

As a child I wanted to be many things; sometimes a doctor, an engineer, a nurse, or an artist. However, my early exposure to the plights of sick people in a developing country like Nigeria, where many people rely on quack medical practitioners because basic healthcare is unaffordable and inaccessible, made me determined to become a health practitioner. The light-bulb moment that affirmed my resolve to contribute to the health industry was the death of my neighbour in 2018. He was a young man in his early twenties, who died from malaria because his family could not afford healthcare and they had superstitious beliefs regarding his illness. Due to that, his first point of call when his illness began was seeking solutions to the problem in a prayer house. When that failed, he resulted to self-medication from "chemists" (i.e. unqualified drug dealers in Nigeria), which, unfortunately, led to the worsening of his condition and then, his death. I was deeply saddened by the news of his demise and that made me resolute on pursuing a career in the health industry.

Aside from the incidence with my neighbour, the one thing that was clear to me as I grew up was that I was filled with immense sadness and a deep sense of helplessness whenever I saw people fall sick, suffer or pass away due to either a terminal illness, medication error, and the inability to pay for their own medication. So, I decided that I was going to contribute my own quota in making healthcare affordable and accessible. With the thoughtful guidance from my father, I chose to focus on science during my secondary education. While at it, I began to wonder how familial and societal outcomes would transform if sick people, regardless of socioeconomic status, could afford and access healthcare and the appropriate medication as and when they need it. I also wondered the social change that could accrue from the health sector when healthcare services became better and medication errors were minimized or the healthcare system became more efficient, reliable and compassionate towards the patients by giving them timely and accurate treatment, thus alleviating these sufferings. These thoughts sparked a desire within me to make a difference, and to contribute to creating a better healthcare system.

After high school, I had three options. The first was to study medicine and surgery. The second was to study pharmacy. The third was to study nursing. I needed to make a decision on which of these health subjects to pick for my undergraduate studies. Then, I spoke to my sister, who introduced me to the Japanese concept of Ikigai, which in my case entailed choosing any of the three aforementioned courses that will be affordable for my middle class family to fund, and will be a salad of my goals, passions, missions, and future livelihoods. Taking the remuneration realities of health practitioners in Nigeria into consideration, I narrowed my focus to pharmacy and medicine. However, after my family had explored the costs of studying either course, I came to the conclusion that pharmacy would be the best option for me as I was passionate about it and it was the academic option that fitted my family's budget. Therefore, I began to pursue pharmacy as though my life depended on it. I read every material that I could lay hold of, and so did everyone in my family. Then, one day, my sister introduced me to the doctor of pharmacy (Pharm D) course, which resonated with my long standing interest. Although I preferred medicine initially, when I discovered Pharm D, I knew immediately that it was the perfect course for me because it offers a unique blend of scientific knowledge, clinical practice, patient interaction, medication management, and therapeutic expertise, which were the key aspects of health that piqued my interest. The opportunity to learn about medications, understand drug interactions, and provide patient counselling excites me as I believe it is essential to empower patients with the knowledge they need to manage their health effectively.

Throughout the study of my course, I have gained valuable skills and experience through class room learning, practical experiences, and hospital ward visits, where I came in contact with the patients. These experiences have not only enhanced my understanding of pharmaceutical sciences but also provided me with hands-on experience in patient care and healthcare settings. I am confident that

these skills will serve as a strong foundation for my future career as a pharmacist. Therefore, I make bold to say that Pharm D is my dream come true as it fuels my passion for people and the health industry. I am confident that with this degree and my accomplishments during the study period (as can be seen in my resume), I will be able to make a positive difference in the lives of patients and contribute to shaping the future of healthcare in Nigeria and the world at large. I also believe that doing an internship in a developed country will broaden my thinking horizon and offer me a learning curve to achieve the milestones I am set to achieve as a budding Pharmacist from Nigeria, a developing nation.