



Student Highlight

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Oladele Olamide John

Master of Arts in Rural Development Student

GETTING TO KNOW OLADELE OLAMIDE JOHN

Oladele Olamide John was born in the city of Lagos in Nigeria. He has excellent passion, determination, flair, and competence for environmental studies. As a growing man, John had the opportunity to travel and live with his migrant academic father in three different countries in Africa - Nigeria, Botswana, and South Africa. These experiences enhanced his knowledge on the various environmental challenges faced by different countries. John is interested in research that deepens his understanding of issues related to global environmental sustainability, such as resource management, biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and rural development. John believes that these topics allow researchers to develop solutions that balance social and environmental justice, while also assisting governments and businesses in using their resources efficiently to improve the world.

Currently, John is a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Rural Development (MARD) program here at Brandon University. According to John, the program has broadened his perspective on rural development as a crucial factor for a country's economic growth. And he has learned that public interest in rural development has increased, whereby governments have taken various steps to improve the lives of rural residents. While agriculture generates significant revenue for many developing countries, it's important to understand the ways to support these local economies through progressive and sustainable policy work.

However, rural settlements are often criticized for literacy levels, infrastructure, agricultural practices, government initiatives, and urban influence. This demonstrates the importance of community collaboration and development projects that can accompany these communities on their journeys towards economic sustainability. Increasing literate populations boosts employment, and rural development depends on infrastructure projects like roads, telephone lines, and irrigation systems. Utilizing the right fertilizers and comprehending how crop yields behave under various circumstances can also assist reduce the effects of climate change. Urban influence, like social media, can draw industries into rural areas resulting in higher sales and job possibilities that support economic growth.

WHAT'S MORE

- *John is currently finalizing his Master's thesis dissertation at Brandon University, entitled "Effects of E-Waste Perceptions and Awareness on Disposal Practices: A Comparative Study between Rural and Urban Settlements Around Pietermaritzburg, South Africa."*
- *John's substantial background and knowledge in developmental studies and sustainable development have enabled him to develop an interest in global development.*

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Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed. This greed fuels climate change, which we don't acknowledge as a current problem that we are facing. Rather, we think it is a problem waiting to happen. We are running the most dangerous experiment in history right now - climate change is too serious for the world any longer to ignore its danger or split into opposing factions over it.

JOHN'S ROLE AT RDI

Throughout December 2023 and January 2024, John has volunteered as a researcher at RDI. Through this position, he has conducted a thematic analysis of the articles relating to climate change produced through the Journal of Rural and Community Development (JRCD) and the Rural Development Institute. These experiences have allowed John to enhance his literature analysis and writing skills. It has also allowed him to familiarize himself with the different referencing programs and applications such as Canvas, Mendeley, and RefWorks. Additionally, His roles at RDI have facilitated collaborative engagements, networking and mentorships with academics and researchers within the field of rural development. John is hoping to build on this volunteer researcher experience through continuous engagements with RDI.

JOHN'S INSIGHTS AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

John believes that the MARD program is full of engaging and challenging opportunities that will not only broaden and improve his skills as an environmental scientist and researcher, but also ensure he gains skills in actionable work. Rural development is essential to a country's ability to function economically, socially, and environmentally. After completing his master's degree, John hopes to work full-time in Canada. In addition, He hopes to continue his education and apply for a PhD during this period. John hope to one day utilize his skills and education as an environmental consultant.

