

As a girl, I live in the beautiful city of Calabar in Cross River State of Nigeria and the people of Calabar have love for all that is beautiful. As a result of her wonderful sense of hospitality and the courage to welcome and entertain the strangers, it was nick named the Canaan City, The people's Paradise and a land flowing with milk and honey. The myth of having the best cuisine in the country makes the Nigerian Men from different parts of the country to want to choose their wives from Calabar. However, the present challenges in the aspects of leadership and good governance has at the moment dragged the city and the whole nation into a state of confusion and deprivation where distrust and suspicion has become the order of the day. Thereby reducing that sense of hospitality and making people even from the rank of the middle class just trying to live one day at a time.

For a girl to grow up in the context described above one requires building a very strong and positive sense of self with the support of the family and a good educational back ground to be able to live above the present struggles and to work for a better tomorrow. I desire to become an ambassador some day and that is why I am studying Languages and international Relations in the University of Calabar with the hope that this choice of studies will open up opportunities for me to reclaim the past glory of my city and to be able to recover that cultural heritage of beauty, of hospitality and of celebrating the gift of life.

In Calabar where I come from, boys and girls are trained to be very domesticated with family chores. Nevertheless, the boys have their ways of lording over girls and very often they are supported by the parents who often think that boys are more special than girls. It is therefore, not easy for girls to grow up in traditionally patriarchal environment where Girls do not have the complete freedom to do what they really want. Unlike boys, being a girl comes with a lot of restrictions, like going out and coming home late. Airing out your views in public or family matters; as a

girl, you have some stereotype expectation like knowing how to cook, knowing how to do the house chores; knowing how to comport yourself well in public, and knowing basic personal hygiene as good values to uphold. As a girl child, I am able to differentiate between what is good from that which is not so good. Thanks to the good examples from family and friends. My family is the best gift of God to me; therefore I share whatever good I have learnt from them with other growing girls in my community and try to be a model among my peers. My advice to the next generation of girls is:

Be yourself, love what is good;

Stand strong against negative influence.

Discover the hero in you and befriend yourself.

Know that your future is what you make of it today.