

What was your job in your country and what made you decide to study in Japan?

Before joining the program, I worked as a principal management development consultant at the Centre for Management Development Nigeria, which operates under the Ministry of National Budget and Economic Planning. The Centre for Management Development is Nigeria's apex human capacity development institution and regulatory body. As the principal management development consultant, I specialized in conducting organizational training needs assessments (TNA), developing training content, delivering training sessions, and evaluating post-training outcomes. Additionally, I provided economic and policy analysis and financial advisory services.

From 2016 to 2018, I pursued a master's degree in international development economics at the International University of Japan through the African Business Education for Youth Initiative (ABE-Initiative), sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). During the program, I learned new approaches to economic development and gained competence in formulating and analyzing economic policies. I also networked with numerous Japanese companies during the JICA business networking events and internships. These experiences, along with the desire to solidify my economic knowledge and expand my network among Japanese individuals and businesses, have motivated me to continue my studies in Japan.

Please, describe your study at Hiroshima University and the things you are now working on.

I am a Ph.D. student in Economics at Hiroshima University's Graduate School of Humanities and Social Science. I joined the program through the JICA SDG Global Leadership Program. Professor Yoshihiko Kadoya supervises my research, which focuses on financial and behavioral economics. My focus includes financial literacy, digital financial literacy, behavioral biases, and financial decision-making.

Is there any difference between when you just came to Japan and right now?

Although this was not my first stay in Japan, the people of Hiroshima reinforced my view of Japan as a homogeneous society marked by friendliness, punctuality, kindness, love for work, cleanliness and Honne tatemae (holding true feelings (honne) and voicing out what is aligned with the public expectation the (tatemae). Visiting Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park changed my understanding of World War II and highlighted the need for global cooperation on geopolitical and economic issues.

Please describe the best moment in Japan.

I had memorable moments in Japan, including my welcoming party at Professor Kadoya Lab, receiving the 2024 Hiroshima University Excellent Student Award, visiting junior high schools, interacting with Japanese friends, and attending intercultural activities.

Do you interact with local Japanese people during your stay in Japan? If not, would you like to do something to interact with local people?

I have had several opportunities to meet with local people. Often, I met with Yoshiko Yokoyama Sensei and Junko Sensei, along with other international students, to discuss Japanese culture, including cuisine, language, and cultural differences from other countries. This interaction helped me understand the Japanese acceptability of foreigners and their willingness to assist in learning the language, overcoming loneliness, and living comfortably.

Anything you want to share about yourself and/or your life in HigashiHiroshima. Such as hobbies, food, Japanese culture, and your country.

I loved Hiroshima Okonomiyaki, Children's school visit, and the onsen (traditional Japanese hot spring bath) experience was fantastic. My interactions with Professor Kadoya and his Lab members were very pleasant and motivating. We played games and went sightseeing together. His style of mentoring has helped me to publish papers in peer-reviewed journals.

For my country, Nigeria is not only the most populous country in Africa but also the continent's largest economy. Our nation boasts a youthful population, abundant arable land, and vast mineral resources. Nigerians are renowned for their entrepreneurial spirit and the potential for high returns on investment. We warmly invite Japanese investors to explore Nigeria's wealth of opportunities.

After you graduate, how would like to apply what you learned in Japan to your job? Also, are you planning to keep in touch with the Japanese community/people?

As a management consultant and trainer, I aim to apply my expertise at the Centre for Management Development after graduation, contributing to the growth and benefit of the broader community. As an ABE Initiative alumnus and former President of Kakehashi Africa Nigeria (KANI), I plan to maintain strong ties with the Japanese and support Japanese companies operating or planning to invest in or considering investments in Nigeria. KANI, an organization comprising ABE Initiative alumni in Nigeria, is dedicated to strengthening economic and social collaborations between Japan and Nigeria.

Message to future JICA participants.

As a JICA participant, you represent your country and have the responsibility to be a commendable ambassador. Embrace the objectives of your scholarship and develop a clear plan to achieve them effectively.