

Autobiography of Shadrack Muthami Kitheka

Introduction

My name is Shadrack Muthami Kitheka, and this is the story of my life. Born and raised in Mumbuni village, Kitui County, Kenya, I belong to the resilient Kamba community. My journey has been shaped by the values of hard work, respect, and community, instilled in me by my parents, Gladys Kuthea Kitheka and the late Andrew Kitheka Kimanzi. Growing up as the second-born in a family of six, my early life was a blend of joy and hardship, marked by the tragic loss of my father and the steadfast strength of my mother.

As a devout Christian and a member of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church, my faith has played a central role in my life. Being part of the church choir has enriched my spiritual journey and strengthened my sense of community and belonging.

From my formative years in primary school to my transformative high school experience at Migwani Boys High School, and now as a final-year student at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DEKUT) pursuing a degree in Business Information Technology, my educational journey has been a testament to perseverance and adaptability. My involvement in extracurricular activities,

leadership roles, and the mentorship of inspiring teachers have all contributed to my growth and aspirations.

In this autobiography, I reflect on the lessons learned, the challenges overcome, and the unwavering support of family and friends that have shaped who I am today. As I look to the future, I am filled with optimism and a commitment to making a positive impact in my community and beyond.

Chapter 1: Early Life and Family Background

My name is Shadrack Muthami Kitheka, and I was born and raised in Mumbuni village, nestled in the heart of Kitui County, Kenya. I belong to the Kamba community, a group known for its rich cultural heritage and enduring resilience. My journey began in a modest household, filled with both joy and hardships, which collectively shaped the person I am today.

My parents, Gladys Kuthea Kitheka and Andrew Kitheka Kimanzi, have been central figures in my life. They instilled in me values of hard work, respect, and community. My father, Andrew Kitheka Kimanzi, was a transit driver, a demanding job that kept him on the road but provided for our family. My mother, Gladys Kuthea Kitheka, has been a steadfast pillar of strength, managing our household and nurturing us with love and care.

I am the second-born in a family of six children. My elder brother, Anderson Kimanzi, has always been a guiding figure in my life, working hard in Nairobi to make ends meet. My younger siblings, Brian Kalonzo, Elizabeth Wendy, Barack Mwendo, and Solomon Muuo, each have their unique aspirations and dreams. Brian is currently in his second year at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DEKUT), Elizabeth and Barack are navigating their high school years, while Solomon is preparing to complete his primary education.

Our family faced a significant loss when my father passed away in a tragic road accident in Eldoret. His premature death left a void in our lives, but my mother has been our rock, supporting us and keeping the family together despite the challenges. Her resilience and strength have been a source of inspiration for all of us.

Chapter 2: Growing Up in Mumbuni Village

Mumbuni village is blessed with a favorable climate for farming, which has significantly influenced my upbringing. Our village is known for its fertile soil and conducive weather conditions, ideal for growing crops such as maize, peas, cowpeas, and millet. From a young age, I was introduced to farming, learning the intricacies of planting, weeding, and harvesting.

Being the second-born came with its share of responsibilities. I often found myself helping with farm work, whether it was planting seeds, weeding the fields, or tending

to our cattle. These tasks taught me the value of hard work, responsibility, and the importance of contributing to the family's well-being. Additionally, I played a significant role in raising my younger siblings, ensuring they were well cared for and supported.

Growing up in such an environment instilled in me a deep appreciation for nature and the cycles of life. The rhythm of planting and harvesting became a metaphor for growth and perseverance in my own life. I learned that patience and diligence yield bountiful rewards, both in farming and in personal endeavors.

Our community in Mumbuni is close-knit, with strong bonds among neighbors. Traditional ceremonies and communal activities fostered a sense of belonging and mutual support. These experiences taught me the importance of community, cooperation, and the role each individual plays in the well-being of the whole.

Chapter 3: Educational Journey

My educational journey began at Mutulu Primary School, where I enrolled in nursery school. The early years of schooling were filled with excitement and curiosity. I remember vividly the joy of learning new things, the thrill of making friends, and the encouragement I received from my teachers. I studied at Mutulu Primary School until class 5 before transferring to Riverside Academy.

The transition to Riverside Academy marked a new chapter in my life. Here, I was exposed to a different environment and new challenges. I completed class 6 and the first term of class 7 at Riverside Academy before transferring to Unyaa Primary School, where I completed my primary education in 2016. This journey through different schools taught me adaptability and resilience, skills that have been invaluable throughout my life.

Each school I attended had its unique environment and challenges, which helped me, develop a well-rounded perspective. At Mutulu, I built my foundational skills and discovered my love for learning. Riverside Academy introduced me to a more competitive academic environment, pushing me to excel further. Unyaa Primary School provided a sense of stability and community, allowing me to focus on my final primary school years with determination.

Chapter 4: High School Years

In 2017, I secured a position at Migwani Boys High School, an extra-county school in Mwingi South Constituency. High school was a transformative period for me, not only academically but also personally. I immersed myself in various extracurricular activities, discovering my passions and honing my leadership skills.

One of my most cherished experiences was playing hockey. I joined the school's hockey team and eventually became the team captain in Form 3. Leading the team

was both challenging and rewarding, teaching me the importance of teamwork, strategy, and perseverance.

In addition to hockey, I was deeply involved in environmental conservation efforts. In 2018, during my second year, I founded the Wildlife Club and served as its chairperson. The club aimed to raise awareness about wildlife conservation and organize educational trips to national parks and game reserves. Our visits to Nakuru National Park, Nairobi National Park, the Giraffe Centre, Hell's Gate, and Olkaria were eye-opening experiences that deepened my appreciation for Kenya's natural heritage.

The Wildlife Club's activities were not only educational but also fostered a sense of camaraderie among the members. We organized clean-up drives, tree-planting activities, and educational sessions about the importance of preserving our environment. These experiences instilled in me a lifelong commitment to environmental stewardship and conservation.

Chapter 5: Recognizing a Special Mentor

One of the most influential figures during my high school years was my Kiswahili teacher, Mr. Ndeto. He joined Migwani Boys High School while I was in Form 3, and his impact on my academic and personal life was profound. Mr. Ndeto quickly

became my favorite teacher, known for his passion for teaching and his ability to connect with students.

Mr. Ndeto also became the patron of the Wildlife Club, further solidifying his role as a mentor. He was incredibly supportive of our conservation efforts and actively participated in our club activities. His enthusiasm and dedication were infectious, inspiring us to pursue our goals with determination and enthusiasm.

Under Mr. Ndeto's guidance, my interest in Kiswahili blossomed. He had a unique way of making the subject engaging and relatable, which significantly improved my understanding and appreciation of the language. His teaching methods were innovative, and he always encouraged us to think critically and express ourselves confidently.

In my final exams, I scored an A in Kiswahili, a testament to Mr. Ndeto's exceptional teaching. His influence extended beyond academics, as he also taught me valuable life lessons about perseverance, passion, and the importance of knowledge. I will always be grateful to him for his guidance and mentorship.

Chapter 6: Academic Interests and Achievements

Throughout my high school years, several subjects captured my interest and inspired me to excel. My favorite subjects included Kiswahili, Geography, Mathematics,

Physics, and Christian Religious Education (CRE). Each of these subjects offered unique insights and challenges that fueled my passion for learning.

Kiswahili, under the guidance of Mr. Ndeto, became a subject of great interest. His dynamic teaching methods and deep understanding of the language made learning enjoyable and rewarding. My success in Kiswahili, culminating in an A grade, was a highlight of my academic journey.

Geography was another subject that fascinated me. The study of the earth, its features, and the intricate relationship between humans and their environment broadened my perspective and deepened my appreciation for the natural world. My passion for Geography translated into academic success, earning me an A in the subject.

Christian Religious Education (CRE) provided a moral and ethical foundation that complemented my academic pursuits. The subject's exploration of religious teachings and their application to everyday life resonated with my personal beliefs and values. I achieved an A in CRE, reflecting my dedication and understanding of the subject.

Mathematics and Physics, while challenging, were subjects I approached with determination and curiosity. Despite my efforts, I scored a B in both subjects. While

I initially felt I had failed my teachers and myself, I realized that these experiences taught me resilience and the importance of continuous improvement.

Chapter 7: University Life

After scoring a B in my KCSE exams, I secured a position at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DEKUT) to pursue a bachelor's degree in Business Information Technology (BBIT). University life has been an enriching experience, offering me opportunities to expand my knowledge, develop new skills, and build lasting relationships.

As I entered my final year and last semester, the sense of accomplishment and anticipation for the future grew stronger. The academic journey at DEKUT has been rigorous but rewarding, preparing me for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in the professional world.

My coursework in BBIT has equipped me with a solid foundation in both business and technology. Subjects such as data analysis, cybersecurity, and business process optimization have been particularly interesting and relevant to my career aspirations. The combination of theoretical knowledge and practical applications has prepared me to tackle real-world problems and contribute to the field of information technology.

In addition to academics, university life has provided numerous opportunities for personal growth and development. I have been involved in various extracurricular activities, including student organizations and community service projects. These experiences have enhanced my leadership skills, fostered a sense of community, and reinforced the importance of giving back to society.

Chapter 8: Personal Relationships and Support Systems

Throughout my life, I have been fortunate to have the support of several key individuals who have significantly influenced my journey. My best male friend and cousin, Amos Safari Joseph, has been a constant presence, both mentally and physically. Although we attended different schools, our bond has grown stronger with time, and he remains a pillar of support and encouragement.

Emily Mueni, my girlfriend, has been another significant influence in my life. Her unwavering support, love, and companionship have been invaluable. Emily has stood by me through thick and thin, and I am deeply grateful for her presence in my life. Her encouragement and belief in my potential have been a source of strength and motivation.

During my university years, I have also formed meaningful friendships that have enriched my life. Patrick Kiteme, a friend I met at DEKUT, has been a mentor and

guide. He has provided valuable advice on financial management, relationships, and moral values, helping me navigate the complexities of university life and beyond.

Kelvin Muriithi, a course mate, has been a dependable friend, offering both academic and financial support. His willingness to help and his genuine friendship have made a significant difference in my university experience. Together, we have tackled academic challenges and celebrated successes, building a lasting friendship based on mutual respect and support.

Chapter 9: Hobbies and Interests

Outside of my academic pursuits, I have a diverse range of hobbies and interests that bring balance and joy to my life. Football has always been a passion of mine. Whether playing with friends in the village or watching professional matches, the sport has been a source of excitement and camaraderie.

Swimming is another activity I enjoy. The feeling of being in the water, combined with the physical exercise it provides, is both refreshing and invigorating. Swimming has also taught me the importance of discipline and perseverance, as mastering different techniques requires consistent effort and practice.

Reading is a hobby that has enriched my mind and broadened my horizons. From novels to academic texts, reading allows me to explore new ideas, gain knowledge, and escape into different worlds. It has been a constant companion throughout my life, offering solace and inspiration.

Traveling is another passion that has allowed me to explore different parts of Kenya and experience diverse cultures. I have visited various counties, including Mombasa, Machakos, Kitale, Nairobi, Nyeri, Nakuru, Eldoret, and Kilifi. Each journey has been an adventure, filled with new experiences and learning opportunities.

These hobbies and interests have contributed to my overall well-being and personal development. They provide a balance to my academic and professional pursuits, ensuring that I remain well rounded and fulfilled.

Chapter 10: Personal Growth and Development

Throughout my life, the various challenges and achievements I have encountered have significantly contributed to my personal growth and development. Each experience, whether positive or negative, has imparted valuable lessons and shaped my character.

The support from my family has been a cornerstone of my journey. Their encouragement and belief in my potential have motivated me to strive for excellence. My mother's resilience, in particular, has been a source of inspiration, demonstrating the power of perseverance in the face of adversity.

My educational journey, from primary school to university, has been marked by dedication and hard work. The challenges I faced along the way, such as adapting to new schools and overcoming academic difficulties, have taught me resilience and adaptability. These skills have not only contributed to my academic success but have also prepared me for future challenges.

Extracurricular activities, such as playing hockey and leading the Wildlife Club, have developed my leadership and teamwork abilities. These experiences have shown me the importance of collaboration and the impact of collective action. They have also reinforced my commitment to environmental conservation and community service.

Chapter 11: Future Aspirations

As I approach the completion of my university education, I look forward to the future with optimism and determination. My goal is to leverage my degree in Business

Information Technology to make a positive impact in the field of information technology and business.

I aspire to work in an environment where I can apply my skills and knowledge to solve real-world problems and drive innovation. I am particularly interested in areas such as data analysis, cybersecurity, and business process optimization. My ultimate goal is to contribute to the growth and development of the technology sector in Kenya and beyond.

In addition to my professional aspirations, I am committed to giving back to my community. I plan to engage in initiatives that promote education, environmental conservation, and community development. My experiences in the Wildlife Club and other extracurricular activities have shown me the power of collective action, and I am eager to continue making a positive impact.

Chapter 12: Political Aspirations and Community Engagement

My passion for politics stems from a desire to contribute positively to Kenya's future. Engaging in civic activities and community leadership roles has fueled my commitment to promoting social justice, economic prosperity, and inclusive governance.

As I navigate the complexities of political landscapes, I aim to advocate for policies that empower marginalized communities, foster sustainable development, and uphold democratic values. Through informed civic participation and collaborative efforts, I aspire to be a catalyst for positive change and contribute meaningfully to Kenya's socio-political landscape.

Chapter 13: Reflections on Growth and Resilience

Reflecting on my journey, I am grateful for the experiences and lessons that have shaped me into the person I am today. From my early years in Mumbuni village to my academic pursuits at DEKUT, each chapter of my life has been a blend of challenges, achievements, and growth.

The support of my family, the guidance of my teachers, and the camaraderie of my friends have been invaluable. They have taught me the importance of perseverance, resilience, and community. As I look to the future, I am filled with a sense of purpose and a commitment to continue learning, growing, and making a difference.

My journey is far from over, and I am excited to see what the future holds. With the lessons of the past as my guide, I am confident in my ability to navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. My story is a testament to the power of determination, hard work, and the enduring support of loved ones.

Epilogue: Gratitude and Acknowledgments

As I conclude this autobiography, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to those who have been part of my journey. To my parents, Gladys Kuthea Kitheka and the late Andrew Kitheka Kimanzi, thank you for your unwavering love and support. Your sacrifices and guidance have been the foundation of my success.

To my siblings, Anderson Kimanzi, Brian Kalonzo, Elizabeth Wendy, Barack Mwendo, and Solomon Muuo, thank you for your companionship and encouragement. You have been my pillars of strength, and I am proud of each one of you.

To my teachers and mentors, thank you for your dedication and wisdom. You have inspired me to strive for excellence and have equipped me with the tools to succeed. Your impact on my life is immeasurable.

Special thanks to Mr. Ndeto, my high school Kiswahili teacher. Your passion for teaching and your friendly demeanor made learning a joy. Your role as the Wildlife Club patron and your support in my academic endeavors have left a lasting impression. Scoring an A in Kiswahili in the final exams was a testament to your exceptional teaching and guidance.

To my best friend and cousin, Amos Safari Joseph, thank you for being a constant source of support and encouragement. Our friendship has grown stronger with time, and I am grateful for your presence in my life.

To Emily Mueni, my girlfriend, thank you for your unwavering support and love. You have stood by me through thick and thin, and I deeply appreciate your companionship.

To my university friends, Patrick Kiteme and Kelvin Muriithi, thank you for your guidance, support, and friendship. You have enriched my university experience and have been instrumental in my personal and academic growth.

Lastly, to my friends and community members, thank you for your support and camaraderie. You have enriched my life with your presence and have shown me the value of community and friendship.

As I step into the next chapter of my life, I carry with me the lessons, memories, and aspirations that have been part of my journey. I am excited for the future and committed to making a positive impact in the world. Thank you for being part of my story.