cities perform and where improvements are needed.

THIS ROOM I BUILT

RACHEL ONAMUSI



THIS ROOM I BUILT

On Growing Older, **Bolder**, and
Building a Life That Fits

BY: RACHEL ONAMUSI

I love this room.
This little room I've built.
It's taken me years to build this space. To build a life that makes sense to me. Not one that works for everyone else or meets everyone else's expectations. Not one that looks impressive on LinkedIn or shiny for the Gram, but one that works for me. A life that, for the most part, feels peaceful when I wake up in the morning. Because I've spent most of my adult life doing something we aren't always allowed to do freely: making my own decisions.

From work, to relationships, to when or whether to marry, have children, go back to school, rest or pivot, I have chosen for myself. And choosing yourself, in a culture built on timelines and silent expectations, is not as easy as it sounds. There was always a script.

Go to school, get the grades. Done? Great. Now, get more.
Land a job. Be grateful.

Get married, preferably "on time."
Have a child.
Now give that child a sibling.
Had a daughter? Have a son.
Balance it all.
Be ambitious but submissive.
Be successful but humble.
And smile through it all.

I knew the script. I saw women I admired live by it. Some did so happily. Others...not so much. And for a while, I followed it too. Until something in me started to ask, "Who am I? Whose life is this?"

The first bold choice I made was with work. On more than one occasion, I have walked away from something safe to chase something that felt more like me. People were kind but confused. "You're really leaving that job?" "Are you sure this is the right time?" I wasn't sure. But I did it anyway.

Then came other choices. More personal ones. Choosing to ignore the pressure around marriage timelines. Choosing not to rush motherhood just because age was being whispered into every conversation. Choosing to pivot careers again and again when people thought I should be 'settled.' Choosing to say yes to work-life balance as a practice. Choosing joy. Rest. Boundaries. Balance.

This was never about rebellion. There are traditions I love and hold dear. I will always geek out over Ojude Oba photos. I take pride in cooking Nigerian food exactly how I like it. Our music, our arts, our fashion - honestly, we are the assignment. I giggle at MetGala looks because I know we are not anybody's mate. I am Nigerian through and through.

I've also grown into roles I once resisted. I am now 'Big Mummy' to dozens of children and I love the way we celebrate life and mourn its passing. I love the way we love, and how that love often looks different from what the West expects. I see tenderness in unexpected places: in hardworking fathers who, despite their tough exteriors, show up softly to their wives, their children, even strangers in need. There's so much to admire here. And in this room I've built, I paint the walls in vibrant colours that reflect who I am and where I'm from.

This is the part people often miss: writing your own story doesn't mean tearing everything down. It means choosing what fits. Saying yes when you mean it. Saying no without apology. It means knowing which parts of tradition to carry, and which parts to leave behind.

Did everyone understand? No. I lost some connections. I had the awkward conversations. The raised eyebrows. The backhanded comments. I've been told I'm too picky, too ambitious, too slow. But over time, I started hearing something new:

"You seem lighter."

"You look happy."

"There's something different about you."

That "something" is peace.

This room I built is full of decisions that look like me. Some that scared me. Others that saved me. It's got laughter, courage, softness, boundaries and healing, as well as a few things I never thought I could have. I'm not done. There's still decorating to do. But I'm not lost in someone else's story anymore. I'm here.

It's not a fancy room. It's not even finished. But it's mine.

And finally, finally! It has me in it. And maybe this isn't just about me. Maybe it's also about you.

What would your life look like if you gave yourself permission to choose? Really choose. Without fear. Without performance. Without needing to please everyone.

You don't need to explain your choices for them to be valid. You don't need to follow the script if it doesn't fit. And you definitely don't need to apologise for living a life that looks like you. Start small.

Rearrange something that no longer fits. Say yes to something you've been quietly longing for.

Say no to what drains you. Walk away. Try again. Come back home to yourself.

Because at the end of the day, the only person who has to live in that room is you. So build it. And make sure you like it.

Rachel Onamusi is the CEO of VN Sync, a UK-based tech company and full-service marketing firm with expertise in all aspects of media and a strong focus on digital strategy development and implementation. Dedicated to creating lasting impact, Onamusi is a sought-after speaker, thought leader, writer and frequent media contributor.

HERE ARE THE MOST AND LEAST AI-DRIVEN INDUSTRIES IN 2025

CHINWE MICHAEL

A new study from Yijin Hardware has revealed the most and least AI-driven industries of 2025, uncovering a sharp divide in artificial intelligence adoption that experts warn could reshape global economic dynamics.

The study evaluated industries based on a comprehensive AI engagement score, a metric combining global investments in AI start-ups, the number of industry-specific AI ventures, public interest via search trends, and the top use cases of AI in each sector.

According to a spokesperson from Yijin Hardware, the data points to an emerging technological rift across the global economy. "The clear divide in AI adoption across industries reveals a growing innovation inequality that could permanently transform competitive landscapes."

"This widening gap isn't just about efficiency gains; it represents a fundamental reimagining of how entire sectors function. Early AI adopters are positioned to completely redefine market rules, while technological laggards face increasingly difficult catch-up challenges," it said.

Most AI-driven industries

The most AI-driven industry in 2025 is healthcare, with an AI engagement score of 100, reflecting many AI start-ups and extensive financial support. The global AI start-up investments in healthcare amount to \$4.2 billion, including medical AI analysis of X-rays and MRIs, administrative automation, and drug development. Currently, there are 11,228 healthcare-specific active AI startups in the world.

Finance ranks 2nd in the list of the most AI-driven industries in 2025, with a score of 72.4. There is a similar number of AI startups, 11,057, but the funding is smaller. Global investments sum up to \$2.1 billion, two times less than for healthcare. The main AI uses in the sector include fraud monitoring and trading automation.

The marketing & advertising sector is third, getting an AI engagement score of 60.9. There is more interest in AI innovations in the sector from the general public than in finance, with 241K monthly searches. The global funding comes to \$1.1 billion for over 9,970 AI start-ups.

Legal services follow closely with fourth place and a score of 58.1. The number of AI start-ups in the industry is a little lower than in marketing & advertising, but the finding is much smaller at \$0.4 billion, 5 times less than for finance and 10 times less than for healthcare.

Education & learning is fifth in the ranking of the most AI-driven industries in 2025, with an AI engagement score of 41.8. The innovations in this sector are the second most popular, with over 399K queries each month. Most popular AI innovations in the industry are related to virtual tutoring and test grading automation.

Least AI-driven industries

Construction is the least AI-driven industry in 2025, with a minimal possible score of 1. There are fewer than 700 active startups in the sector, with a total funding of \$200 million, the lowest in the list.

Insurance takes second place among the least AI-driven industries of 2025, getting an AI engagement score of 5.2. The public interest towards AI innovations for insurance is higher than for construction, with 61K monthly queries, and there are currently 678 active startups in the industry.

Real estate holds third place, scoring 5.4. The funding for it is the same as for insurance AI innovations, at \$600 million globally. There are more startups for AI in the sector than in insurance or construction, with 799.

Manufacturing ranks 4th, getting an AI engagement score of 9.5. The general interest in AI in the industry is similar to insurance, but the startups gather more funding, with \$900 million. The most explored directions for AI innovations in manufacturing are machine failure detection and quality control.

Agriculture closes the ranking of the least AI-driven industries with fifth place and a score of 11.4. There are over 1,700 start-ups focused specifically on AI in agriculture, developing technologies for spotting insect pests and monitoring crop health. At the same time, the funding for AI in agriculture is smaller than for manufacturing or real estate, at \$500 million.

HERE ARE 5 STUDY TECHNIQUES TO SAVE STUDENTS FROM EXAM FAILURES

CHARLES OGWO



Examination is one unavoidable hurdle every child must scale through to achieve his/her academic goals, especially in Nigeria, where students who aspire for tertiary education must sit for at least three of such in a year.

Over the years, Nigerian students have recorded poor results in various examinations such the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME), West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), and National Examination Council (NECO).

Though having good grades in school does not necessarily equate to success in career and life; however, having good grades is an advantage and should be desired.

Experts posit that having good grades is foundational to reading habits, hence, a student must know the best study techniques

Many students erroneously follow the “read and repeat” pattern, believing that more time equals more knowledge; research has shown that certain smart study techniques can cut down study hours and boost learning.

Here are the five study techniques according to Tom Vorselen, a study coach from the Netherlands, that help students not just score better, but also grow with confidence and clarity.

Why a distraction-free zone works

Students who seek to make good grades must learn to study in a distraction-free ecosystem. According to Vorselen, building a distraction-free environment is not just a preference, it is a necessity. Research shows that even brief distractions such as phone pings or background noise can break the flow of learning, forcing the brain to take up to 25 minutes to fully refocus.

The study coach maintains that a distraction-free environment is not just about forcing focus, but about designing the surroundings so the brain naturally slips into deep work mode.

“A clean desk, a silent phone, and a gentle background light can make concentration feel almost effortless,” he said.

The 50/10 rule

The 50/10 study rule simply means study for 50 minutes and rest for 10 minutes. Experts believe that this rule helps students to reset their minds and prepare them for the next round of focused effort.

“Long, uninterrupted hours can wear the brain down, leading to fatigue and poor memory retention,” they say.



Vorselen emphasised that taking a few minutes' break is a little way of helping one's brain by not overloading it. And this can be done through stretching, sipping water, and/or just breathing, among others.

Don't just read

One of the common unhealthy habits many students exhibit is passive reading, put another way, reading to impress. This might make a student feel comfortable because he/she is impressing onlookers, but such a reading attitude does not challenge the brain.

Effective reading embraces recalling, which makes the brain work harder. In order to optimise one's reading exercise, there is a need to practice closing the book and try to recall the main ideas.

Experts argue that this approach to reading strengthens memory and highlights what truly needs revision. It is like training a muscle; the more it is used, the stronger it gets.

The Feynman technique

The Feynman technique is a learning strategy, developed by physicist Richard Feynman, that emphasises explaining a concept in simple terms as if you were teaching it to someone with no prior knowledge.

He believes that understanding something deeply means being able to explain it simply. Vorselen regularly encourages students to act like a teacher, take a topic, break it down into simple language, and explain it as if speaking to a child.

Spaced repetition

Spaced repetition learning system is a technique where information is reviewed at growing intervals: after one day, one week, then one month.

This is important because the human brain forgets things fast, unless it is reminded at just the right times.

The emphasis here is on how many times something is revisited. This method leverages the brain's "forgetting curve," helping to lock in knowledge right before it fades. It is efficient, effective, and builds a long-lasting memory bank that does not disappear after the examination.

This technique does not just show gaps in understanding, but it also builds true mastery, transforming knowledge from something memorised to something truly owned.

FCT TEACHERS STRIKE: WAR AGAINST SYSTEMATIC IMPUNITY

CHARLES OGWO



It was Wole Soyinka, Nigeria's Nobel Prize winner, who once said, "When a leader encourages the culture of impunity, the society is lost and it makes the work harder for the rest of us."

Going by Soyinka's philosophy, without justice, the most heinous crimes go unpunished; victims are unable to obtain redress, and peace remains an elusive goal, since impunity generates more hatred, which leads to acts of revenge and more suffering.

There is no better way to describe the scenario where children were forced out of school for over 60 days, by the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, council chairmen's failure to pay teachers their entitlement, than impunity.

Those trusted with leadership powers in Abuja decided to subject children in public schools into intellectual bankruptcy, while their children are private schools and for the teachers, the council chairmen careless if they are paid, hence declaring impunity war, by oppressing the vulnerable under their care.

According to Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

"It is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mine worker can become the head of the mine; that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation."

It is no longer news that primary school teachers in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja have been on strike repeatedly, pushing the limits of endurance in pursuit of their rights: the right to a decent wage.

For far too long, our Local Education Authority (LEA) teachers in Abuja have been battered, bruised, and betrayed by a system that refuses to reward their selfless service.



Many well-meaning Nigerians, such as David Naphtali, a concerned original inhabitant at FCT, have lent their voices for the government to address the disarray in the Abuja council education ecosystem.

Naphtali urges President Bola Tinubu to do everything possible not to allow the crisis fester further.

“Abuja is your seat of power. If justice is broken here, the rest of the nation will learn to normalise injustice. Your intervention facilitated the April salary implementation. Now we ask for more, not as a favour but as a matter of equity,” he said, instructing that a special intervention committee be set in place to reconcile and settle all outstanding arrears across area councils.

“This is no longer just a strike. It is a symptom of systemic failure. We cannot afford another academic year ruined. We cannot afford another healthcare crisis. We cannot afford another round of avoidable hardship for those who serve us at the lowest levels.

We are not asking for luxury. We are asking for justice. We are asking for dignity. We are asking that you, our leaders, act with urgency, compassion, and commitment,” he added.

It is expected that the authorities will address the demands of the aggrieved workers which among others include that the N70,000 minimum wage arrears for eight months amounting to over N16 billion, 40 percent peculiar allowance implementation, and 25 percent, and 35 percent salary increase implementation, and arrears.

Others are N35,000 wage award for six months, annual increments, promotion arrears, upgrade of teachers underemployed since 2018 and health insurance scheme for teachers among others.

It is expedient that the area council chairmen address these issues and other entitlements owed to teachers because if proper care is not taken, strikes may resurface in no distant time disrupting the teaching and learning process again.

A fact remains that education is considered the best legacy a government can leave because it empowers individuals, fosters economic growth, and strengthens society.

More importantly, experts believe early childhood education lays the groundwork for future learning; consequently, keeping these children at home further amounts to mutilating their future.

Nigerians must learn to arise against impunity in governance, just the way and manner the citizens rose against JAMB; without collective efforts, the leaders will continue to take the citizens for granted.

One would wonder why the minister of education is yet to utter a word against the injustice met on the children, teachers and Nigerians by these council chairmen.

It is good that Nysom Wike, minister of FCT has stepped in, but that is not enough until these children return to classrooms, and the teachers are happy doing their work.

HOW NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT FUELS YOUTH'S EDUCATION APATHY

OLUWABUNMI OLUWADOTUN



A 21-year-old young man known popularly as Femi, woke up one morning, and to the amazement of the entire family, he told his mother he was no longer interested in going to school.

Omobolanle, his mother, at first, thought it was a joke until Femi was seen at home for a week, while his peers were receiving lectures in school.

It then, got done on Omobolanle, Femi's mother that her son was up to something serious about going back to the university.

Omobonle, a mother of three children, was so confused that her first child is developing apathy to education at this stage of his life; hence she took the issue to her husband, who summoned Femi for a talk.

In the course of their deliberation, the man got angry and slapped him threatening to cast out the evil spirit tormenting, and ministering the education apathy to him.

With the intervention of neighbours and extended family members, the youngster, who was a 200 level Computer Science student was asked to explain his reason for developing sudden cold-feet for education.

"School is a scam, and I can't afford to continue to waste my time and life on it," Femi said in anger.

Education apathy is a lack of interest, motivation or concern for learning and academic success.

It can manifest as indifference to schoolwork, absenteeism, a lack of effort, and a general feeling of detachment from the educational environment.

Gone are those days, when university education was seen as a golden opportunity and a ladder to a successful life. In the early 1950s and 1960s university graduates were given automatic jobs and sometimes with cars, depending on the company and position of employment.



Then, going to school was envogue, those who did not have a university education were seen as the society's 'nobodys'. However, in contemporary Nigeria, the reverse seems to be the case, as students who are in school seem to have no interest in academics and labelled it as a scam being used by the government to generate income.

Experts believe that Nigerian youth's apathy towards education is a complex issue with multiple factors, including economic hardship, perceived lack of job opportunities and a sense of hopelessness.

Hence, many are blaming the government for youth's lack of interest in academics, especially the university students. The Nigerian governments at various levels by their nonchalant attitude to education have invariably inculcated the idea in many people that school is of little or no importance to making a successful livelihood.

Gone are the days when first-class graduates were celebrated and held in high esteem, today, many first-class graduates are roaming about the streets seeking for employment, while touts in the motor-parks are making thousands of naira daily.

Besides, various state governments are seen celebrating Big Brother Naija (BBN) winners with huge sums of money. The education policymakers have failed to give the country competence-based curriculum, almost at all cadres of learning in the country.

The curriculum in most public schools across the federation is tailored to only stick with theory, with little or no practicality.

Globally, education has transited from the era of theory to practical. A Computer Science student in Europe is trained to have the practical knowledge of computing, programming, tech skills while his counterpart in Nigeria is only exposed to the textbook knowledge.

Obviously, with the kind of education system in Nigeria, students who use YouTube for private tutorials on some specific skills, especially tech skills, will no doubt have reasons to lose interest in going to formal schools, and will see it as a waste of time and effort.

Moreover, the impasse between the Academic Staff Union of Universities, and the government contribute to reasons students would not want to go to school.

Why would the government allow students to spend seven years for a course of four years because of the ASUU strike? That is not acceptable at all.

Worst still, most of these students would have passed the recruitment age of 25, when they leave the four walls of the universities, hence, will find it difficult to get employed in either private companies or government parastatals.

The government should prioritise education, and introduce more practical and more extracurricular activities into their educational system.

Besides, there is a need for more vocational schools to equip youth to become self-employed, and job creators, instead of job seekers.

INSIDE THE AFRICAN EXHIBITION HUSTLE: WHO PAYS FOR THE ART?



African art is gaining global attention, with exhibitions showcasing the continent's rich cultural heritage.

However, behind the scenes, curators face significant challenges in funding and sustaining these exhibitions. Limited financial resources, infrastructural deficiencies, and the need for sustainable practices are constant concerns.

Despite these challenges, there is a growing recognition of the importance of African art on the global stage. Institutions and individuals are stepping up to support curators and artists, fostering an environment where African exhibitions can thrive.

In this digest, we will explore the intricacies of funding and sustaining African art exhibitions, highlighting the efforts of curators and the support systems that enable their success.

This digest is brought to you by Patrons MCAA. Think African art, think Patrons. Patrons is Africa's leading art advisory and dealership firm with deep expertise in African art, helping private and corporate art collectors diversify their wealth through art collection, appraisal, packaging & transportation, storage, insurance, maintenance, and restoration. Purchase or general inquiry? Reach out: art@patronsmcaa.com.

TOP PICKS FROM OUR COLLECTION



Title: Kumwe (Together)
Artist: Lambert Shumbusho
Medium: 300+ aged ironwood
Dimensions: 26 x 45 x 24 in | 66 x 114 x 61 cm
Available on Request



Title: K k non
Artist: Falhona Ogoun
Medium: Acrylic and pastel oil on canvas
Dimensions: 27.56 x 39.4 in | 70 x 100 cm
Available on Request



Title: Face of Resilience
 Artist: Abrifor Silas
 Medium: Acrylic, marker and pastel on paper
 Dimensions: 20 x 25 in | 51 x 64 cm
 Available on Request

Funding: The Lifeblood of Exhibitions

Securing funding is a perennial challenge for African art exhibitions. Many curators rely on a mix of personal investments, grants, and sponsorships, to bring their visions to fruition. Organizations like the African Culture Fund (ACF) provide crucial support, offering grants to artists and cultural projects across the continent. Similarly, the African Arts Trust focuses on supporting emerging artists, providing them with the resources needed to develop and showcase their work.

However, accessing these funds is not always straightforward. The application processes can be competitive and complex, often requiring extensive documentation and proposals. Moreover, the availability of funds is limited, and not all deserving projects receive the support they need.

To mitigate these challenges, some curators turn to alternative funding methods. Crowdfunding platforms, partnerships with local businesses, and collaborations with international institutions have become viable options. These approaches not only provide financial support but also help in building networks and increasing the visibility of African art.

Sustainability: Beyond the Exhibition

Sustainability is a critical aspect of curating African art exhibitions. Beyond securing initial funding, curators must ensure that exhibitions have a lasting impact. This involves strategic planning, community engagement, and the integration of sustainable practices.

One notable example is the Congolese Plantation Workers Art League (CATPC) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This collective of artists creates sculptures from materials like cacao and palm oil, common products derived from plantations.

The income generated from exhibitions and sales of their artworks is used to buy back and restore their land using the principles of agroforestry. This approach not only ensures relevance but also encourages local support and participation.

International Collaboration: A Global Stage

International collaborations have proven instrumental in supporting African art exhibitions. Partnerships with global institutions bring in not only funding but also expertise, exposure, and access to broader audiences.

For instance, the Outset Contemporary Art Fund has awarded significant grants to African art initiatives, including a £150,000 grant to the African Artists' Foundation for their traveling exhibition "Dig Where You Stand."

Such collaborations also facilitate knowledge exchange, allowing African curators to learn from global best practices while sharing their unique perspectives. This mutual enrichment enhances the quality and impact of exhibitions, fostering a more inclusive and diverse global art scene.

The business of curating African art exhibitions is a complex yet rewarding endeavour. While funding and sustainability pose significant challenges, the resilience and creativity of curators, coupled with support from organizations and international partners, are driving the growth and success of African art on the global stage. By embracing innovation, fostering community engagement, and building strategic collaborations, curators are not only preserving Africa's rich artistic heritage, but also shaping its vibrant future.



Keturah Ovio

Keturah Ovio is an Executive at Patrons Modern & Contemporary African Art. She is also an engineer and Founder of Dukka, a Fintech startup providing bookkeeping and payments solutions for small businesses. Keturah is passionate about African Art and has been collecting art since her early 20s. Now, she advises, curates, and manages collections for individuals and corporate organisations looking to start or diversify their wealth management through art collecting. She strongly believes that a fine marriage exists between Art and Technology

GALATASARAY FAN TURNS HOME INTO SHRINE FOR VICTOR OSIMHEN

ANTHONY NLEBEM



In the rugged hills of Diyarbakır's Silvan district, one house doesn't just stand out; it roars with devotion. Painted in Galatasaray's iconic yellow and red, the modest home has become more than a residence: it's a shrine, now glowing with the name of Victor Osimhen, the club's high-profile Nigerian signing.

The man behind the spectacle is Mehdi Keskin Iç, a father of four and lifelong Galatasaray fanatic. A plasterer by trade, Keskin Iç first turned heads two years ago when he emblazoned the name of Argentine striker Mauro Icardi on his home's facade, a tribute to the man who spearheaded Galatasaray's back-to-back title wins. That act of loyalty earned a reshare from Icardi himself, who posted the image to his 13.9 million Instagram followers with the caption "Minik aslanlar büyüyor" ("Little lions are growing up").

But Keskin Iç didn't stop there. This summer, following Galatasaray's blockbuster signing of Victor Osimhen and a record-extending 24th Süper Lig title, Keskin Iç updated his sacred canvas, painting Osimhen's name alongside Icardi's, flanked by a newly added fifth star and two lion figures to represent the two forwards.

"They said Osimhen was coming. I thought, if Icardi helped make us champions, why not Osimhen too?" Keskin Iç told local reporters. "I put his name up, added a star, and gave both players their lion."

To Keskin Iç, football is more than a game; it's his faith. "If I had 20,000 houses, I'd paint them all yellow and red,"

he said. "I promised myself that if I ever owned a home, I'd decorate it with Galatasaray's badge and Icardi's name. I kept that promise."

But his gesture is not just about celebration; it's about hope. "We don't ask to be taken to the stadium anymore. Just give our kids a small pitch, a place to play. Let it be named Galatasaray."

Keskin Iç also addressed the criticism and ridicule he and his family faced online after the story went viral.

"If you respected your own families, you wouldn't insult someone else's. No one has the right to be cruel behind a screen."



Then came a heartfelt plea to Osimhen, the man whose name now adorns the shrine of Silvan.

“Osimhen, don’t leave us. Don’t be lured away, brother. There are traps out there,” he said, ending with a stirring rhyme:

“Galatasaray has peace, love, and everything you need. We believe in you; just believe in us, too. One cup is still missing

from the museum: the Champions League. Let’s bring it home together.”

In Silvan, Keskink I nç has made it clear:

Osimhen isn’t just a striker, he’s now family, a lion among lions, etched into the heart of Galatasaray’s most devoted fan.

2025 BALLON D'OR: TOP FIVE PLAYERS POWER RANKINGS

CHARLES OGWO



Come Monday, September 22, all roads will lead to the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, for the crowning of 2025 UEFA and L'Équipe organised Ballon d'Or winner.

With the exit of the 'gods' of football in the persons of Lionel Messi, and Cristiano Ronaldo, many round leather mortals are jostling for the coveted crown.

Before now, some 10 years ago, football pundits would with certainty predict who the possible winner would be. However, with the exit of the 'gods' of the round leather game, it seems difficult to lay claim on who would wear the crown going by the individual performance of these players within the season.

Here are the top five listed players according to Goalcom, an online sports magazine.

Ousmane Dembele (Paris Saint-Germain)

Dembele has scored 35 goals, 12 assists, and won Ligue 1 and Trophée des Champions PSG in the 2024/25 season. Many football pundits believe that the 2025 Ballon d'Or is Dembele's to lose, especially with PSG in the finals of UEFA Champions League.

Dembele could be crowned Ballon d'Or if PSG defeats Inter Milan to lift the UCL Cup.



Lamine Yamal (Barcelona)

Yamal, the 17-year-old Barcelona striker has recorded 16 goals, 25 assists, winning La Liga Cup, Copa del Rey and Supercopa de Espana.

If Yamal wins the 2025 Ballon d'Or, he will be the first player to have won the honour before 20 years of age in the almost-70 years of the award.

However, with the exit of Barcelona from the UEFA Champions League final, it might be difficult for the Catalan club's player to be crowned the winner this year.

Nevertheless, going by his Champions League displays before the exit of the team at the semi-finals stage, Yamal stands a good chance to be crowned Ballon d'Or winner.





Raphinha (Barcelona)

The Brazilian has scored 37 goals, 25 assists, and has lifted La Liga, Copa del Rey and Supercopa de Espana with Barcelona this season.

The Barcelonan captain has proven that he is capable of leading one of the most successful football clubs in the world.

Raphinha is arguably the most decisive of Barcelona's electric front-three, and his raw goal and assist numbers certainly help back that up.

He is obviously playing the best football of his career right now, but if that will earn him the Ballon d'Or crown, will be decided on September 22.

Gianluigi Donnarumma (Paris Saint-Germain)
Donnarumma, the only goalkeeper nominated for this year's Ballon d'Or had 12 clean sheets and has won Ligue 1 and Trophee des Champions, with PSG, besides qualifying the team for the 2025 UEFA Champions League final.

If the Italian wins the award, he will be the second goalkeeper to win Ballon d'Or after Lev Yashin, 62 years ago.

His outstanding performances in the Champions League knockout rounds, especially against Liverpool and Arsenal, is one of the reasons the team is still in the competition.



Mohamed Salah (Liverpool)

Mo Salah was obviously outstanding in the 2024/25 season, scoring 36 goals, 24 assists, and winning the Premier League.

However, Egyptian's chances of winning the award is believed to be very slim especially with Liverpool not playing in the UCL final.

Liverpool was edged out by PSG at last-16 stage, besides being denied the honour of lifting the Carabao Cup by Newcastle.

Recall that Rodri won the award in 2024 defeating the popular favourite, Real Madrid's Vinicius Jr to the crown.

Rodri emerged winner after one of the most closely-fought races for a number of years, beating Vinicius Jr into second place as Real Madrid dramatically boycotted the ceremony in Paris in protest at their star player missing out.

However, the 2024/25 season does not have the same two horse race competitors, hence, it is open to many individuals who would be selected based on personal and club success.

HOW TO CONNECT WITH CUSTOMERS THROUGH

FEYISITAN IJIMAKINWA

As consumers are increasingly bombarded with marketing messages, standing out amongst your competitors requires more than just showcasing a product or service. Brands are slowly recognising the need for developing emotional connections with their customers in order to create loyalty. Enter emotional branding - an approach that focuses on tapping into the feelings, values, and beliefs of consumers.

What is Emotional Branding?

Emotional branding is the process of building the image of a brand by appealing directly to the emotions of their customers. It's beyond simply selling a product, service, or experience, but focuses on creating an emotional connection that resonates with the audience. Unlike traditional branding, which often emphasises the features and benefits of your brand, emotional branding engages customers on a more personal level.

The Psychology Behind Emotional Branding

Emotional branding works because of human psychology. Emotions play a crucial role in decision making, and studies have shown that more often than not, people make choices based on feelings rather than logic. Because of this, brands that effectively create an emotional connection with their customers are more likely to create loyal ones.

The Benefits of Emotional Branding

From cultivating strong customer relationships to standing out in a crowded marketplace, the power of emotional branding can significantly enhance your brand's impact. Let's take a look at the benefits.

Building Strong Customer Relationships

One of the main, and most important benefits of emotional branding is its ability to foster strong relationships with customers. When a brand connects emotionally with their customers, it creates a bond that goes beyond transactions. Customers not only feel understood, but valued by your brand, which leads to increasing customer loyalty.

Helping Your Brand Stand Out

Most businesses operate in a saturated market, fueling the need to stand out amongst your competitors. Emotional branding can be a key differentiator for prospective customers. Brands that evoke emotions stand out in a customer's mind when they're considering a purchase.

Increasing Customer Lifetime Value

Because emotional branding can increase customer loyalty, it also contributes to increased customer lifetime value. When customers feel a connection with a brand, they are more likely to return to them again and again.

Elements of Emotional Branding

You know what emotional branding is, but what elements need to be brought together in order for it to be successful? The elements of emotional branding are:

Authentic Storytelling

At the heart of emotional branding is the storytelling of your brand. Narratives that reflect the brand's values and mission in an authentic way can deeply resonate with customers.

When crafting your brand's story, consider what makes your brand unique and how it aligns with the values of your target customer. Authenticity is key, and customers can spot insincerity.

Visual Branding

Visual elements play a significant role in evoking emotions. In addition to colour theory, fonts, imagery, and design should all align with the emotional tone of the brand. Warm colours, like red and orange, evoke excitement, while blues and greens convey calmness.

Brand Consistency

In order for your emotional branding to be effective, consistency is needed. When we talk about brand consistency, the default is that the website and social media accounts have a unified message and tone. While this is obviously a key part of brand consistency, every aspect of your brand has to be unified to truly benefit from emotional branding. This means that your branding should be reflected across all marketing channels, including social media, advertisements, and of course, tangible marketing materials like business cards.

How to Implement Emotional Branding

You know you need to think about emotional branding, but how do you implement this in practice? We suggest:

Identify Your Brand's Core Values

The first step in implementing emotional branding is to clearly define your brand's core values. Answer questions like "what does your brand stand for?", "what emotions do you want to evoke in your customers?", and "what type of customers do you want to attract?" Understanding the answers to these questions will help guide your emotional branding strategy. If needed, take some time with your team and stakeholders to re-identify these values before you jump into a branding project.

Know Your Audience

For emotional branding to be effective, you have to know your audience. Your team should conduct research to better understand the demographics and psychographics of your target market. Identify their interests, values, pain points, and the way they prefer to communicate.

Create Emotional Touchpoints

Consider every touchpoint a customer has with your brand as they travel through the sales funnel - from the website experience to customer service interactions. Each individual touchpoint should reflect your brand's values and evoke the desired emotions.

LAST LINE

Emotional branding is more than a trend, it's a powerful strategy that can completely transform how consumers perceive and interact with your brand. By focusing on authentic storytelling, understanding your audience, and creating meaningful touchpoints, you can cultivate a strong emotional connection that leads to increased customer loyalty and advocacy. Remember, successful emotional branding requires consistency across all channels and a commitment to genuinely engaging with your customers.



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THE COST OF A SON

UDY OSARO-EDOBOR

Mazi Okonta was a revered man in our community. Among the council of chiefs, he stood out, not just for his wealth or his influence, but for his education. While the other chiefs barely made it past Standard Six, Mazi Okonta proudly held a secondary school certificate. That small piece of paper made him the most educated man in the council and for that and many other reasons, he was deeply respected.

He was a kind and generous man, always using his resources for the good of the people. The elders had begged him, time and again to accept the crown and become king but he always declined. He believed true leadership wasn't about titles but about service. Mazi Okonta was the kind of man who preferred to work in the background as long as peace reigned and his people prospered.

But for all his achievements and blessings, Mazi Okonta lacked one thing: a male child. He had three wives and eleven daughters. Though his daughters were bright and well-brought-up, he longed for a son, someone to carry his name when he joined his ancestors. The ache for a male heir consumed him more with each passing year. Rumour had it that he even took his wives to a fertility doctor in the city, one famed for helping couples conceive male children but the results remained the same.

Then, Mazi Okonta began the search for a fourth wife. Every eligible woman in the village secretly wished to be chosen. After all, Mazi Okonta took care of his wives like royalty. But he surprised everyone by choosing Sisi, my close friend.

Sisi was a young widow, the only daughter of her parents and their third child. Her husband, a hunter, had died after a long illness. Not long after, their only son followed. Many believed Mazi Okonta saw in her the promise of male child.

Sisi, for her part, saw the proposal as a rare opportunity. She was determined not just to be a wife but to be the mother of Mazi Okonta's heir. While I believed she had a natural chance of bearing him sons, Sisi didn't want to take chances or perhaps she was blinded by greed

"Desperate situations require desperate measures," she told me, the day she confided her plan to travel seven villages away to consult Okosisi, a renowned native doctor. I warned her. Yes, Okosisi was powerful but his medicine came with consequences. But Sisi wouldn't listen.

Okosisi promised her a male child on two conditions: the child must never go near fire and she must fast for three

days, consuming only a spoonful of palm oil every three hours. Sisi agreed. It wasn't much of a price to pay for what she wanted.

Months later, she gave birth to a son. She named him Okonta Junior—OJ. Mazi Okonta was overjoyed. His dream had come true. Sisi became his favourite wife and he treated her like glass. In time, she bore him a daughter and then another son. But it was OJ who held his heart.

With her new status secured, Sisi began to change. She wore her pride like a second skin although she remained polite to me perhaps out of fear, knowing I was aware of her secret.

OJ was a bright and curious child. Though pampered and protected, he longed to play freely like other children. He longed to climb trees, roll in the sand, run barefoot. But his mother wouldn't let him. The rules were strict: no fire, no rough play.

Then one day, an opportunity came. Mazi Okonta and his wives had travelled to the city for an important event. With no one watching, OJ joined the village children. They played hide-and-peek, chased each other through mango trees, and climbed the udara tree by the stream.

Then they decided to play "kitchen." OJ's task was to fan the fire while others fetched cooking ingredients from their mothers' kitchens. But when they returned, OJ was gone. In his place was his clothes and a large pool of palm oil near the open flames.

Panic spread.

Where was OJ? Who spilled the oil? The children were confused. The search began but OJ was nowhere to be found.

Hours later, the search party returned to deliver the news to Mazi Okonta and Sisi who had just returned from their trip. Chaos erupted. Sisi collapsed, wailing uncontrollably. It took relentless questioning before she finally confessed everything... how she had gone to Okosisi, the condition about fire and the oil ritual. Everyone listened in stunned silence.

Mazi Okonta was broken. The son he had so desperately wanted had been born of juju and had melted into the very oil used to conceive him. The irony was cruel. He had overlooked the strength, brilliance and potential of his daughters in pursuit of a son.

Worse still, the entire village began to whisper: Were Sisi's other children real? Were they normal? Could they be made of oil too?

The shame became unbearable. One morning, Sisi vanished leaving her two children behind. Mazi Okonta took in the children and raised them with care, despite the lingering questions. But something had changed in him. He no longer spoke of heirs or legacies. Instead, he poured his energy into his daughters, teaching them everything he knew and singing their praises to anyone who would listen.

His daughters had managed his businesses, earned respect and brought him honour yet he had never truly seen them until the OJ incident.

In time, his daughters carried his name farther than he ever imagined, becoming scholars, traders and respected leaders. The community learned from his story too. That the worth of a child is not in their gender but in their heart and deeds.

And so, Mazi Okonta learned, though painfully, that greatness is not reserved for sons. Sometimes, it is hidden in plain sight—in the daughters we overlook and in the love we fail to see.

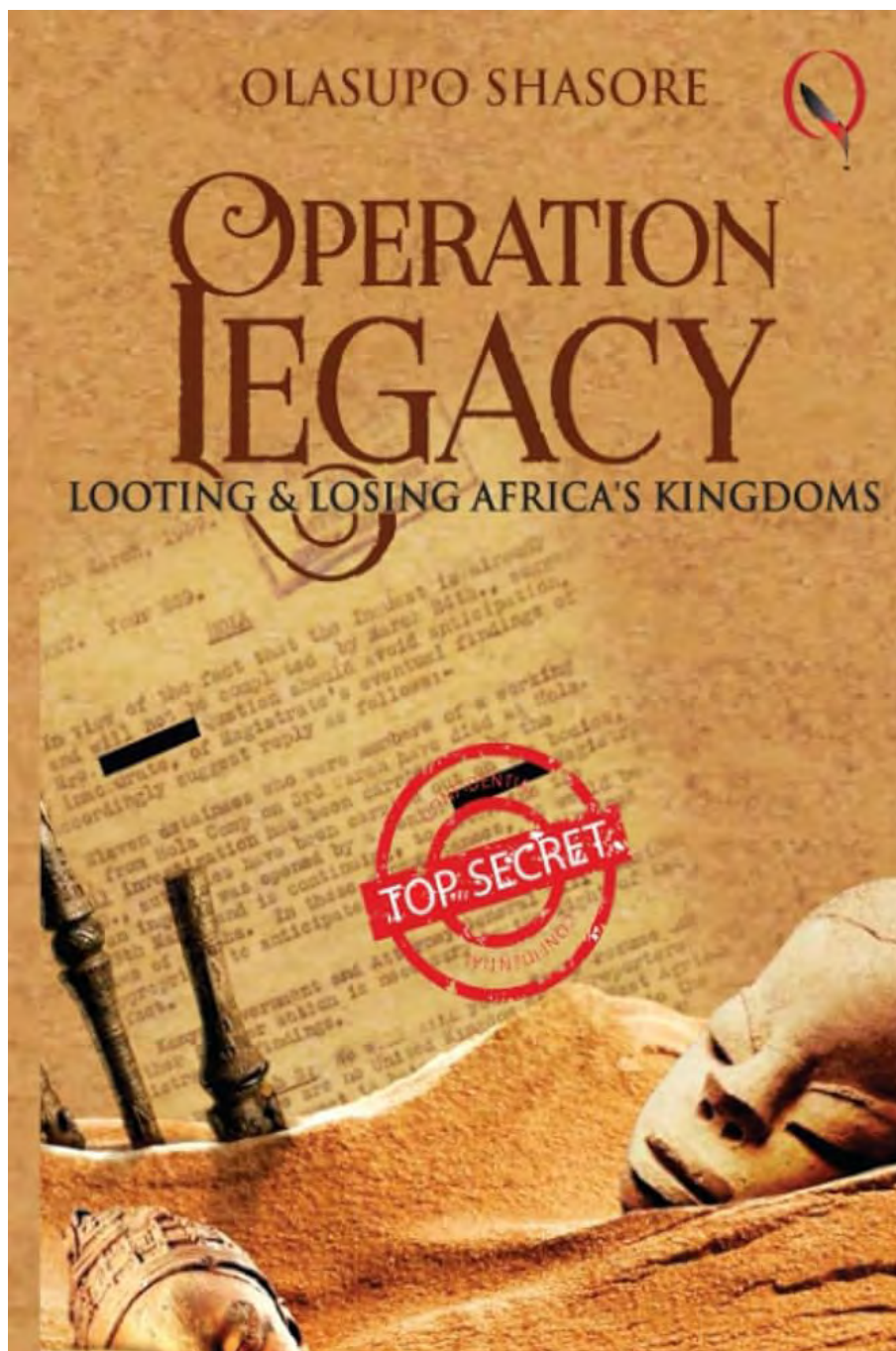


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Reclaiming the Past-A Review of Olasupo Shasore's Operation Legacy

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OPERATION LEGACY: LOOTING AND LOSING AFRICA'S KINGDOMS

TITILADE OYEMADE

Whether fueled by anger or a deep desire to correct the record, Olasupo Shasore's *Operation Legacy* is a bold and enlightening work that every African should read. It presents a powerful examination of Africa's history, challenging long-held misconceptions shaped by colonial records.

The subtitle alone sparks curiosity, especially for African readers, as it hints at Shasore's mission not just to educate, but to correct a flawed historical record. From the outset, it becomes clear that the book is a response to decades of misrepresentation.

One striking feature is Shasore's use of thought-provoking quotes and sayings that add depth and inspire reflection. These moments resonate deeply, inviting readers to pause and consider Africa's past and present with fresh eyes.

As the story unfolds, a clear frustration with the disrespect shown to Africa by European powers emerges. Shasore's critique is sharp and justified, highlighting how African history has often been misrepresented or completely erased. Whether or not he changes every reader's perspective, he undeniably initiates an important and overdue conversation about reclaiming African voices.

Shasore doesn't hold back in his criticism of colonialism and its lingering effects. At times, *Operation Legacy* evokes strong emotions, anger, disbelief, and even pride. Readers are prompted to question the arrogance of those who dismissed Africa's rich and complex history.

One of the book's greatest strengths is its power to dismantle falsehoods and empower readers. As you move through the chapters, you may find yourself astonished by the audacity of colonial inaccuracies, but also uplifted by the truth being brought to light.

Shasore's extensive research and commitment to accuracy are evident throughout, delivering a story that feels both personal and authoritative.

The book's accessibility is another triumph. Despite its historical depth, *Operation Legacy* reads more like a conversation with a passionate friend than a dense academic text. Shasore simplifies complex topics without diluting their meaning, making the work approachable yet profound.

A central message of the book is the importance of owning your story. Shasore urges Africans to reject imposed versions of history and reclaim the truth of their heritage, heritage that was systematically hidden or devalued. His message is clear: no one else should define who you are or where you come from.

By the end, you're left with a mix of emotions, anger at historical injustices, gratitude for Shasore's revelations, and a renewed sense of purpose. *Operation Legacy* doesn't just educate; it inspires.

In conclusion, *Operation Legacy* is more than a history book; it's a call to action. It urges Africans to reclaim their stories and reshape the storytelling of the continent. A must-read for anyone serious about understanding Africa's true past and forging a more empowered future.



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WEEKENDER

MOVIE REVIEW

BAD INFLUENCE (2025)

If you fancy a simple Spanish romantic movie, then this might be something to check out this weekend. Reese was the only daughter of a very wealthy man, who had lost his wife while she was very little, but the incidence surrounding her mom's death was a misery to her. As she grew up and was doing well in school and ballet dancing, she began to receive threats from all angles, this was troubling for her and her dad. To protect her he decided to get a very young charming boy, who was just released from the prison to follow her everywhere, he was also an orphan. One thing led to another and she found herself doing some negative things due to the influence of her new bodyguard "Eros", her dad decided to let him go as he suspected he was a very bad influence for his good daughter. Well, you will need to check out the movie to find out who exactly was threatening her all along, my suspicion would be as wrong as yours, well wait till the very end to find out their motive, the end of this movie was too weak and sad for me. The 106m romance, thriller movie was directed by Chloe Wallace, they featured actors like Alberto Olmo, Elea Rochera, Enrique Arce, Mirela Balic, Sara Arino, Farid Bechara, Fernando Fraga, Mar Isern e.t.c.



NONNAS (2025)

Searching for a nice romantic Italian movie, then you might want to check this brand-new movie out to have a very good laugh, although I am no a great fan of comedy movies, a lack of action movies led me this and it wasn't bad Afterall. Joe Scaravella loved his nana and mom so much, when she fell ill, he moved back in to take care of her, after a while she passed on and this left Joe totally devastated. To honor his mom and her legacy, he decided to start up a new Italian restaurant, what he did was employ all grandmom's who had the flare and passion of cooking delicious meals that tasted exactly like home cooked meals. Well, you will need to go check out this movie to find out, if he pulled through, if the business survived and how was able to cope with the lagging debts that were already on his shoulder. The 111m comedy movie was directed by Stephen Chbosky, they featured actors like Vince Vaughn, Lorraine Bracco, Talia Shire, Brenda Vaccaro, Theodore Helm, Jimmy Smagula and many more.



OTHERHOOD (2019)

So, if you are looking for something cool, different and funny, this movie might be worth a good laugh, I wasn't sure what to expect, but then I had a good laugh watching it and I am sure you will, if you are a fan of comedy movies with moms, then this will be worth your time. In this movie 3 mothers who had being friends for over 3 decades, waited to hear from their sons on mother's day and after waiting for ages, they decide to go visit their sons in New-York without any prior information or invitations, with one mission in life to convince and proof to themselves that they were still loved by their sons, it was a total mistake and disaster, well do check it out to discover how this unsolicited visit went, were they allowed in, were they welcomed and treated right, you will have to find that out for yourself when you check out this movie. The 100m comedy movie was directed by Cindy Chupack, they featured actors like Angela Bassett, Patricia Arquette, Felicity Huffman, Jake Hoffman, Jake Lacy, Sinqua Walls, Heidi Gardner, Stephen Kunken e.t.c.



LINDA OCHUGBUA

WEEKEND QUOTES



1

Follow the one who
is faithful and fatherly
.....WhispersbyTEN

3

Witness for the one who shares
wealth and wellness for free
.....WhispersbyTEN

2

Honour the one who
is holy and gives hope
.....WhispersbyTEN

4

Sing to the one who settles
and says "succeed"
.....WhispersbyTEN