

Controversy as UNILAG graduating student dies after final exams

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The death of a 400-level student of the Department of Microbiology, University of Lagos, Adeniyi Ogundijo, has continued to generate controversy.

While some claimed that the 22-year-old committed suicide over poor performance in his final exams, his friends and family members said he was killed.

The school authorities, however, urged everyone to stop speculating on the cause of his death, saying the family kept mum when questioned by the management.

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PUNCH Metro gathered that some suspects had been arrested by detectives from the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Yaba, for interrogation.

Our correspondent also learnt that Ogundijo's corpse had been deposited in a morgue pending the outcome of an autopsy.

The deceased and his course mates were said to have recently sat for their final exams and the results were released preparatory to their graduation.

A course mate, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitive nature of the case, said the death was announced on a group chat.

He said, "We have a *Whatsapp* group chat and a course mate broke the news on the platform. The course mate had spoken to a relative of Niyi (Ogundijo), who said she lost her brother. The course mate asked to see his photo. Lo and behold, it was him. Although we got the news yesterday (Monday), we learnt he died on Saturday. A family member said he was with his friends when the incident happened. We also learnt that he had yet to return home since we finished the final exams.

"We have seen the results of all our papers. There are insinuations that he took local insecticide, *Sniper*. He was probably killed and those who did it made it appear like he committed suicide. Two of his friends have been arrested by the police. To the best of my knowledge, Niyi was a good student. He interacted well with people and had no reason to kill himself."

A family member of the victim, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, said Ogundijo was on a Cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.2 (Second Class Lower), adding that he did not know the result of the final exams.

He noted that although the victim was a loner, he could not have committed suicide.

He said, "I don't know where people got the idea that my brother committed suicide because he failed some courses. Why should he wait till his final year to do that? I have been in worse situations. I know my brother was a loner and could be quiet, but it did not mean he was depressed. I spoke to him this week and we had a good conversation. There was no issue with the family or anybody at all.

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“About five of his friends have been arrested over this. Although I don’t know about the results of their final exams, his CGPA was 2.2 before the incident happened.”

PUNCH Metro obtained a text message purportedly circulated by the Office of the Dean of Students Affairs, Prof. Ademola Adeleke.

“I am saddened to confirm the untimely death of Mr Ogundijo Adeniyi Samson, of the Department of Microbiology with Matric no. 140807008. We have spoken to the father, who confirmed the death.

“He, however, declined to give additional information on the cause, nature or time of death. The DSA is arranging a condolence visit to the family. Kindly stop the speculation on the cause of death,” the message read.

At least two students of the university confirmed receiving the message.

Adeleke, when contacted on the telephone, said he was in Abuja and could not comment on the incident.

The Principal Assistant Registrar, Communications Unit, University of Lagos, Mrs Taiwo Oloyede, said the victim died outside the campus.

“The cause or nature of his death is not known. Here at the University of Lagos, our thoughts and prayers are with the family and we wish eternal rest for the soul of the departed,” she added.

The Police Public Relations Officer, CSP Chike Oti, confirmed the incident, adding that investigation was ongoing.

He said, “The deceased was a student who normally visited his friend from time to time. His friend and uncle lived in the same house. He had gone on the visit as usual when the friend and uncle later went out. By the time they returned to the house, they found him dead with an empty container of *Sniper*.

“However, the police are looking at a possible case of murder. Forensic investigation is being carried out on his corpse. Meanwhile, the uncle and friend are in our custody.”

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In March 2016, a 300-level student of the same department, Eniola Jacob, was reported to have taken *Sniper*.

Jacob, who stayed in a hostel on the campus, was rushed to the Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Idi araba, where doctors battled to save his life until he died.

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