

SOP SAMPLE

BY

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR PHD IN _____ BY _____

I have about 10 years of experience in development work. I have been engaged in the provision of sanitary pads in poor communities, and training young women on how to be financially stable. This has inspired my career prospects, of becoming a renowned expert in international development, therefore I want to pursue a PhD inat the..... A PhD program in this field would expose me to relevant theories, contemporary policies and equip me with the right academic and theoretical training. I will also be under the tutelage of the best hands and resources to enable me to positively impact young civic leaders in developing countries and advance my career as a scholar, researcher and development practitioner. For the past 10 years, I have been actively involved in community development, because I reckon that it is best to change our society with action rather than criticism. Hence, I founded Girls With Purpose (insert website here) which has provided pads for over 1000 vulnerable girls and trained about 2,000 women on business development. As a result of my humanitarian activities, I won several humanitarian awards such as Associate Fellow of the Royal Commonwealth Society UK, and the Mandela Washington Fellowship of the US Department of State.

The trajectory of my life growing up was shaped by migration resulting from conflict. Therefore, my family moved from one city to another. I was born in, but we moved to, because of the prevailing atmosphere of socio-political instability precipitated by acts of Islamist extremism in the North. I finished my secondary and university education in the southern part. I was posted back to Northern Nigeria upon graduation from the for the mandatory one-year national service. It was there that I came across young girls who were mostly absent from school because they could not afford sanitary pads. They reminded me of when I lost my father at the age of 10 and our lives were negatively impacted because he was the sole provider of the family, until my mother took menial jobs to cater for our needs. I became determined to support the girls and empower their mothers financially so that the girls would stop skipping school. My interest in international development led me to start a Master's in and specializing in at the University of

.....where I graduated with Distinction and top of my class. My MA research titled, “.....,” won several international awards/grants like I have gone ahead to publish papers and presented my research at several conferences.

My professional and academic work is an embodiment of Social Practice and Transformational Change. I have a background in Interdisciplinary studies and my proposed PhD research is interdisciplinary as well, which makes a PhD in this field most appropriate. I have titled my proposed research, ‘.....’. This study intends to investigate how access to international opportunities impacts young Africans as well as sponsoring bodies in North America and Europe. Change Makers/Leaders refers to young people who founded Social Enterprises and NGOs intending to solve a social problem and fight for social justice. The research questions are: To what extent has access to international opportunities impacted young African Changemakers/Leaders? In what ways will these opportunities impact economic and political activities in Africa in the future? What benefits do sponsoring bodies intend to get from these ventures that ensure their sustainability? This research will focus on Africans in Nigeria and Ghana.

My proposed research aligns with one of the pillars of Social Justice and Praxis Orientation of this program, as these young leaders after being trained in the West, return to Africa to become change agents. In the course of training young people in leadership skills, I have made some interesting observations which I would like to further explore. I observe thatJust as more international fellowships continue to spring up, so do these young people become motivated to start NGOs and Social Enterprises as they are seen as rewards, while others have migration plans. Public diplomacy would be employed as the framework of this study. Bátorá (2005: 4) earlier described public diplomacy as “all activities by state and non-state actors that contribute to the maintenance and promotion of a country’s soft power”.Pajtinka (2019) defined public diplomacy as a set of complex activities carried out or supported by a state that focuses on influencing public opinion abroad to reach or promote a certain foreign policy goal. He argues that it uses communication based on one way messaging rather than dialogue.

In the past five decades, significant effort has been put into funding and other resources in Africa’s development geared at economic growth, social and political stabilization. (ICD 2011). Most of these support comes as foreign aid. Thapa (2020) argues that foreign aid increases dependency and donors can interfere with economic and political activities of a receiving country. On the other hand, this study states that foreign aid improves a country’s image and helps to promote peace. While most researchers have focused on the impact of Western Public Diplomacy in Africa, not much has been done concerning the influence these international opportunities have on Young African change makers who are future leaders of the continent. A study like this is of uttermost importance as Africans are on the receiving end. Just as there is an increase in the number of international programs, it is not a coincidence that there is also an increase in the number of businesses and social enterprises that are springing up. This research will be of benefit to the Canadian authorities in maintaining a reciprocal relationship with experts across Africa through the provision of such opportunities and how holders have been able to give back to their communities through this avenue thereby impacting immensely in their local regions and by implication the world. I hope to develop a reliable instrument that will help to measure the impact of such fellowships on the participants. This research will utilize a case study approach.would be studied and participants from these initiatives would be interviewed. For three months of fieldwork, the research instruments include In-depth interview with 30 alumni members. Two focus group discussions with 8 members of each program, In-depth Interviews with coordinators of each program.

My interest in pursuing a PhD degree inat thewas

inspired by the fact that the University ranks among the top universities in the world. Also, the university is a great citadel of learning with world-class facilities, libraries, mentors, and student-support system that can inspire groundbreaking research, which would equip me to build a successful career in teaching and research. I would like to work with....., as my supervisor, as she is a renowned scholar with expertise in my subject of interest and has committed to supervising it, which further motivated me to apply. She has worked with initiatives in Africa, and her work on social justice are of immense utility to my research. I am also looking forward to lending my expertise to help other students to transform their world by changing ideas into viable social ventures and learn from my practical experience in international development and civic leadership.