LEARNING, UNLEARNING AND RELEARNING – PREREQUISITES OF THE DIGITAL AGE

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ABUJA

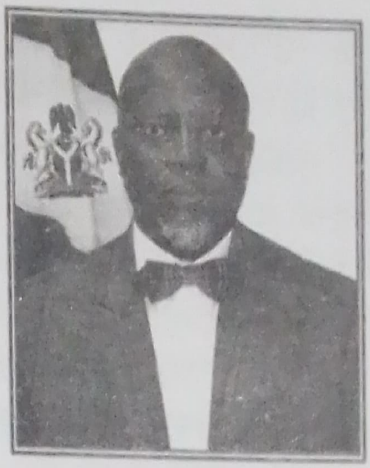
Convocation Lecture

Delivered at

KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE



December 14, 2023



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Is-haq Olanrewaju Oloyede is a Professor of Islamics and a Fellow of the Islamic Academy of Cambridge, United Kingdom; Fellow, Academy of Entrepreneurship; Fellow, Nigerian Institute of Management; Fellow, Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies and Fellow, Association of Islamic Religious Studies and a Fellow, Nigerian Academic of Letters. He won the Arab League Prize for Best Final Year Certificate Student in Islamic Studies from the University of Ibadan in 1977.

He won Federal Government Undergraduate Merit Award (University of Ilorin) in 1981 and many other laurels both home and abroad. He has a first class degree in Arabic Language and Literature, a Masters degree in Islamic Studies and a Ph.D in Islamic jurisprudence. He also holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education from University of Ilorin.

He has served on the board of many reputable university and academic organisations. He was the Chairman, Committee of Directors of Academic Planning in Nigerian

Universities, 2002 to 2004; he was the President, Association of African Universities (AAU), 2004 to 2011 when he voluntarily resigned to pave way for the resumption of a Nigerian, Professor Jegede as the Secretary-General of the Association. He served on the Board of Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), 2010 to 2012 and International Association of Universities (IAU), 2008 to 2012. He is an International Advisory Board member of International Network for Higher Education in Africa (INHEA). He was also a Board member of Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC).

He was appointed Co-Secretary of the National Political Reform Conference by President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2006 and also a member of the 2014 National Political Conference. Also in 2006, he was appointed a Consultant for the reorganisation of the National Universities Commission (NUC) in Nigeria.

He was the initiator and honorary secretary General of All West African Universities (AWAU). He was the Executive Secretary and National Coordinator of the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) from 2007 to 2018 and currently the Secretary General of the Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.

Professor Oloyede served as the Vice-Chancellor, University of Ilorin, from October, 2007 to October 15, 2012 and Chairman Association of Vice-Chancellors of Nigeria Universities as well as the Committee of Vice-Chancellors (CVC) from 2011 to 2012.

Prof. Oloyede during his five-year administration as Vice-Chancellor turned around the fortunes of the University of Ilorin and its ratings among global Universities.

Prof. Oloyede assumed duty as the Registrar of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) on the 9th of August, 2016 and within few years of his assumption, revamped the entire operation of the Board. The Board had remitted to the Federal Government coffers a cumulative sum of less than ₦50m between 1978 and 2016, remitted ₦7.8b in 2017 and has between 2017 to date paid operating surplus of ₦30.3b to the Federal Government-CRF, excluding special allowance to staff, grants to corporate bodies and institutions which amount to above N5billion in addition to over N12billion capital expenditure for the massive physical and human development being undertaken from the Internal Generated Revenue (IGR) of the Board. The fact, which made the Federal Government to reduce the application fee into tertiary institution by 30%.

Professor Oloyede who is a globally acknowledged scholar of Islam, who was promoted to the rank of Professor in 1995, has published close to one hundred publications in reputable outlets and attended numerous academic fora within and outside Nigeria.

Professor Oloyede is a recipient of two national honours: Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic (OFR), 2014 and Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON), 2022. He received the National Productivity Order of Merit (NPOM) Award in 2019 and the Nigeria Excellence Award

in Public Service (Education Category) in 2022. The National Executive Council of the Nigerian Association of Christian Journalists honoured him with the Integrity Public Servant Personality of the Year 2021 award (NACJ). In February 2023, he was presented with an Icon of Education Transformation and Peace award and was also made a life member of the NANS Hall of Fame. In September 2023, TAF Africa honoured him for his outstanding commitment to the education of people with disabilities in Nigeria. Prof. Is-haq Olanrewaju Oloyede is married with four adult-children and eleven grandchildren.

Learning, Unlearning and Relearning – Prerequisites of the Digital Age

Welcome to the information
(Digital)age.
Data, data,
everywhere,
but no one knows a thing.
- Roger Kimball

PREAMBLE

Ladies and gentlemen, eminent guests and dignitaries, it is indeed a great honour for me and the institutions that I represent, the University of Ilorin and the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), to be invited to deliver this year's convocation lecture particularly at a time this convocation lecture is holding - a time when our nation is trying to press the reset button in its attempt to overcome the multiple challenges facing it in recent times. We are all gathered here today and at a time when it has become urgent for us to make efforts to cross the abyss that separates us from our destiny. It is my firm belief, therefore, that there actually might be no better or pertinent topic for us to ponder, there might be no other urgent conversation to engage in other than that which problematises the challenges the so-called information or digital age poses to our youths, to us as their parents and to our nation. It has become a categorical imperative for us to reimagine and re-envision the information age with a

view to interrogating its curves and columns, and reappraise the strategies that we may continually have to deploy in order to find meaning for, and in our lives as individuals and as a nation.

It is my utmost joy and pleasure to be in the beautiful ambience of this fast-growing citadel of learning, Kwara State University (KWASU). Let me begin by appreciating the Acting Vice Chancellor, Prof. Shaykh-Lukman Alade Jimoh and his dynamic management team for the 'pleasant trouble' given me to deliver this year's Convocation Lecture. It is an honour to share what is known and to contribute to the capacity building of the youth who constitute the engine of the society.

I also acknowledge and congratulate the Governing Council, staff and students of Kwara State University on the auspicious occasion of the 10th and 11th combined convocation ceremonies. It is my fervent prayer that KWASU shall continue to enjoy progress in leaps and bounds. It is also my hope that it shall continue to set standards for other state universities to follow as a flagship institution in its own right, which like a precocious child has developed far beyond the chronological age.

I must confess that being in KWASU again fills me with immense nostalgia and moderated joy. Please do not question why my joy is moderated. It is remarkable that the baby of yesterday that KWASU was, has attained maturity and it is marching valiantly forward to a promising

adulthood. I was the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin when the University was established in 2009 and I have been watching its steady growth and development with interest. I had led my management team and members of the Senate for a retreat here shortly afterwards to brainstorm on revamping our postgraduate studies. We were all in the student hostel for about a week and the quantum of what we were able to achieve was amazing as it set a new pedestal for the University of Ilorin postgraduate studies.

Once again, I felicitate the KWASU academic community and applaud the thoughtfulness of its founding fathers, the pioneer Vice-Chancellor, Prof. AbdulRasheed Na'Allah and those who worked with him at all levels to the successful successors. The right successor in late Prof. Muhammad Akanbi was upping the ante at discharging his assignment and I note with pleasure that within his tour of duty, the Faculty of Law came on board and the College of Health Sciences was also approved by the National Universities Commission (NUC). These are high impact programmes that will add value to the great job the university is doing at delivering its mandate as a university for community development. The current Acting Vice Chancellor Prof. Shaykh-Lukman Alade Jimoh has also within this short period raised in diverse ways the banners of KWASU. I congratulate you and your principal officers.

This year's convocation therefore marks a watershed in this institution's march to greatness. It signposts KWASU's

position as the fountain for the production of the critical human capital that is *sine qua non* for the progress and development of this nation.

Ladies and gentlemen! I, however, believe that the glory in today's event does not belong to KWASU as an institution alone. It indeed belongs to the graduands. Indeed, today is your day. Is it not? Today marks the end of a chapter in your book of life. Is it not? It is the day you cease being ordinary citizens in this country. Today is indeed your day. It is the day your status in life has changed and forever too. Today marks your ascension on the ladder of life! It is the day you qualify to receive a certificate that expectedly would open the door of opportunities in life to you. But let me share this with you - today would indeed become a memorable one in your life if you consider the certificate that KWASU would award you as the ticket with which you would change the world and realize the plans of your Creator, Almighty Allah, who brought you from nothing to existence.

In other words, dear graduands, when carefully contemplated, today is actually not 'yours' alone. No! Today actually belongs to your parents. Happy are days like these when parents behold the 'seeds' that they planted and nurtured become a 'tree'. Your parents are therefore waiting; they are waiting that you, the 'trees', would begin to fructify and bear fruits. The Nigerian society is also waiting; it is waiting to benefit from the wisdom and

discernment that KWASU has imparted into your life during the past four to five years.

Ladies and gentlemen, yet again, today might belong neither to you, your parents nor to KWASU. In truth, today belongs to Almighty Allah. It is He who has brought us all here. In his unknowable plans and actions, He granted us all those uncommon favours; the favours of life, of faith. He has treated us like the special ones. On the road where accidents have occurred, we have been saved, rescued and preserved; in seasons of anomie when people are killed for fun, we have been protected; at a time the healthy ends up in the morgue, ours has been that of wealth and health. Ladies and gentlemen! This day is not for you; this day is not for them. It is to Him and for Him alone, the Almighty!!!

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

Which of the favours of your Lord can we deny?

Thus, ladies and gentlemen, if we have to ponder the question "why are we here?", the probable response could indeed be that we are here gathered to celebrate not the end but the beginning of another journey in the life of today's graduands. This is because convocation ceremonies are instructive of the fact that life is nothing but series of beginnings, not endings; that graduations ceremonies are not rituals of terminations, but rites of transformations; convocation ceremonies are points of departures for new journeys in life, not points of

arrivals! Successful therefore shall be those, among you graduands who do not consider themselves as having arrived your destinations in life. Consider this day to be the second "matriculation" ceremony in your life; a 'matriculation' not into any conventional university but quite instructively into the 'university of life!'

It is based on the realisation of the task ahead of these graduands, the task ahead of youths of today who usually conflate points of departures with that of arrivals, youths who usually consider themselves as exceptional and masters of the game at a time when they are utterly ignorant of both the universals and the 'particulars' of life, that probably informed the choice of today's lecture that I have taken the liberty to retitle "Learning, Unlearning and Relearning; Prerequisites of the Information Age". But exactly what is meant by the information age? What are its features? How can the concepts or categories of learning, unlearning and relearning be useful in increasing the capacities of today's graduates in the onerous task of living?

As Oloyede (2018) noted while delivering the 10th convocation lecture of Tai Solarin University, that convocation lecture has various colours and hues across climes, there is something fundamental about it regarding relevance to the graduands. Otherwise known as Commencement Speech, Convocation Address and Convocation Speech, it is essentially a presentation or address that *seeks to put their (graduating students) recent*

hard (or not so hard) work into the context of the future….words traditionally reserved for momentous occasions may ring true and inspirational at any hour (Balis, 2013).

In Nigeria, however, the convention has been that a convocation lecture would address a topical issue with all the appurtenances of academic presentation, like a seminar or conference paper. When I have to present a convocation lecture, I am always in the dilemma regarding delivering it a commencement speech or convocation address as it is or going the Nigerian way of delivering an academic paper or hybridizing the two so that the global and the local approaches would be integrated. For this lecture, it is the hybridised form that I have adopted where the lecture is more than just a speech but is also not a technical paper.

In clearer terms, while being aware of what we assume a Convocation Lecture to be in Nigeria, where the theme may not even have anything to do with the graduating students and they are not even obliged to attend, the theme of this lecture is functionally multivalent: it is relevant to the graduands, the entire studentry, the faculty and the public. In delivery, the speech and paper components are hybridised to considerable degrees such that it could neither be described as an address or a technical paper. It is a discourse on highlighting the significance of lifelong learning in the current Information Age such that no one will be complacent that after having a degree or some

degrees, one has finished learning. As it often happens, the end of schooling is the beginning of education and learning, and according to Islamic tradition, education is from the cot to the coffin, from the cradle to the grave.

HUMAN CIVILISATION AT THE BOARDER OF INFORMATION AGE

It is self-evident that the world we live in did not begin today or that we arrived here in an instant. Human civilisation has evolved over time and space, taking on many forms and patterns of development. There was a time when our forefathers were engrossed in the use of simple tools for gathering food, a time when the world in which they lived became so complex to them that in order to understand it, they began to create myths and superstitions to explain what they did not understand. There was also a time when they mastered the use of iron and could build machines to assist them in performing complex tasks. The advances of the past have culminated in a new world in which everyone clicks and knowledge is oxygen.

Based on the submission of Lari (1977), human civilisation started with the Paleolithic Age marked by the use of simple tools like sticks and stones to hunt animals, gather food and achieve self-defence. At this Age of the hunter-gatherer, caves were used for shelter, leaves were used for cover and sticks were used for defence. Man, in its generic term, was in a state of constant engagement with the enemy which manifested in confronting the hostile environment, animals and fellow humans.

After the Paleolithic Age, there was the Later Paleolithic Age during which natural objects were used to fabricate tools. This entailed fixing stones to sticks to make hammer,

grinding stones against stones to achieve sharp edges, striking stones with leaves to make fire and cooking food to improve its nutritional value. During this period, the development of fire-making and nocturnal vision greatly diminished the fear associated with nighttime, as individuals were able to illuminate their surroundings and identify any threats, be they human or animal.

Following this, the Neolithic Age began, a period in which the human living conditions underwent profound transformations. Huts became homes and crude objects of the Paleolithic Age gave way to tools with precise and polished tools. Wood was shaped into planks and mud was moulded into pots and the process of drying clay to a solid state using fire and sunlight was developed. Additionally, organised subsistence agriculture was practised while some animals were domesticated. The bow and arrow were invented while spears and axes were developed. This period is otherwise known as the Stone Age.

The Bronze Age came with the use of metals and the development of communal living. Human civilisation attained a new dimension of city life as human beings evolved from mere hunters of animals and gatherers of food to conscious beings with dreams and aspirations and living in a "polis". The later part became known as the age of science with man becoming curious about devising means and using metals to dominate his environment. Iron became cast in shapes, wheels began to roll on the road and there was a substantial improvement in the human

capacity to move from one location to another which gave rise to the age of industry and the advent of the Industrial Revolution.

The cumulation of the previous eras gave birth to the current Information Age. This is an epochal period in the annals of human history that started in the mid-20th century. The Age is characterised by a radical shift from the traditional industry of the previous era to a knowledge-based economy driven by Information Technology. The Information Age, also called the Computer Age, the Digital Age, the New Media Age, is based on the idea that access to and control of information is the defining characteristic of the contemporary era of human civilisation.

THE INFORMATION AGE: DEFINING THE INDEFINABLE

Ladies and gentlemen, it is common knowledge that whenever reference is made to the information age, it partly to that moment in 1941 when the German engineer, Konrad Zuse, invented the first programmable computer then known as Z3. Earlier in 1936, another engineer, Turin, had published a paper that has been acclaimed as laying the foundation for computer science. In the said paper, Turin had predicted the development of a Universal Machine that would be capable of decoding and performing any set of instructions. While preparing that paper, Turin had also sought inspiration from Antikythera mechanism that was discovered in 1901 which was believed to be the earliest known mechanical analog computer. But what

matters is not how computers evolved from ancient tools like abacus to modern devices with microprocessors; nor is it of critical importance to anymore whether the computer is 'desktops' or 'laptops'. Rather, what matters today is that all references to the information age is *de facto* to the fundamental changes and revolution that that machine has orchestrated in human life since the beginning of modernity. It is to how humanity has become so dependent on computer and ancillary products like hand phones like never before. Thus, the information age could be a synonym for the internet age, when billions of people across the world now communicate seamlessly with one another, when the barriers and boundaries of time and space are liquidated by the magical intervention of technology and new information systems. The information age references that period that is characterised by the widespread use of digital technologies and the internet. It is a period that manifests significant changes in the way we live, work, communicate, and access information. According to Cambridge Dictionary, it is the "time, in which many things are done by computer and large amounts of information are available because of computer technology" (Cambridge, 2023). It is an age that "permits the users to adopt different new media web-communication technologies in their daily life for easier and smooth communication." (Yujie, 2022, p.8). An age for better quality of life through innovative dimensions of activity (Fischer, Lundin & Lindberg, 2023, p.2). But exactly what are its features and major elements?

THE AGE OF CONTRADICTIONS

Also known as the "Age of Multimedia Revolution" and "The Information Superhighway," the latter of which the Senator Al-Gore in his 1992 vice-presidential campaign used to symbolise "his vision of universal access to a huge interlinked matrix of computer systems through a highly developed communications infrastructure" (Flexner and Soukhanov, 1997 p.69), the Information Age is today's world of globalisation. The features of the Information Age comprises everything that concerns the electronic storage and transmission of information including the computers, the internet, smartphones, online shopping, social media platforms and digital connectivity. According to Spacey (2017), some 24 characteristics of the Information Age are:

1. Networks
2. Internet of Things
3. Mobility
4. Knowledge and Research
5. Digitisation
6. Consumerisation
7. Immersive Experience
8. Long Tail (ability of amateurs to compete with highly skilled professionals or very small firms to compete with large firms.)
9. Misinformation and Disinformation
10. Knowledge Economy (the creation of value without manual work as a large number of workers now create things such as strategies, plans, codes,

designs and research which are completely digital without any physical form.)

11. Productivity
12. Leisure
13. Attention Economy
14. Dematerialisation (the tendency for economic actiview to use less and less raw materials)
15. Imagination Age
16. Maker Culture
17. Creative Destruction
18. Globalisation ("a process in which geographical distance becomes a factor of diminishing importance in the establishment and maintenance of cross-border economic, political and socio-cultural relations" which goes along with the empowerment of Western culture. It is also a concept referring both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole" (Robertson, 1992 p.8).
19. Commodity and Experience
20. Culture Change
21. Digital Dependency
22. Information Security and Insecurity
23. Moore's Law (Information Technology rapidly improves and becomes cheaper and faster with every capacity. Moore's Law is about the prediction made in the 1970s that the process power of computers would double every two years)

24. Accelerating Change (Computers are research and design tools that have helped to create an age of innovation and change with each innovation helping to make the next innovation faster such that change accelerates with time.)

The most defining feature of the information age is probably the pervasive use of digital technology, which includes computers, smartphones, tablets, and other digital devices. These devices process data and store information in digital form. Yes. With the computer and smartphones, we now live in the so-called digital age; the age of transformation; the age when materials are dematerialised and digitised; the age when tangible entities become intangible. The information age is the age of new knowledge economy; when values are created without manual work.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the information age: the age of coding, of algorithms and of what they call Artificial Intelligence (AI); the age of artificial men and women; the age of artificial life. This is the age when robots now perform human functions; when robots are displacing human interventions in the field of medicine, finance, banking and education. This is age when men now seek sexual gratification not from other opposite gender but from robots!

Welcome to the information age! This age has functioned in positioning humanity in two different worlds: the virtual

and the physical; the age of double identities; the age of the real, of the unreal and the surreal.

Ladies and gentlemen, this age is referred to as the information age partly because of the huge information that are accessible to humanity courtesy of the internet. Given the free access that everybody now has to the 'world' and the freedom enjoyed by all to generate information by themselves, the information age has become a metaphor for misinformation and disinformation.Thus, what appears to be true in this age could indeed be false; what is false could indeed be true. The information age makes everything possible; relativity of truth has become the doxa, a marker of the digital age. With artificial intelligence, a strong component of the information age, stupidity now borders on intellectuality, inanity can be cloaked in the garb of rationality, religiousity is on the verge of antiquity. We have all become ordinary elements in cyberspace now known as 'internet of things'. Humans now appear as machines, and machines have become humans. In this digital age of ours what you consider to be machine could be humans after all; some humans now prefer to be machines!

Yes! One of the goody-goodies of the information age, is its facilitation of human and data 'mobility'. Yes, in the safe corners of your room you can move from one continent to another though in truth you may actually not be changing your physical location.What an age this is. With a flick of

your finger, you could be in china; with a reverse flick, you could be in Australia.

With the information age, the world has witnessed exponential increase in economic productivity. Unlike decades before, we now 'énjoy' new platforms and avenues for leisure and pleasure; pleasures and leisures that provide solace to humanity away from its grim realities.

In this age, we now live what I refer to as the 'e-life': in place of postal services, we now do email; instead of physically going to the market, we now engage in e-shopping; instead of physically going to the banks, we now do e--banking or e-banking; instead of teaching in classrooms, we now do e-teaching. As we are pondering these issues today, the global north is already working how to upscale the information age. The information age appears to have become trite and tired of itself; the internet appears to have overstayed its welcome. Tech-experts in North America are now working on developing new technologies that would facilitate life in what they refer to, not as internet anymore, but metaverse: a 3D virtual world, focussed on social and economic connections; or a trialectical space in which users represented by avatars interact with one another in the virtual, completely detached from the physical world. In the latter, human to human contact would become antiquated; life would be lived in space; or, in another parlance, remotely. Welcome to remote life, to remote work and remote romance. All these have become possible thanks to the information age;

the age of the social media, of Twitter, of Instagram, of Facebook, of Linkedin. The information age, simply put, is the age of the possible; it is the epoch where humanity is pulling down the barriers, opening up new areas, removing the veil from the sacred, making the profane sacred.This explains why in 2014, I titled a work "Theologising the Mundane, Politicising the Divine: The Cross-Current of Law, Religion and Politics in Nigeria."

THE YOUTH AND THE 21ST CENTURY ILLITERACY

The graduating students are a critical segment of the youth though being youth is not necessarily being a graduate. The National Youth Policy (2010 p.10) posits that "the way in which a nation defines its youth is related to the object conditions and realities that exist on ground especially historical and contemporary socio-economic and political issues that need to be addressed". There have been divergent opinions on who a youth is. Nevertheless, it is agreed that the youth represent "the most active, most volatile, and yet most vulnerable segment of the population, socio-economically and in other respects" (National Youth Policy, 2001).

Other scholars employed the age bracket of 15-30 to define youth. It is also helpful to add that progressive-mindedness is one of the defining characteristics of youth. Therefore, the current thinking is that people beyond the age of 36 who share the ideals of a progressive society are also considered youthful. Whatever the age limit, the youth are men and women considered to be young, energetic,

vibrant and resourceful, who are often engaged in social enterprises that require physical strength and mental capacity (Suleiman, 2006). Life belongs to the youth and the future of the country lies in the hands of the youth.

Robert Kennedy once said what resonates stridently with the demands of today's modern world: "This world demands the qualities of youth: not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the life of ease". So, a person whose state of mind is youthful, regardless of his biological age, which is just a number, is also a youth. And if a person biological age falls between 18 and 40 and he is mentally docile, imaginatively poor, physically weak, socially passive and generally tardy, the person is as old as Methuselah. The youths, it is worth restating, are to be obsessed with the appetite for adventure, not seeking the easy life.

The greatest enabler of attaining goals and achieving a life of purpose is to be actively involved in the knowledge economy or the age of globalisation. In a world where geographical boundaries have been shattered by the dotcom burst and few limitations exist in accessing affordable web-based platforms that add value, there is nothing stopping the youth from seeking more, yearning more, learning more and earning more. They are well suited to harness such opportunities for personal development and social advancement. The difference

between developed societies and the developing ones lies in their attitude to learning or education.

Gone were the days when illiteracy was the inability to read and write. In his book, The Third Wave, the celebrated futurist and thinker, Alvin Toffler made a prescient observation to the effect that "the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn." The 21st century is meant for continuous learning and the youth must continue to learn. As Perelman noted some time ago that "learning is what most adults will do for a living in the 21st century".

It is a measure of compliance with the demands of the current age to learn, relearn and unlearn on a continuous basis as a way of unlocking the doors of opportunities, overcoming challenges and opening vast vistas to greater accomplishments. It is not enough to have a degree and be contented that one is educated to the level of a first or second degree. There are learning opportunities across virtual and physical platforms that can edify the mind, liberate the soul and add value to the society. This is where the tonic and vitality of the 21st century lie.

As graduates and youth, you have to be studious, enterprising, creative, hard-working, diligent, disciplined and good to surmount the challenges and if you possess the determination to succeed, the challenges you encounter along the way will be mere platform ladders that you ascend to greater heights.

Ladies and gentlemen, what I have described above could indeed be likened to the perspective of a horticulturist – a specialist who only perceives beauty. Should you ask the horticulturist what his opinion of the information age is, he would most likely respond by saying that it is the best development recorded by humanity in the modern period. To him, whatever challenges the digital age poses to humanity, such could be likened to the sharp knife in the hands of either the murderer or the defender of the national heritage. But exactly what are the challenges inherent in the information age?

THE CHALLENGES OF INFORMATION AGE

Despite the advantages that come with the so-called information age, there can be no denying the fact that there are very many downsides to the current. For example, hardly can it be controverted that one challenge that the information age poses to all of us, without prejudice to age or class is what is known as digital dependency or perhaps I should say digital addiction. There is hardly anyone among us nowadays who is not obsessed with their phone. Everybody has had the seemingly instinctive want to be internet highway 24/7. Hardly is there one person in this audience who does not crave to be "informed" of news as they 'break', but to also 'inform' others, no matter how ribald, egregious and highly distasteful the content may be. If you desire to know how challenging the information age could be, check the TikTok; there you would see beauty, brain and brawn; there you would see the abyss into which humanity has sunk; there you would see the

desacralisation of the sacred, the murder of modesty, the erosion of eternal human values, the egregious lack of prudishness.

With the information age, our devices, our smartphones have become our Quran/Bible. A recent research finding shows that Nigerians spend more hours in a day on the internet than their fellow Africans. If indeed you are still not sure of this argument, do a random counting of the number of Whatsapp platforms that you belong to; do a flippant enumeration of messages that flood those platforms on a daily basis, then try and calibrate the number of hours you spend trying to catch up on the welter of messages waiting for you to read them.

Ponder that and reflect. Reflect on this other subtle but most profound fact - that the information age, while increasing our knowledge capacities, has also deepened our consumerist tastes; it has increased our taste and desire for the ephemeral, for the transient, for the impermanent. Recall the story of the age before the information age; the story of that past that we jointly shared; the story of our life; the life that we have spent. You would all recall that in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Chinese phones trended in Nigeria's mobile phone industry. They were symbols of the affluent: those who had 'arrived'. Only very few people could afford them. At that time, attempt to purchase a Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) card was tantamount to buying a piece of land at Lekki. During that time, emailing was the most pronounced channel of digital

communication. But only a decade thereafter, Blackberry phones emerged in the digital industry. Blackberry phones and devices soon gained so much prominence that Chinese phones, popularly known as "Chinko", then quickly went into total oblivion. The new digital slang on the street in our cities and in social circle became 'pinging' as all classes of people especially the youths began a rat-race; everybody found themselves in the strange competition to exchange their BBM pins. Blackberry phones became the best phone model from 2004 to 2010 (The Guardian, 2016). Those that could not afford to buy the device found themselves on the periphery of the then social currents and circles.To be a proud owner of blackberry meant to be 'modern', to be in the 'world', to be 'informed'. Whenever the handphones of those using what was then known as 2go rang and the owner was in a public gathering, the latter dared not answer the call in the open. He had to take a quick exit from the hall in order that people may not know the type of handphones he was using.

However, the interregnum of blackberry phones, like the previously known Chinese phones, did not last. Its 'authority' was torpedoed by android phones; by Samsung, by Nokia, Tecno, Infinix etc. By this time, SIM cards that were once as expensive as lands in wonderland had become so cheap that they were sometimes given free of charge by telecommunication companies. Blackberry became totally obscure in the Nigerian mobile phone market; emailing became just an official digital

communication channel and the social medium of 2go completely disappeared. Whatsapp, Twitter, Facebook, etc. took over the social media world. What implications do these have for our identity as humans, and as Muslims or Christians - the two faith communities to which most Nigerians claim to belong?

One of the unintended challenges the information age poses is its uncanny ability to draw humans into a competition for the world; competition for the chimerical, the ephemeral and the modern. In other words, one thing the information age does is that it has turned us all into involuntary consumers of modernity and worshippers of modernism. Whereas modernity is the effect, modernism, on the other hand is the cause; whereas the former is the product, the latter is the ideology. Put differently, modernism, as an ideology is all about the negation of the past and the search for the new. The moment Samsung 1000 emerges into the market is exactly the same time the production of Samsung 2000 begins. What this means is that modernity dies the moment it is born and nothing exemplifies the futility of human life than the pursuit of that which never lasts.

For those imbued with discernment and illumination, for those who are utterly aware of uncertainty of human life on earth, the greatest challenge the information age poses to humanity is its ability to make people impervious and oblivious of the passage of time, of life. Thus, the information age becomes a threat; a threat against the very

essence of human life. Indeed the threat that the information age poses to us has achieved practical manifestation in the incidences of cyber-attacks and bullying. Overly innocent girls and boys have fallen into the hands of ritual killers and kidnappers as a result of their lack of tact and caution on the internet. Our vulnerability ration increases exponentially by the degree of our exposure to the cyberspace. Cyber-digital-addiction has gotten to that level where some do not experience any sense of fulfilment anymore unless and until they post their latest achievements on the Facebook for the world to see! As soon as the baby-bump appears on her tummy, she goes on to post it on her Twitter handle page so that her followers could be informed and like her the more!

Face to face with these realities and challenges, the search for the strategies with which humanity can cope and negotiate its destiny within the maze of information age therefore becomes urgent and important. Here the triadic concept of learning, unlearning, and relearning becomes very apt indeed.

THE TRIAD OF LEARNING, RELEARNING AND UNLEARNING

Learning in the Information Age

In Abraham Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs', living life's full potential is the highest need of man but this cannot be achieved without constant engagement with learning. It is with continuous learning that one is able to cope with and

adapt to a world that is constantly evolving because the planet is sustained by its ability to refresh itself.

Leaning has been described as the superpower of superpowers, the one that grows the rest of them. It is "a process of personal knowledge construction and meaning-making. It is both a cognitive construction process (intra-individual) and a socioculturally constructive process (inter-individual) (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarion & Kohler, 2003 p.45). It is an amazing tool that nourishes the minds and soothes the soul. It is an invaluable resource for necessity for both personal and professional advancement as facilitates understanding, promotes awareness, deepens insights and enables the ability to handle things in a better way in life. It makes individuals and organisations maximise their ability to achieve continuous improvement, operational excellence and innovation, as pointed out by Edward Hess in his 2014 book, *Learn or Die.*

As youth and graduates in the 21st century, learning is not limited to the four walls of the University. In fact, the completion of university education is the beginning of more learning. That is why in certain professions like engineering, medicine and law, training just begins with university education. The mindset of a successful graduate is that of a perpetual learner, a lifelong learner and you must be receptive to new knowledge and ideas as they come.

The significance of learning cannot be over-emphasised. It is important to growing your income curve. It plays a role in getting access to new opportunities. It helps to boost self-confidence. It develops and helps your growth curve. It is crucial to achieving your goals. It makes you happy and enhances your personal development (Bhasin, 2019). The same way that a body that is not engaged in physical exercises weakens with time and dies slowly, a mind that is not engaged in continuous learning is deficient of nutrients, hence it quickly loses its vitality.

Therefore, there is more learning after graduating from KWASU and any other university. As important as learning is, it is useless if it is not acted on since knowing is not enough. According to Al-Gazal,

> Be it known very well that knowledge will not save a person unless it is put into practice. Let me clarify this point with an example for you: supposing someone fully armed suddenly met a lion in the mountains, no matter how brave and how good he might be in using a gun and a sword, could he save himself from this lion unless he used his weapon? He could not, as you, too know very well. By the same token, however deeply learned a person may be, his knowledge will come to naught if he does not act upon his knowledge. Another example is a doctor who becomes ill himself. Supposing he diagnosed his illness, sheer knowledge would not cure him unless he took the

medicine.... However much a person may have learned and however many books he may have read, all this will be an exercise in futility unless he practices what he knows.

As far as Islam is concerned learning is fundamental not simply as a tool with which the information age could be engaged but indeed for the whole idea of human existence. This was exemplified in the primordial times when, just before Prophet Adam assumed the mantle of leadership of creation, he was taught "al-AsmaKullaha- the name of all entities in nature" (Quran 2: 31) by the Almighty Allah. In other words, in the reckoning of the Almighty therefore, learning is *sine qua non* for earthly success. It is precedent to any vocation that human beings may want to venture into; it is the key with which all doors of opportunity and privileges can be opened.

Having established what to learn, the Quran makes reading an integral element in the process of learning. This probably explains why the Quran is called the Quran - a material to be read; it explains why it is called *al-Kitab*- the book: books are books because they are read, because they are meant to be read. It also explains why the very first injunction or revelation received by Prophet Muhammad is that he should read:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

Read! Read in the name of your Lord who creates (Q 96:1)

It is instructive to note that answer to the probable question of what is it that should be read can be found in Quran in the primordial "Tutor-Learner-Learning" experience of Prophet Adam. In other words, when Allah commanded Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) to read, the command is an open-ended one. What should be read therefore are all entities and existents in nature and whose names were taught to Prophet Adam (upon him be peace): entities on land and water, entities in space and in the outer space. 'Reading' here therefore means having authority of entities whose chemistry and elements have been learnt. It makes the deployment of what has been learnt to the service of its Owner, the Almighty, and through that simple process gain eternal redemption and salvation.

Dear graduands, learning in Islamic pedagogy and epistemology is a lifelong exercise. Thus to stop learning is to slip into ignorance, to descend into the abyss of lassitude; it is to fail to fulfil the obligation of being the *Khalifah* (the Vicegerents of Allah) on earth (Quran 2:30).

Dear graduands of today, the digital age has made learning to be sacrosanct to living and existence. I recognise the fact that some of you would feel happy; happy that you are now free from 7:00 am lectures and 6:00 pm classes. Yes. No impromptu assessments; no ambiguous assignments and no endless reading for examinations anymore. But take this from me: it is just too early for you to stop learning; not in this age; not in this digital world. In fact, it is impossible to stop learning in this

age of technology and labour competition into which you are graduating. Before today and in your respective Departments, you learnt first before you were examined but in your respective endeavours henceforth and as from today, you shall be examined first before you begin to learn. How would you survive without continuous learning before you are examined? It would be good if you bear the following in mind:

- **That learning is an expansive landscape**; it is like an ocean: boundless and limitless.
- **That you need to cultivate a growth mindset**. A key aspect of effective learning is the cultivation of a growth mindset. Coined by a Stanford University Psychologist, Dr Carol Dweck, a growth mindset involves the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed with effort, practice, and perseverance. This mindset fosters resilience and a passion for learning, enabling individuals to embrace challenges, overcome obstacles, and adapt to new situations. It is a mindset that thrives on challenges and sees them neither as obstacles nor hindrances, but as propellants for growth and achievements.
- **That learning can be anywhere**: that knowledge gained within the structured confines of formal education is foundational but not exhaustive. To thrive in the Digital Age, it is essential to go beyond the classroom, constantly seeking new insights and skills. Never underestimate the power of informal

learning, self-directed study, and the wisdom of experience. As graduates, you can learn a cogent lesson from a vulcanizer on the street or Nursery one pupil. There are a thousand and one lesson you can learn even from the mad man on the street!

- **That learning is Perpetual**: Be a perpetual student, always seeking opportunities for intellectual and personal growth. Continuously update and expand your knowledge base. Embrace the pursuit of knowledge as a source of personal enrichment and empowerment. There is a common saying that learning is from cradle to grave. Take that as your watchword.
- **That no shame in learning**: A friend recounted his experience in a five-star hotel that I find very interesting. He was invited for a three-day conference and was lodged in the hotel. It was his first experience in a five-star hotel. When it was time to take his bath, there were two knobs on the bathtub. One released very cold water while the other released very hot water. After spending a couple hours standing and confused, he decided to be washing his feet and face with the cold water till he checked out of the hotel. He did not ask despite sharing his suite with another fellow because he felt it was unthinkable, given his status not to know how to turn on tap water!. It was not until a year later that he was invited for the same conference when some of his fellows were recounting their experience with

the water knobs that he realised it would not have been shameful if he had asked. He realised he only needed to turn on the two knobs partially to release warm or ordinary water. So there is no shame in learning. Shame only exists in ignorance. As graduates of the digital age, you must be bold enough to be a learner.

Unlearning in the Information Age: Breaking Free from the Past

Dear graduates, unlearning is probably the second skill you need to acquire in order to survive and succeed in the information age. This involves the deliberate and conscious act of letting go of obsolete or counterproductive knowledge, beliefs, and habits that you may have acquired over the years. It is the elimination of obsolete knowledge and routines preparatory for new and desired one(Hislop et al., 2014).It is also a disregard of old routines for new ones (Levitt and March, 1988). It is a process of asking new questions to embrace the unknown (Antonacopoulou, 2009). When we unlearn, we eliminate outdated knowledge, values, and routine (Vu and Nguyen, 2022, p.799) that have become redundant or useless.What we unlearn is different from what we forget. Forgetting is involuntary and can occur with the passage of time, or a lack of focus or priority on what was learnt. But unlearning however is a deliberate and purposive action (Sue, 2016, p.1027)

In the Digital Age, clinging to outdated ideas and methods can hinder progress. The necessity to unlearn is driven by the rapid obsolescence of information, shifting paradigms, and changing societal norms. Unlearning is not easy, as it often requires us to confront the limits of our knowledge and confront deeply ingrained beliefs. Nevertheless, it is an essential step in personal and professional growth. According to Dominici (2020, p.3) "65% of the children currently in elementary school will have jobs in the future which not only do not yet exist, but which we cannot even imagine." This implies that as graduates, you have to position yourselves in a spot where you can maximize opportunities.

Unlearning is the process of discarding old beliefs and notions about people and phenomena through conscious and continuous learning and relearning. Almost everyone is a victim of wrong ideas which were assumed to be right like fake news. Some of these wrong and poisonous ideas are even contained in popular sayings or proverbs that have been accepted by many as valid without subjecting them to critical analysis. These ideas and notions are largely responsible for the strife that pervades the society at the global and local levels. Examples are many but for illustration purposes, seven of them that should be unlearnt are briefly examined thus:

1. If you cant' beat them, join them.

This is a very wrong idea that justifies joining a negative trend. In life, especially at the workplace, you will

encounter people doing wrong things to the extent that what is wrong appears normal and mainstream. But doing what is wrong is not justified by the number of people doing it. The right philosophy is that if you can't beat them, leave them. If you cannot change people from doing what is bad and objectionable, rather than join the fray, you dissociate yourself from such people and continue to do what is right. Every society, every culture has standard of behaviour and the mere fact that the negativity is popular does not make it positive.

2. Everyone is a thief when no one is watching

This is a Yoruba proverb that relies on over-generalisation, a logical fallacy. It tends to make theft normal by questioning the integrity of the person who is not. There are many instances of poor people who returned the money that did not belong to them. There are many instances of conscientious people in business and public service who do not soil their hands with ill-gotten lucre. Any time it is said that everyone is a thief, it demoralises those who want to find good examples in the role models that are still many in the society. Not everyone is a thief when no one is watching because some people are aware that the Almighty God is watching them at all times.

3. Life is about the survival of the fittest

The notion of "the survival of the fittest" is popularised by the British naturalist, Charles Darwin, in his *Origin of Species* first published in 1859. The phrase means that organisms best adjusted to their environment are most

successful in surviving and reproducing. In application, it is expressed to justify the oppression of the poor by the weak and domination of people by others. Life is not about just the survival of the fittest. It is about the survival of all regardless of our circumstances. Both the weak and the strong, the rich and the poor, the master and the slave, are all entitled to live.

4. *Might is right*

The tendency is always there for the strong to suppress or oppress the weak but this is wrong. Just as it happens among individuals, so it happens among nations. The sky is wide enough for all birds to fly and the mere fact that someone is big and strong does not justify harassing and oppressing someone small and weak. That maxim that the *might is not right* should be upheld by everyone so that no one will abuse power just because the victim is not capable of defending himself.

5. *The end justifies the means*

That the end justifies the means is a sick idea that requires unlearning despite its widespread influence. It means that bad and unfair methods used in achieving a goal are good and acceptable. Niccolo Machiavelli popularised the theory in his book, *The Prince* (1532), where he posits that almost any action or behaviour is perfectly acceptable as long as it results in the expected outcome. The theory is self-centred and it is responsible for many evils in the society. Those who kidnap people for ransom, engage in armed robbery, embezzle public money, dupe others or kill their opponents

to achieve political superiority are goaded to assume that the means is not important, what matters is the goal. This theory has to be unlearnt as the means justifies the end. One should not cheat in the exams to justify success. Rather, it is the right means of proper preparation that would make success justifiable.

6. ***Do whatever makes you happy.***

It is also common to hear people tell you to do whatever makes you happy since life is short. The meaning can be interpreted as that you should do whatever provides pleasure now regardless of the future consequences. The problem is that what makes you happy may be injurious to your health, may not be fair to the others, or may be disastrous at the end. Rather than doing what makes you happy, it has to be unlearnt to do whatever is right. What should guide whatever one is to do at any point in time is not the happiness or pleasure that it brings but its rightness. This is where the Four-Way-Test of Herbert Taylor, which has been adopted by the Rotary Club and the Ghanaian judicial system, is relevant and applicable. The Four-Way-Test means that before you do anything, you should honestly ask the four questions:

1. Is it the truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

These are the questions that should guide speech and actions, not the question of happiness.

7. Opportunity comes but once

There are lots of opportunities in this life, contrary to the idea espoused in this idea, which is also expressed as opportunity knocks at the door just once. It is not true that one only has a chance to prove oneself or one's worth. The saying has misled many people into abusing opportunities and corruptly enriching themselves or taking advantage of others because they are misled they won't have another opportunity to do what they think will give them pleasure or comfort.

Unlearning can be summarised as:

1. **Recognising Obsolescence**: The first step in unlearning is recognising when our existing knowledge or habits have become obsolete or counterproductive. This recognition can be challenging, as it forces us to confront the limitations of our understanding.While some Departments still instruct students to submit multiple copies of research proposals for project defence, some Departments would digitise the process by instructing students to send the proposal to Department's email and copy all staff.

2. **Embracing Ambiguity**: Unlearning often involves navigating ambiguity and uncertainty. It requires us to let go of the comfort of what we know and embrace the discomfort of the unknown. This process can be disorienting, but it is a critical part of personal transformation.You must be ready to

explore; keep in mind that what you have known today was once unknown. In the same vein, what is presently unknown would surely be known much later.

3. **Questioning Assumptions**: A fundamental aspect of unlearning is questioning assumptions and beliefs. Are the beliefs we hold, the paradigms we adhere to, and the assumptions we make still valid in the digital era? An open-minded approach that challenges the status quo is essential.

4. **Breaking Habits**: Unlearning can also involve breaking old habits and routines that are no longer effective. This might include changing the way we work, interact with others, or even our daily rituals. Breaking habits can be difficult, but it is necessary for growth.

Relearning: Embracing Change

Ladies and gentlemen, some 5 - 4 centuries BC, most scholars and philosophers perceived the earth to be flat in shape. This claim was so widely accepted that it was unthinkable to declare that the earth was spherical or ellipsoidal. The ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations, the ancient Greece, and philosophers like Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras amongst others believed the earth was flat in shape. Though some few philosophers believed the earth was spherical, it was not as pronounced as the claim about the flatness of the earth. The introduction of modern astronomy in the 17th century

however established the spherical shape of the earth, hence the world had to unlearn and relearn the shape of the earth.

Since learning is continuous even after school, relearning entails that learning is not a once-and-for-all experience. Relearning is the process of creating new understanding and attitudes around the concepts and issues we already know. It is about learning after learning since we tend to forget what we learn. It is a savings method of measuring retention by measuring how much of what is learnt already is retained or forgotten. Human beings by nature are amnestic and it is not enough to learn, relearning has to be done until what is learnt is totally internalised and permanently become part of experience. Life is a school where there are lessons to be learnt and relearnt in a continuous process.

Apart from various aspects of learning experience that he youth must have been exposed to in the university and the larger society, there must be a commitment to relearning throughout life. If I construe RELEARNING as an acronym, there is a need to relearn the values and virtues of rightfulness, excellence, love, education, appreciation, responsibility, non-violence, integrity, non-negativity and generosity as you navigate through the seas of life. Those who have successful voyages are those who keep improving and relearning these values that make life rich. As a matter of fact, these are the tonic that vitalise, nourish

and nurture life ultimately making living in a changing world more abundant.

1. *Rightfulness*

Rightfulness describes acting in accord with the principle of justice. It aligns with doing the right things and doing things right all the time. The world is a terrible place now because people don't do what is right. Being morally upright is a fundamental life principle that should be re-learnt. Rightness and rightfulness ultimately lead to righteousness and it is righteousness that exalts individuals and people. So, it is very important that you do the right thing at the right time in the right way anywhere you find yourself whether people are watching or not. This is a lifelong challenge that determines the extent of being professional and successful.

2. *Excellence*

To excel is basically to go beyond the average level in getting something done. Average students would be contented with just passing but excellent students consider passing not just enough but taking the top positions. As Aristotle once said, "Excellence is not an act, it's a habit". It is important that you cultivate the habit of excellence and avoid giving excuses for mediocrity. As graduands in particular and youth in general, everyone must strive to gain a reputation for delivering great results all the time. Excellence means continuous improvement, going the extra mile, being creative in greatness and being

qualitatively consistent. Throughout your career and life, strive to be a person of excellence.

3. *Love*

As it is well known, love is that feeling of a strong affection and personal attachment to someone or something, a virtue representing all of human kindness, consideration, compassion and benevolent concern for the good others. It is the salt that makes life sweet given that everything becomes tasteless when love is absent. However, it is a sad reality that the world is sick but only love can heal it. In this life, we cannot relearn love enough and there must be a constant struggle to love God, to love family, to love neighbours, to love fellow human beings because love multiplies love. Love is a cure for one's heart and as said by Martin Luther King, Jnr, "Hate destroys the very structure of the personality of the hater...when you start hating anybody, it destroys the very center of your creative response to life and the universe, so love everybody." As you journey through life, you should let love be your driver and show it to everyone. That one loves everybody does not really mean that they deserve the love but one deserves the peace that comes with emptying one's mind of hate garbage.

4. *Education*

One can only finish schooling, one cannot finish education. It is this regard that education is a continuous activity that one must be exposed to. Basically, to educate is to train, to

raise, and to lead people from want to plenty, from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light. It is defined as the sum total of a person's experience (Moore 1982) or the process of transmitting culture from parents to children, what happens to us between life and death (Aghenta, 2001). It is the process of developing one's mental alertness, regulating and improving one's attitudes and behaviours as well all acquiring skills with which things can be done: writing, painting, engineering, medicine, etc. Every new day is a day of learning new lessons to become better educated about life and its complex phenomena. Graduating to the larger society requires relearning and updating all that had been learnt so that at no point in time would one be found unprepared or wanting.

5. Appreciation

One major quality that adds vitamin to life is the spirit of appreciation or the attitude of gratitude. This cannot be emphasised enough especially in this age that people tend to take things for granted. The virtue of appreciation that must be constantly relearnt operates at the levels of God and people. Appreciating the Almighty God for His favours is an obligation that must be fulfilled at all times. As Allah rhetorically asks in the Glorious Qu'ran, "Which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?" (Q 55: 61). Apart from the Almighty God, parents, siblings, teachers, friends, neighbours, colleagues and everyone from whom you have benefitted should be appreciated. You should always remember that gratitude is not just the greatest of virtues but the parent of all, as Cicero said, and he who does not

appreciate others cannot even appreciate God as Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said.

6. *Responsibility*

Being responsible means doing what one is supposed to do and accepting the result of one's actions. Responsibility is one of the main virtues that gives life its meaning. As you journey through life, you must align yourself with having a sense of responsibility and relearn it to achieve your goals. Responsibility operates at many levels but they all ultimately lead to the same end of fulfillment. Personal responsibility concerns the obligation to do positive things with your ability, talents and resources. You have a personal responsibility to take care of your family for example and it is irresponsible to abdicate from it. There is official responsibility regarding doing what is expected of you at work without compromising the expected standard of operations. There is moral responsibility which concerns your duty to do good always and to avoid harming others. It is a moral responsibility for the rich to give the poor or for the strong to support the weak. This is related to social responsibility or the obligation to put others and the environment into consideration while pursuing your goals. Organisations are expected to socially responsible as they are obliged to give back to the society in which they operate and thrive.

7. *Non-violence*

Non-violence is the rejection of physical violence in order to achieve personal, social and political goals. It is an umbrella term for the philosophy and way of life that is committed to seeking peaceful means of addressing differences and conflicts. It begins from challenging the mind to reject the notion that physical confrontations and violent conflicts are normal. It is associated with the term "Ahimsa", a Sanskrit word that basically means "cause no injury, do no harm" and defined as "the overflowing love that arises when ill-will, anger and hate have subsided from the heart", which is associated with the philosophy of Mahtma Gandhi. Non-violence in practice is mainly concerned with being harmless to self and others in every situation in which one finds oneself. The idea derives from the belief that harming others, be they people, animals or environment, is not a condition to attaining desired ends. So, non-violence is a general philosophy, a way of life and a personal commitment towards eschewing violence as a matter of ethical, religious and spiritual principles (Kurlansky, 2006).

8. *Integrity*

Integrity is a reflection of character and character is everything in this life. It is the practice of being honest and the state of being unimpaired. Integrity refers to "steadfast adherence to a strict moral and ethical code" or "the quality of being wholesome". The synonyms of integrity are honesty, uprightness, rectitude, purity, goodness, probity, sincerity, virtue, decency, among others, according a

dictionary. At the work place, integrity makes organisations grow and a lack of integrity harms organisations and the individuals that make them. Taking the bitter pill of integrity, because it is difficult to achieve, is a sure route to lasting growth and honour. According to Waters (2022), the seven traits that are associated with people of integrity are that they express gratitude for others; they communicate honestly and openly; they take responsibility for their actions, good and bad; they respect themselves and those around them, no matter who they are; they help those in need without sacrificing their own health; they demonstrate reliability and trustworthiness; and they show patience and flexibility, even when unexpected obstacles show up. Understanding the meaning of integrity and how it can nourish your life in this Information Age may require studying why the Nigerian media, as critical as they are, branded the late father of the former Vice-Chancellor, Hon. Justice Mustapha Akanbi, as "Mr. Integrity". He was described by President Muhammad Buhari as "a man whose greatest asset in life was his integrity and incorruptibility" (Premium Times, 2018)

9. Non-negativity

Non-negativity requires being optimistic and hopeful, regardless of how gloomy the circumstance may be. It has been said that everyone has positive mental attitude and negative mental attitude, one of which is activated at a time. Rather than seeing the negative side of life, look at it positively and constructively as every disappointment is a blessing ultimately. There will be challenges at every point

in life but the successful ones are those who view the challenges positively. Maya Angelou (1928-2014) once counseled, "If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude." By taking non-negativity as an operational philosophy and relearning at every occasion that life turns and twists, you realise that to FAIL is just your "First Attempt In Learning", END actually means "Effort Never Ends" and NO is not actually a rejection, it is just about bracing for "Next Opportunity".

10. Generosity

Another virtue that has to be relearnt to live an abundant life today is generosity, the virtue of being liberal in giving others. The benefits of generosity are many: it reduces stress, supports giver's physical health, enhances one's sense of purpose, imbues one with happiness and increases one's life's span. Being generous is not limited to material things like money or property. There are at least seven forms of generosity with you are to imbibe as you progress in life. These are thoughts, words, money, time, things, influence and attention. The good thing about generosity is that whatever you give, there is a way of returning to you in manifold. If you are good and generous, you will definitely be great.

Relearning, ladies and gentlemen, therefore, is the ability to acquire new skills, knowledge, and perspectives quickly and effectively. Just as it happened regarding controversies over the shape of the earth, it is the act of acknowledging the existing knowledge was flawed and

there is a new knowledge that supersedes it that imbues life with creativity. In the Digital Age, change is constant, and the skills we need today may not be the same as those we shall be needing tomorrow. Relearning is about agility, resourcefulness, and the willingness to embrace change as an opportunity rather than a challenge. To relearn successfully, the following roadmap is essential:

1. **Adaptability and Agility**: Relearning requires adaptability and agility. It means being open to change and viewing it as an opportunity for personal and professional growth rather than as a threat. I recommend to you a small book – "Who moved my Cheese".

2. **Resourcefulness**: In a rapidly evolving digital landscape, the ability to quickly acquire new knowledge and skills is a valuable asset. Being resourceful in seeking out information and educational opportunities is crucial for effective relearning.

3. **Lifelong Learning**: Relearning is closely tied to the concept of lifelong learning. As you graduate, remember that your journey as a learner is far from over. Be prepared to continually update your skills and knowledge to stay relevant in a world of constant change.

4. **Embracing Innovation**: Relearning often involves embracing new technologies and innovations. This means being open to exploring and adopting new tools and methods in your personal and professional life.

CONCLUSION

For all, the imperative of learning, relearning and unlearning cannot be over-emphasised as the tonic that gives vitality to successful living in today's Information Age. Those who can learn, relearn and unlearn are the successful ones and those without the mindset that accommodates the triad are bound to perpetually lament.

The world of today is totally different from the world inhabited by our forebears. One of the factors responsible for this change is the totality of what makes the Information Age, which is still evolving as technology develops rapidly. The changes of the world provide new opportunities and threats. While there are new opportunities in Information Technology, the existing jobs as typists, receptionists, traditional printers, telephone booth operators, computer operators, factory workers, cashiers, travel agents, fuel attendants, among others, are on the verge of extinction. New opportunities will emerge in the high tech sector and many skills that were not otherwise thought in traditional schools would be needed. Degrees would no longer be sole guarantors of jobs but demonstrable skills will.

In this regard, there won't be any difference between those who are literate and those who are illiterate without the cutting-edge skills that are associated with learning, relearning and unlearning. Therefore, the onus of the responsibility lies on everyone to get prepared for the challenges of the Information Age by taking lifelong

learning seriously and being willing to change as circumstances unfold.

As you embark on the next chapter of your lives, armed with the knowledge and wisdom gained during your academic journey, remember that learning, unlearning, and relearning are the compasses that will guide you in the uncharted territories of the Digital Age. These processes are not separate but interwoven elements of a holistic approach to personal and professional development.The illiterate of the 21st century, as Alvin Toffler profoundly noted, will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn. Your ability to embrace these principles will set you apart and empower you to navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities of our rapidly changing world.

Lastly, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to you all, graduands of KWASU for 2023. May you be bold in your pursuit of knowledge, resolute in your willingness to challenge the status quo, and unwavering in your commitment to personal and professional growth. May your journey of learning, unlearning, and relearning be a lifelong source of inspiration and fulfilment.

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