

The Argument on Which of the Engineering Fields is the Best.

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The field of engineering has been described as of that where the knowledge of mathematics and sciences, gained by study, experience and practice is or are been applied, with key judgment bend on developing ways towards an economical usage of materials and natural forces, for the benefit of mankind.

Technological advancements have been acclaimed as the main catalyst that accounts for the different developmental strides that are evident in our localities and the global world at large. Thus, we can say “a nation which does not acknowledge the rightfulness of its engineering scope in its various educational set up, would be of no difference from a nation lacking in its quest towards development”.

The engineering field accounts for almost all (if not all) of the various developments that we see around us: structural development, transportation, medical care, in the energy sector, software and hardware designs, fabrics, agriculture, communication and so on. These developments are evident through the different engineering field of studies, such as; Chemical Engineering, Automotive Engineering, Petroleum Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Agricultural Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Computer Engineering, Mechatronics and System Engineering, Aeronautic Engineering etc.

However the situation that is evident in most of the Nigerian learning institutions is; ***“the argument on which of the engineering field is the best”***. At first, been an Engineering student at the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU), Bauchi; my thought was that, such argument was only amongst the “Balewites” (ATBU students). But, my thought was proven wrong upon my recent encounter with fellow students from other learning institutions (when we meet at conference venues); who made me see this (i.e the argument on which of the engineering fields is the best) as a thorn on engineering flesh - so to say!

The argument finds its grounds on the bases that:

- *“My course is more technical than yours”*
- *“I offer much courses per semester than you”*
- *“You don’t offer some of the courses believed to be compulsory for most engineering disciplines”*
- *“It’s harder to obtain good grades in my department than it is in your department”*
- *“My course is more marketable than yours”*
- *“My lecture notes are bulkier and involves more calculations than yours”*
- *“Your chances of been employed are less compared to mine”, etc.*

Instead of the engineering students to bend on studying to proffer our nation with technological hypothesis and theories, inventions and solutions to some human problems been faced, that can stand out at the global world, what we see is the argument on which of the engineering fields is the best.

Perhaps you are waiting for me to tell you which of them is at its best, compared to the others, **No**. the fact still remains that all fields of engineering are as important as they are to each other. It is just like an argument between the fish and the water in the sea, on who is more important to the fisherman: though the target is the fish, we cannot argue the fact that if the water had not been present, there would have not been any life support to the fish, and without the fish, the fisherman will not have a target. Thus, the fisherman needs a water body to support the life of his target – the fish. Therefore both the water and the fish are as important as they are to each other, to the fisherman. No doubt, depending on the individual's perspectives, certain differences might be given priority, but the problem will be when such arguments follows the students (upon graduation) to the labor environment, and the argument then continues.

The basis of judging which is the best, should not be on the number of courses offered, the caliber of lecturers, nature of lecture notes, calculations involved, how hard it is to have good results, nature of exam questions nor should it be on the basis of which is more richer than the other in the labor force. How I wish, that the basis of comparing between each of the engineering fields would have been on the technical contributions each renders, or base on how much more a field of engineering contributes to the nation's GDP etc. If that would have been the case, then I don't think we would have had any argument on which is the best, because all engineering disciplines are interdependent on each other: a Petroleum Engineer would require a Mechanical Engineer to assemble some of his machineries on a drilling site, a Mechanical Engineer would require an Electrical Engineer to electrically power his constructed vehicle, just as he would require a Petroleum Engineer to supply him with fossil fuel to serve the same purpose, continuously.

However, the facts of such arguments does not stop such students from been at their best, when it comes to issues regarding their studies. But curbing such needless arguments from amongst the engineering students would further improve upon value recognition amongst the various engineering disciplines.

We are all as important as we are to each other!!! That I don't do some of your things or undergo my study curriculum in like manner as yours does not make you superior over me, neither will that make me inferior towards you. We are all of equal importance, and the sooner we engineering students accept and align with this fact, the better will it be. And together (as the nation's technological strength), shall we all engineer the science behind things, towards making the life of every Nigerian better.