Many Nigerians hold religious beliefs to very high pedestal and every unexplainable medical conditions are misconstrued as spiritual attacks. An average Nigerian would rather describe episodes of panic disorders as a situation involving the devil slipping back into one’s life rather than just a manageable medical condition. Such is the stigma and ignorance to mental health issues in my country. A case that have resulted in increasing rates of suicides amongst assaulted youths and undue killings by mentally unstable police officers.

One major reason is the lack of appropriate research on mental health prevalence in the Nigerian population. Another is the stigma of accepting the occurrence of mental issues in the Nigerian families and lastly, the country with over 180 million populations can only boast of about 250 psychiatrists. The situation in the country continue to worsen due to the recent cases of insecurities prevalent in different parts of the country.

My interest in mental health issues in the country stemmed my transient struggle with glossophobia as an undergraduate. I could barely face a crowd of more than two people and there was the laughs and subtle abuses from my peers as they could not understand that my heart was about to break through my chest. An intervention from of my lecturers who understood the problem was the defining moment of my life as I had to engage in many uncomfortable public engagements and took up various leadership roles to surmount this challenge. A cherry on top was representing the faculty at quiz and debating competitions winning some.

I have always likened anxiety to an omnipresent voice in a person’s head, that knows all of one’s insecurities and could sometimes be the loudest, even in an overcrowded room. Anxiety manifests in different forms and current world statistics indicates an increasing rate of occurrence of over 300 million people suffering from anxiety in 2017. Current management for anxiety has only accounted for a 45-60% success rate with significant adverse effects. Newer researches into the mechanism and management of anxiety are highly required due to the increasing rates of occurrence. The craving to gain profound knowledge and delve deep into the molecular development of newer anxiolytics influenced my desire to pursue a master’s study in Neuroscience& Neuropharmacology.

In the early days of my undergraduate years, I battled with Glossophobia, I began on the path of becoming a pharmacist by first learning the ropes and exposing myself to the world of interdisciplinary science, taking courses, and engaging in laboratory practicals from within and beyond my department. Having suffered from myself, I was interested to learn about the network of the brain, nervous system and associated disorders. Courses like “Neurophysiology for pharmacy” and “Pharmacology of the Central Nervous System” equipped me with knowledge of the normal functioning of the nervous system and mechanisms of current drugs used in managing the common disorders e.g. Anxiety, Schizophrenia, Epilepsy etc.

In my final year, I combined my knowledge of pharmacology and neuropharmacologic research with my plant extraction skills during my final year project, which involved extracting the active constituent of an ethnomedicinal plant, determining the acute toxic dose and testing on mice to determine its anxiolytic potential. This project has since been published in the *Journal of Pharmaceutical Research, Development and Practice.* The research work was exciting as it adds to knowledge on the application of these relatively safe natural compounds in managing anxiety. After my graduation, ranking as the overall best student in my faculty, I started an internship role in a teaching hospital where I was posted to the psychiatry ward. I had to counsel patients, manage life threatening drug side effects in order to optimize outcome of patients in the hospital. The zeal to continuously test for safer natural alternative to management anxiety stimulated a research to determine the anxiolytic potential of another ethnomedicinal plant. This project has also been published in the *Journal of Medicinal Plants for Economic Development.* These experiences improved me mentally and personally by developing my interpersonal and teamwork spirit while also instilling a passion for research.

Furthermore, to prepare for advanced research work in molecular neuropharmacology, I took online courses on research writing and the use of genomics tools. Currently, I am working as a research assistant at a Genetics and Molecular Biology laboratory isolating secondary metabolites from fungi species, to test their effects on various types of cancerous cells.

After battled with glossophobia, a problem I solved by facing the challenge head-on by taking various leadership responsibilities that would continuously warrant talking to large groups of people. Furthermore, I began on the path to understand the basic trigger of situational anxiety in human. This inquisitivenesss led me to continue researchig on n

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This number has been observed to double by the end of 2020 partly due to the pandemic. This chronic debilitating disorder largely impacts the quality of life of individuals.