

Editorial: Graduation & All That It Means



Graduation to many is a time of celebration and excitement. Mortarboards and gowns, degrees and diplomas, distinguished lecturers and professors, and eager students- it is usually a formal and much awaited occasion. On this day, it is usual for students to ponder the long hours they have spent in the library over the years, minutes of attentive listening in classes, the endless questions during the long discussions with lecturers, and the countless late-night meetings with fellow students.

It is often with tears of triumph and jubilant smiles that graduands walk up to receive their diplomas and degrees from the Vice Chancellor, or even the Chancellor, of the university. So what does a diploma or a degree mean these days? It almost seems that the mere thirty seconds spent receiving the scroll, for which the graduand says a silent 'Thank You', does not warrant all the excruciating moments cramming for examinations or writing term papers.

To some, graduation marks their readiness to get a job. To most, however, graduation marks a personal achievement of sorts and is usually a day to commemorate that achievement. Tertiary education is often valued for the combination of classroom sessions, workshops, and varied learning skills that are imparted at university. Sometimes, the impact of a particular course can be life changing. Given the right situation, moment, and mode of delivery, a single course is capable of changing an individual's worldview and may, therefore, influence them to initiate changes in their own lives.

As for lecturers and professors, they too take credit in sharing the joys of those students who make it till the end. They feel a sense of satisfaction and pride when their students graduate. For most of them, graduation day won't be the last time they see their students. They usually avail themselves to offer students advice and career counseling. In some instances, they maintain friendships with students even after graduation.

So how important is graduation in one's life? Does it result in better career prospects? Or is it just about receiving a mere slip of paper that has names and degree titles on it. It takes blood, sweat and tears to reach that highest pinnacle in undergraduate life. Come to think of it, graduation is actually a process of graduating (please excuse the pun) from backpacks to briefcases.

Graduation is a memorable day. More than just a sentimental occasion, it is a happy and joyous day for all. For students, it is the end of one chapter in their lives and the beginning of another. For parents, it is a reminder that their children have grown up and that they will soon face the challenges the 'real world' has to offer. For lecturers and professors, it is a time to look back on their careers and see how far they have come. After all is said and done, everyone is left with a sense of achievement, knowing that their efforts did count, one way or another, as the graduands take turns receiving their scrolls.