



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

CITATION ON

PROFESSOR DAVID MUSYIMI NDETEI
MBCHB(UON),DPM(LONDON),MRCPSY,
FRCPSY(UK),M.D
(UON), CERTIFICATE IN PSYCHOTHERAPY(LONDON)

ON HIS CONFERMENT OF

THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF SCIENCE(DSc)

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

ON

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Professor David Musyimi Ndetei,
MBchB(UON),DPM(London),MRcPsy, FRcPsy(UK),M.D
(UON), Certificate in Psychotherapy (London).

Introduction

Professor David Musyimi Ndetei's achievements, covering a successful and illustrious academic career, from the attainment of 6 professional qualifications in his area of specialization and culminating in the presentation of his DSc can only be described as remarkable.

Early Childhood and Primary School

He was born in Makakoi Village in Machakos in 1948 as the first born of the late John Ndetei Nzuki and Esther Kalekye Ndetei, and the elder brother of 2 sisters and 4 brothers. His parents, who were and still are his close friends were the greatest positive influence in his life, providing the moral and humane foundation on which he has built his academic career.

He attended Makakoi primary school in his village and after 4 years joined Kimutwa Intermediate School about 9 kilometres from his home. He trekked barefoot to and from home daily - arriving at school at 7am and leaving at 4pm. He resisted all efforts by his parents to have him stay at a hostel near the school until his final year when he finally relented to enable him to concentrate on preparing for his final year exams. He performed exceptionally well scoring straight A's in all subjects and securing a place at Machakos School where he completed both "O" and "A" levels.

High School

In retrospect, there were four main events that occurred during his time in high school that set him on his course:

- 1) While still in Form 2, he wrote his first manuscript on “Kikamba Grammar”.
- 2) In Form 3, the Headmaster appointed him the dispensary assistant and in Form 4 gave him full charge of running the dispensary. His work in the dispensary included treating all the boys, admitting and discharging the ill from the School Sick Bay, approving all special meals, procuring medicines, ordering investigations including x-rays and making referrals. Surprisingly, all went well!
- 3) He won first prize in Biology while in form 5 receiving a book as a reward, which eventually turned out to be the recommended book for pharmacology when he joined the University Of Nairobi School Of Medicine.
- 4) During his “A” levels, he spent his vacations as a research assistant at the Katumani Research Centre where he experienced firsthand, high profile research work although; in the field of Agriculture.

Undergraduate Days at the University of Nairobi - 1970 - 1975

His time in the medical school was uneventful except for the following events which further directed the course of his career:

1. Beginning in the first year, he worked during his vacations as a research assistant at the Dutch Medical research centre, now part of KEMRI, giving him exposure to medical research.

2. During his elective term in 4th year, the late Dr. Eric Mngola asked him and a fellow medical student to go to Msambweni Hospital in South Coast to conduct screening tests for diabetes which was probably the first ever community epidemiological study for diabetes in Kenya. While at the Coast, he did a study on how patients had sought help from other sources before coming to the Coast General Hospital, where he later did his internship. He shared the report with the then Dean of the Medical School, the late Prof. Nimrod Bwibo who recommended him to travel to Brazzaville to present his findings. The findings were later published by the World Health Organization (WHO).
3. Most significantly, in his 5th year, he met with the late Prof. Joseph Muhangi, who introduced and won him over to Psychiatry. The rest, as they say, is history.

Postgraduate Training in Psychiatry at Mathari and Kenyatta National Hospitals - 1976 – 1977

With Prof. Muhangi as his mentor, he collected data in a semi-urban clinic in Athi River on recognition of psychiatric symptoms. Out of that data, they published a paper in the British Journal of Psychiatry which has been quoted extensively over the years.

Postgraduate Training in UK - September 1977 - June 1981 on sponsorship from the British Government

It was during his training in the UK, that events which at the time seemed unrelated lay a solid foundation for a lifelong career in research.

1. The Dean of the Institute of Psychiatry invited him and waived his fees for a training program on clinical data collection and documentation using an instrument developed and perfected at the Institute of Psychiatry. He later used this instrument for his Doctorate dissertation.
2. He met some of the most prolific and senior researchers who were humble, generous with their time and resources, motivated, and willing to reach out and develop good rapport with students. They prompted him to go for his Doctorate (Doctor of Medicine according to the British tradition for Medical doctors rather than a PhD) and even paid for it from their own pockets. These attributes impacted him deeply and, moved him to do the same with his students both in and outside Kenya.

Department of Psychiatry - 5th June 1981 - to present

While at the Department of Psychiatry, his achievements can be briefly summarized as follows:

1. He participated in the developed of the curriculum for postgraduate training in psychiatry which started in 1983. Since that time, the Department of Psychiatry has

been the singularly most successful Department of Psychiatry in Africa, outside South Africa.

2. He initiated a regular psychiatric clinic at the University Health Services for purposes of operational research to study mental health in students and staff with the aim to finding out sustainable and cost effective solutions.
3. He was Chairman of the Department from 1988 to 2000 during which time the Department achieved nearly all that it now glories in today. It was during that time he learnt how to stand for what he believed was for the common good. He led a principled fight supported by two colleagues in the Department and the then Vice Chancellor – Prof. Gichaga and won to achieve the following:
 - (i) Make Psychiatry an examinable subject
 - (ii) Start a postgraduate training program in clinical psychology, now a highly thriving programme being emulated by other universities. In the initial stages, only he and two others in the Department were available to teach the students.
 - (iii) Started postgraduate Diploma Courses in substance use, psychotrauma, psycho-social work and clinical psychiatry.
 - (iv) He successfully initiated the MMed. Programme in Psychiatry. He at one stage single-handedly

taught the students for 3 years at Mathari Hospital Case Conferences and if he was not there, he had to look for outside help to stand in for him.

- (v) He successfully initiated teaching at Mathari Hospital. as a teaching hospital on grounds of unsuitability. The challenge was how to make it better and not to abandon it.
- (vi) At personal level, he smoothly rose through all the academic ranks.
- (vii) First in his class Alumna of a doctorate and first medical school graduate to give an inaugural lecture.

Other Achievements

1. A member of numerous professional associations across the globe; currently the Chair, Africa Division of Royal College of Psychiatrists and Secretary of World Psychiatric Association Section on Psychiatry in Developing countries.
2. Successfully mounted disaster response following – The Rwandan Genocide, the American Embassy Bomb Blast in Nairobi; the Kyanguli fire tragedy, the 2007 post-election violence and currently the Westgate Mall attack.

3. Successfully and personally lobbied for the start of postgraduate training in Tanzania and Zambia.
4. Supervised the biggest number of PhD's in the College of Health Sciences (and other Universities) and runs a highly successful PhD colloquium.
5. Successfully lobbied for students from Africa and paid for their application fees to do, not only psychiatry, but other medical disciplines at the University of Nairobi.
6. Authored six books, 21 monographs, over 250 publications in professional Journals, book chapters and over 700 articles in the Nation Newspaper as well as participating in numerous radio and TV shows.
7. Founded the Africa Mental Health Foundation (AMHF), more as a charity and free resource centre on mental health for all regardless of social, institutional and professional disciplines, to join efforts in providing research based solutions. In addition:
 - a) It supports students in mental health and pays scholarships to students from various Universities in Kenya including University of Nairobi;
 - b) Has done operational research in nearly all parts of the country including the major Refugee camps, South Sudan and Somalia;

- c) Supports Awards schemes for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students of University of Nairobi, Mental health workers at Mathari Hospital, and at the National level who excel in Psychiatry as well as schools.
8. He has received both local and international recognition from many organizations, but his most treasured recognition is mementos from his students.
9. Has served as an external examiner in nearly all medical schools in East, Central and South Africa; has served as a visiting professor in South Africa, UK and Germany and a consultant advisor to WHO, UNODCP and many other UN bodies.
10. He is the third DSc Awardee by the University of Nairobi, but most significantly, he will be making history as the first ever alumna of the University of Nairobi to be awarded a DSc. In a way, the first amongst all the approximately 152,000 students who have gone through this institution since it was inaugurated by Princes Margaret on October 24th, 1956 as a college, to date as a full university. He wants others to follow suit. Yes, University of Nairobi graduates can be DSc material.

His Dreams

Prof. Ndeti has two dreams in his area of profession:

1) "Affordable, Appropriate, Available and Accessible Mental health for all not only in Kenya but in Africa".

2) University of Nairobi seated at the high table of the leading 100 Universities in the World

He believes his dreams are realistic but can only be achieved through faith in action i.e. proactive innovative and strategic positioning.

Professor Ndetai is married to Dr. Victoria Mutiso-Ndetei and they have two children, Christine Wayua Musyimi and David Musyimi Ndetei Junior.

MR. CHANCELLOR SIR, I am greatly privileged to request you to confer the degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) of the University of Nairobi, upon Professor David Musyimi Ndetei.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DAVID MUSYIMI
NDETEI**