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Abstract- This paper examined alumni as a key to the development of colleges of education in Nigeria. It highlighted the fact that colleges develop in relation to the status of their alumni. This explains why the NCE certificate and teachers' poor working conditions hinder the participation of colleges of education alumni in the development of their alma mater. Most of the country's top officials who attended colleges of education for their NCE do not include them on their list of schools attended. Some professors who rose through the ranks to become vice chancellors of federal universities earned NCEs before enrolling in universities for bachelor's and postgraduate degrees. They choose to be alumni of universities rather than colleges of education, where they began with NCE. This paper concludes that alumni associations have the ability to give back more to their alma mater than they have received and recommends that the government provide teachers with a separate salary structure as well as allowances for teaching, research, and examination supervision, all of which should be included in the separate structure.

Keywords: *alumni, teachers, NCE, development*.

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The Role of Alumni Associations in Colleges of Education Development

Lemchi, Ngozi S. [α] & Ihugba, Okezie A. [σ]

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Keywords: alumni, teachers, NCE, development.

I. Introduction

The development of colleges of education is an important component of delivering full-time courses in education, technology, applied science, commerce, the arts, social sciences, humanities, and management. It would be impossible to conduct research in these disciplines on the development and adaptation of methodologies without a sound foundation.

In recognition of this important aspect of national development, the Nigerian government established teachers' training colleges at the end of colonialism in the early 1960s and later went a step further to establish a higher level of teacher training colleges, hitherto known as "advanced teachers' colleges." These colleges were intended to be intermediate institutes that would train teachers for primary schools. Since the Grade Two Teachers' Colleges have closed, these schools, now known as Colleges of Education, have taken on the responsibility of preparing teachers for primary and lower secondary schools (Oga & Okpaga, 2022).

In recent years, many considerations have come into play when parents decide which institutions to send their children to. Some parents assess an institution's academic features and ratings, while others consider its closeness, hostel life, and cult activity rate. While these variables are important, parents value college alumni's (those who have attended or graduated from a specific college of education) participation as contributors more than many schools of education do (SCHOOLSOFTWARE, 2019).

Alumni organizations' concept and creativity are "a way of bringing hope and encouragement to present students of similar colleges." Alumni play an important role in the growth and development of higher education institutions for a variety of reasons. They are intended to advocate for the development of their previous colleges in the field of education. Building and fixing up classrooms, hostels, libraries, and science labs; giving labs and libraries tools, computers, and books; giving classrooms water systems, furniture, and energy generators; and helping with school sports should all be part of their contributions (EISAU, 2016). As a result, it is critical for an academic organization to establish and maintain a continuous relationship with alumni. Alumni are expected to do a number of things well, such as promoting the school's brand, mentoring current students, helping outgoing students find internships, career opportunities, and jobs, and so on (Zaff, Ismail & Gilkar, 2022).

Some provosts of colleges of education include alumni association committees to plan college events and activities. They are invited to major events such as the dedication of new buildings or fundraising campaigns for their former colleges. They invest much in hosting an online alumni database for their former students, which is accessible via the college's website. Because the college is what the aluminia have in common, it is critical to keep the aluminia updated about what is going on at their institution and in the aluminia community. An aluminia newsletter is an excellent way to stay in contact and informed throughout the semester or session.

Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education alumni recently provided a 12 kVA generator to a building at the college that houses their secretariat but

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serves the entire building, organized football matches, health programs, granted scholarships to indigent students, and so on. We also discovered that they intend to build toilets throughout the classrooms to supplement the ones that are already there. These achievements may be found in the majority of colleges of education across the country, in both urban and rural areas. Such contributions are greatly appreciated. However, we underline that much more may be done to assist colleges. When compared to the intervention of the university's alumni association, it is far from equal. University alumni have constructed hostels and an ICT laboratory; drilled a borehole with overhead tanks; and acquired solar street lights, vehicles, generators, and library books, among other things.

This paper is divided into the following sections: Section 2 discusses the Origin, Growth and role of Colleges of Education in national development in Nigeria. Section 3 outlines why alumni are important and why they should give back to their alma mater. The fourth section emphasizes the benefits of alumni association. The fifth section addresses why college of education alumni do not contribute as much as their university peers. Section six brings the paper to a close.

II. Origin and Growth of Colleges of Education in Nigeria

The Ashby Commission's report in 1958, which condemned the quality of teachers in Nigerian schools at the time and emphasized the need for higher-grade or more qualified teachers, gave birth to five institutions that have now evolved into today's colleges of education. The college of education was originally known as "Advanced Teachers College." There were originally four, established in 1962 by the federal and regional governments with the assistance of UNESCO: Lagos, Ibadan, and Zaria; Ibadan was later transferred to Ondo in 1964. Owerri and Kano both established advanced teacher training colleges in 1963 and 1964, respectively. Abraka was later founded in 1968. (Lawal, 2019).

In 1973, Nigeria had 13 advanced teacher training colleges and colleges of education. Until the establishment of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in Nigeria in 1989, all advanced teacher training colleges and colleges of education in Nigeria, which numbered around 43, were affiliates of institutes or faculties of education in Nigerian universities. According to NCCE (2022), there were 152 colleges of education as of October 2022, including 27 federal, 82 private, and 54 state colleges that adhered to the uniform minimum standards set by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). The commission's establishment of uniform minimum standards was necessitated, among other things, by universities' discriminatory admission policies in favor of candidates from ATTCs or colleges of education affiliated with them. According to the commission, "the need for harmonization of the various standards becomes even more compelling with the recognition that they are producing for the same market." Since the establishment of the National Commission for Colleges of Education in Nigeria, the academic programs of all Nigerian colleges of education have been accredited on a regular basis, as stipulated in sections 5(c) and (d) of the Commission's founding Decree 3 of 1989. According to the decree, the commission shall: (c) establish minimum standards for all programs of teacher education and accredit their certificates and other academic awards; and (d) approve guidelines outlining criteria for the accreditation of all Nigerian colleges of education. The purpose of the accreditation and re-accreditation process is to make sure that all Nigerian colleges of education continue to meet minimum standards (Oga & Okpaga, 2022).

III. The Role of Colleges of Education in National Development

Colleges of education in Nigeria have been supplying the needed manpower for national development. They have been critical to our national development, particularly in the education sector. According to Afolabi and Loto (2012), a developed or educated society has enough manpower, and each person occupies his or her rightful position to contribute to the society's growth. In Nigeria, for example, the teaching function of colleges of education has made significant contributions to national development, particularly in the development of middle-level manpower for the country's primary and junior secondary schools. Colleges of education teach or train people to be useful to themselves and to the society in which they live. In order to achieve self-actualization, people must be productive, discover their creative abilities, and apply these to specific tasks (Orji & Job, 2013).

Colleges of education have produced a large number of non-graduate professional (NCE) teachers who teach in our primary and junior secondary schools, thereby alleviating the nation's manpower shortages at those levels. These teachers have also laid the groundwork for whatever formal education is received later in life, and they can now be found in a variety of professions such as accountants, teachers, lawyers, economists, engineers, doctors, agriculturalists, architects, and so on. The ideas that these people implemented have aided the nation's development. Nigerian colleges of education intend to enter the task of producing professionally trained teachers for our vocational and technical secondary schools in order to meet the nation's requirements for technological takeoff as outlined in the National Policy on Education (2012).

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Another aspect of colleges of education's role in national development, according to Obasanjo (2012), is that it teaches individuals how to relate to and interact meaningfully with others in society, as well as the value of effective organization for human progress. Here, educational colleges foster this development. The school brings together people from various cultural backgrounds for a common goal. This encourages mutual coexistence among the various students.

Because they are too focused on global academics, cultures, scholarships, research, and international acceptance, Nigerian universities frequently take too long to respond to local needs and demands. Colleges of education, being in the middle, are frequently called upon to mount flexible programs that can be tailored to the urgent needs of primary and junior secondary schools. Another contribution of colleges of education to national development is Nigeria's structural integration. They have raised the level of national unity and consciousness, a sense of oneness, and a sense of common citizenship and purpose among Nigerians through public lectures, seminars, workshops, conferences, inter-collegiate sports competitions, and the implementation of their curriculum, particularly in General Studies courses like Citizenship Education, thereby enhancing the nation's development. In addition, they offer in-service courses, extracurricular classes, and sandwich programs to help members of the communities around them improve their literacy. Another important aspect of their contribution to national development is research. Their findings enable educational planners to develop appropriate education policies for the nation's development. Finally, by providing compulsory and agricultural extension services to the communities around them, they have contributed to national development. Consulting services help the local economy, while agricultural extension services improve agriculture and, in turn, the economy of the whole country (Oga & Okpaga, 2022).

a) Why do Alumni Matter?

The reputation of any educational institution is dependent on good results, extracurricular activities, the environment, and investments. However, there is one factor that only requires encouragement and support and brings strength and expansion to the institution's reputation and progress, and that factor is the alma mater's alumni. Because of the existence of "Alumni associations," students feel obligated and honored to repay favors to their institutions after achieving success in life. It also significantly benefits and expands the Alma Mater in terms of academics and administration at the national and international levels. Alumni reunions are popular events at many colleges and universities. They are typically organized by alumni associations and are often social fundraising events (Shakil & Faizi, 2012).

According to Babatola (2015) an alumnus (masculine, plural alumni) or alumna (feminine, plural alumnae) is thus a body or group of former students or pupils of a school, college, or university. The term usually, but not always, refers to a graduate of the educational institute in question. In addition to being a former student, an alumnus can be a former member, employee, contributor, or inmate.

Alumni raise funds to help their alma mater provide the resources needed to provide students with an unforgettable and inspiring experience (AGN, 2021). Donations of any size are greatly appreciated. Barriers are broken down, classrooms become more diverse, teachers share their wealth of knowledge, and students achieve feats they never imagined possible. Without the generosity of alumni, parents, friends, and relatives, none of this would be possible for many. Alumni have the power to change lives with their donations, which can take the form of money, in-kind contributions, time, scholarships, or college support.

Engagement with alumni, formerly known as "alumni relations," was seen as distinct from fundraising and other advancement activities. In fact, some colleges of education have alumni groups that are completely separate from the schools from which they graduated. Their members communicated among themselves, but not with the school. The aluminia association's contacts are a critical component of promoting an institution today for a variety of reasons, and it is critical to keep track of your former students.

With the Nigerian population growing at an exponential rate and government resources becoming increasingly scarce, it is clear that the resources available to support the 27 federal and 54 state colleges of education may be insufficient (ThePointer, 2021). This, of course, implies that the colleges may suffer from infrastructure lapses, insufficient lecturers, poor supervision, students crammed into classes at a rate of more than 200 per classroom in some departments such as English language, economics education, business education, and health education, an inhabitable and unenabling environment, and a lack of up-to-date learning facilities, for which colleges of education were previously known. Countries compete to train the best scientists and technologists in the world in the twenty-first century. Most colleges teach students science and technology without involving them in hands-on activities.

Keeping in touch with former students is an important part of the development efforts of colleges of education today, and here's why:

1. The Alumni are the most ardent supporters of their previous schools. They effectively carry out a variety of tasks, such as promoting the school's brand, mentoring current students, assisting with job opportunities, and so on. Past students at several

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colleges of education have assisted deserving but financially disadvantaged students. Students from underserved social groups have received financial assistance to cover recurring expenses.

2. Alumni has the potential to bring in money; it can help the government pay for things like the ones listed above. Because colleges' cannot overcome all of the previously mentioned barriers on their own, their actions will demonstrate a significant response to the government's clarion call to support schools. Most importantly, former students should use the support services to give back to the community that helped them so much while also preparing them for success at their alma maters.
3. It has an effect on one's reputation. When evaluating and ranking tertiary institutions, alumni participation is one of the factors considered. Rankings can influence reputation, which in turn can influence enrollment, which in turn can influence school income. Even if participation rates are not used in ranking computations, they can be a source of pride among peers.
4. Alumni who donate money and time benefit the next generation of current and former students.
5. Money donated to alma maters by alumni sometimes, goes toward research, scholarships, and the construction of new facilities, among other things. It raises our alma mater's profile, making it a better place.
6. Students who excel in sporting events in particular and other academic activities in general most times, are awarded certificates, medals, and trophies. The funds required for this purpose may be provided by former students.
7. It inspires others. People want to help a worthwhile cause. High levels of alumni participation can have an impact when wealthy donors, corporations, and organizations consider their own investments. They want to give back to schools that their former students have supported. For example, Philip Ozuah, an alumnus of the University of Ibadan's College of Medicine, donated $1,000,000, which equates to N417 million based on the official exchange rate of N417 to a dollar on August 3, 2022.
8. Alumni offer invaluable word-of-mouth marketing through their social and professional networks. If colleges of education stay in touch with their former students, they can continue to use their skills and knowledge.
9. Aluminia are great role models for current students, and they can often help students as they start their careers.

b) Why You Should Do Something for Your Alma Mater Now

Alumni should want to see their alma maters succeed, and giving back is one way to do so. Unfortunately, not enough past students are giving back to their alma maters these days, and it shows. Giving back to one's alma mater is advantageous to one's reputation. Contributing to the advancement of one's alma maters' reputations can have a second- and third-order impact on our own lives as well as the perceived value of our school degree (Coleman, 2022). We should all want our alma maters to succeed, whether we contribute money or our time. This can only help our personal situation. "We're all looking for ways to improve our country's education." We can do some good and even change lives by assisting a deserving student in getting a good job or obtaining a higher education by donating our time, talent, and money to our previous institutions.

Giving Back Aids Our Development. Education is a never-ending process, we continue to learn even after we graduate. Nothing is more visible than giving back to our alma maters. Returning to your old school keeps you current, relevant, sharp, and challenged. Giving back does not have to be monetary. We frequently forget that our time is valuable and can be just as important to our alma mater as any financial contribution. Human capital, according to Coleman (2022), is just as valuable to a college's long-term viability and can be just as important, if not more, than financial support. We feel good knowing that we're helping the college that did so much to educate us and provide us with a better life when we give back to our alma maters.

Alumni typically make contributions to their schools in proportion to their gratitude and accomplishments (Oyekanmi, 2007). There could be a link between insufficient giving and the knowledge that our college certificate was directly responsible for a portion of our success. But is this always the case? Previous generations of students frequently fail to connect the dots between their accomplishments and their alma mater, which is one reason educational institutions do not have more alma mater giving.

IV. The Advantages of Alumni Associations

1. Alumni associations are rife with opportunities for graduates to broaden their professional networks. Graduates can network with both recent and senior graduates, and these connections can lead to internships, jobs, clients, partnerships, and other valuable career opportunities. Going to the same school and being able to network in person or online at regular events also makes it easier to make and maintain these vital connections.

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2. *Exclusive Online Job Listings:* Many alumni associations maintain job boards on their websites and/or publish job postings in their recurring newsletters or magazines. These jobs could be offered by other alumni, or they could simply be jobs that alumni heard about. In some cases, these chances may not be widely known anywhere else, giving graduates first dibs.
3. *Targeted Career Services:* Alumni associations frequently offer a wealth of career services to assist former students in finding job opportunities and increasing their chances of landing a job offer. Career fairs, for example, bring together employers from the surrounding area and sometimes further afield, allowing graduates to meet company representatives in person. Career counseling, seminars, webinars, and networking events may provide useful job market information. In the same way, an organization may help graduates with their resumes and cover letters so that they can put their best foot forward.
4. *Access to Educational Resources Post-Graduation:* In addition to career services, alumni associations may offer a variety of resources to assist former students after they graduate. Access to library materials, large databases of journals and magazines, and even labs and equipment used for learning on campus may be included.
5. *Contact with Former Classmates:* Another advantage of joining an alumni association is the ability to reconnect with former classmates. Whether it's a chance to reconnect with old friends and acquaintances or a chance to network, graduates will benefit from alumni directories and online social media groups that keep the lines of communication open long after the caps and gowns have been removed.
6. *Current School Event Information:* Alumni associations distribute current school information to former students through newsletters, e-newsletters, and college magazines. From news about a new campus building to updates on the college's athletic teams to the latest research developments, graduates can stay up to date on their alma mater. This includes events, fundraisers, and career opportunities such as certification test dates, new degree programs, and opportunities to continue learning. All of these can provide graduates with an advantage in the job market.
7. Alumni associations can provide a variety of exclusive perks in addition to education and career opportunities. Some associations provide financial services, such as banking or credit union services, credit cards, or reduced rates on various types of insurance, such as home, auto, and travel. Travel perks, such as special alumni travel destination programs or discounts or free admission to places or events in the area or on campus, may also be included. Some associations also provide school-based discounts on continuing education and gym memberships.
8. *Connect with Professors:* While networking with fellow alumni is one way to find career and social opportunities, reconnecting with former professors can provide a wealth of additional opportunities. This is especially true for research, as many professors at colleges and universities conduct academic research. Graduates could talk to professors in their field to learn something new or get help with a research project.
9. *Connect with the Community:* Many associations have partnerships with their local communities so that alumni can help the community while also getting to know people and leaders.
10. *Socializing:* Alumni associations aren't always solely concerned with business. They provide numerous opportunities to attend social events such as mixers, happy hours, and galas, as well as homecoming events, football tailgates, alumni award ceremonies, and class reunions. Graduates can take a break from work and post-college life to reconnect with former classmates and other alumni while also making social connections that may lead to long-term friendships.
11. *Giving Back:* Many graduates want to stay connected to their alma mater and ensure that future generations of alumni have the same opportunities and positive experiences that they did. Gifts, endowments, membership fees, and volunteer opportunities are all available through alumni associations. Giving back to an alumni association is a great way to keep the school's history alive and make sure that future students can get a good college education.

a) Why Colleges of Education Alumni Do Not Contribute As Much As Their University Peers

Since the dawn of the 20th century, colleges of education, the doyens of higher learning in the past, have fallen in the pecking order of tertiary education. Nobody aspires to attend a college of education. It is frequently the last option for any young person. Nigerian students prefer to attend a university or a polytechnic. Nobody remembers to prioritize college education as a first choice. Going to college for post-secondary education is frequently regarded as a last-ditch effort.

Most colleges of education don't have more than one chapter, which is usually domiciled in the capital of the state where the college is situated. All the first-generation universities (Ibadan, Ife, Lagos, ABU, and UNN) have branches of their alumni all over the country, unlike Alvan Ikoku and co., who have fewer than six branches, or chapters. The university alumni branches invite the vice chancellors of their alma mater

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from time to time to brief them about the challenges they are facing, and they make good contributions towards reducing them. Alumnus or alumni of universities have donated or equipped buildings worth up to 10 million naira and above. Some of them use their offices to execute such projects, e.g., Engr. A.A. Kure, a former Governor of Niger State, spent N70 million to provide a 33 KVA PHCN substation at the Main Campus of ABU, Zaria, and former Kano State Executive Governor Mallam Ibrahim Shakarau donated N14 million to the hosting of West African Universities Basketball Games. Former Mallam Isa Yuguda, Governor of Bauchi State, donated two (2) 18-seater buses to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Alhaji Aliyu Shinkafi, the Governor of Zamfara State, is building a professorial sabbatical hostel at Area "A" in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adu, equally, built a hostel at the Main Campus that is named after him; Donald Duke, the former Governor of Cross River State, gave the Faculty of Law 30 computers; Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, the former Governor of Nassarawa State, renovated the Faculty of Arts; etc.

According to the Federal Colleges of Education Act of 1998, colleges of education can only award the National Certificate of Education (NCE), which is a teaching certificate. Because NCE is no longer respected in the market, most students who complete it continue to a university of their choice through the JAMB Direct Entry admissions exercise. This is especially true for those who don't mind becoming teachers or who did not score highly in JAMB, which enables them to get admission to study courses such as law, engineering, medicine, education, architecture, pharmacy, and so on. Those who went on to further their education at another university have a difficult time identifying with the college where they completed their NCE. They would rather join the alumni group of the college or university where they got their advanced degrees. For example, Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje of Kano State received the Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) from the Advanced Teachers College in Kano between 1969 and 1972 and then proceeded to Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), in Zaria, for a B.Sc. in education degree from 1972 to 1975. I will not be surprised if he is not an active member of the alumni of the Advanced Teachers College in Kano.

The majority of graduates from those colleges of education that run degree programs in collaboration with other universities go into teaching, and the teaching profession is no longer an appealing profession, which can be traced back to the low status accorded the Nigerian teacher by the Nigerian public. As a result, many former NCE students are unwilling to reconnect with their former colleges after graduation. In general, this is due to teachers' poor working conditions. Teachers' pay is insufficient to send them home, let alone donate to their alma mater.

Alumni of colleges of education have little clout in the colleges because they do not speak for all graduates. Most of the country's top officials who attended colleges of education for their NCE do not include them on their list of schools attended. Some professors who advanced through the ranks to become vice chancellors of federal universities earned their NCE before enrolling in university for their bachelor's and postgraduate degrees. They choose to be alumni of universities rather than colleges of education, where they began with NCE.

Primary and junior secondary school teachers' traditional respect and prestige in society have been significantly eroded, and there has been a loss of interest in and attraction to the teaching profession at that level. Because NCE is considered a lesser degree than a bachelor's degree, most of their well-to-do alumni avoid participating in their activities. The law establishing colleges of education should be amended to allow them to operate as dual-mode or specialized universities, offering NCE programs and degrees up to the doctorate level in specific courses. Colleges are degree-granting institutions in the United States that receive billions of dollars from their alumni each year (universities are often considered colleges in the United States).

V. Conclusion

College is where we meet new people, are inspired by lecturers, and discover a world beyond our formative years. Strangers form bonds based on their shared college experience. Alumni associations have the ability to give back more to their alma mater than they have received. People develop a bond with their alma mater throughout their lives. Your tertiary education as a young adult is intertwined with your adult persona. Alumni associations should keep an eye on what's going on at their various alma maters to make sure they don't degrade beyond redemption. Their contributions to their respective alma maters have far-reaching implications. They have a significant impact on the community in which they live as well as on society as a whole.

Colleges of education that are well-maintained produce excellent teachers who go on to train as professionals in a variety of disciplines and eventually serve society in a variety of capacities after graduation. Surprisingly, the situation of alumni of colleges of education differs due to the plight of Nigerian teachers who have a positive relationship with their former schools. It is common to meet an adult who is unhappy with the college he or she went to because of how Nigerians see the certificate from that college. The Nigerian system has turned a large number of college of education alumni into beggars and destitutes, so that the younger generation fears becoming teachers and attending colleges of education in Nigeria in the future. They no longer inspire young people to achieve greater academic success.

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To improve this dreadful situation, the Nigerian government should provide teachers with a separate salary structure as well as allowances for teaching, research, and examination supervision, all of which should be included in the separate structure. Teachers' salaries and allowances should be paid on time, and they should be promoted when they are due, so that they can make room for fraternizing without thinking about what they will gain from being members of their alumni. Employers of teachers in private schools should consider raising teacher salaries and other remuneration to compete with their counterparts in other sectors. As it improves, so will their level of participation in alumni activities.

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