

The University and Alumni: 21st Century Expectations and Realities

by

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Preamble.

It is indeed an honour to be invited to address these eminent gathering of graduates, students and staff of one of the highly rated but relatively young universities in the country. I felt more honoured when I realized that this is the first Lecture of this kind, being part of the activities lined up for the first Alumni Convention of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

Who is an alumnus/alumna?

An **alumnus** (masculine, plural **alumni**) or **alumna** (feminine, plural **alumnae**) is a former student of a school, college, or university. An alumnus/alumna of an educational institution does not have to be a graduate of the institution. All that qualifies him/her is to have matriculated as a student in that institution. Traditionally, the masculine plural (**alumni**) is used for associations comprising of both sexes.

The word *alumnus* has its origin in Latin. In English Language, alumnus means 'foster son' or 'pupil' It is derived from the verb *alere* which means 'to nourish' in English Language. So in a sense, alumni/alumnae of an institution are supposed to have been nourished by the institution in their formative years. So the relationship between an institution and its alumni/alumnae is meant to be that of parent and child, no matter how old the child is.

As far as the title of this lecture is concerned, I am to talk about what a 'child' is expected to do as payback to a 'parent' who nourished him/her to adulthood and vice versa.

Webometrics rankings

When I joined the university system as a lecturer in the early eighties, standards were high but there was nothing like a globally standardized ranking of tertiary institutions. This concept crept in in 2004 very early this century with the sole purpose of improving the presence of the academic and research institutions on the Web and to promote the open access publication of scientific results. This has encouraged healthy competition between tertiary institutions at the global level and has ensured high academic standards. Now there are several ranking groups but the most popular is the Webometrics ranking which is published twice in a year (January and

July) by the Cybermetrics Laboratory of the Spanish National Research Council in Madrid, Spain. The rankings are based on a composite indicator that takes into account both the quantum of information on each university's website and the visibility and impact of these web publications according to the number of external site citations they received.

It is therefore imperative that a university that does not have a functioning website and/or ICT unit cannot rise above the ladder of Webometrics rankings. During the course of preparing for this discourse, I discovered that Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko (AAUA) is not as old as I thought. All along, I had thought that it is a transformation of Ondo State University established in Ado-Ekiti to Akungba when Ado-Ekiti ceased to be part of Ondo State. I have now been reliably informed that this university is just 16 years old, having been established in 1999. The first set of alumni/alumnae graduated in 2004, barely 11 years ago. It is therefore highly commendable that in spite of administrative challenges, the Alumni association might have had in the past, this relatively new university now has a highly formidable Alumni Association with various Chapters already established in the catchment area as well as in the Federal Capital Territory. You have performed a feat that took many older universities more than two decades to achieve.

As at January this year, AAUA ranked 33rd out of the 143 universities in this country. In July, the university ranked 39th. There is no cause for alarm as long as the university is counted among the first 50 in the country. Besides, some older and better equipped universities are not performing better. If the Alumni Association has not been participating actively in how rankings would be high, the time is now to show more interest. I say this because there are other criteria that are used as input into this ranking exercise as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Selected criteria for ranking universities globally

Criteria	Major World Indicators
Quality of Education	Alumni of an institution winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals
Quality of Faculty	Staff of an institution winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals
Research Output	Articles published in Nature and Science (Highly cited researchers in 21 broad subject categories)
	Articles in Science Citation Index-expanded and Social Science Citation Index
Size of Institution	Academic performance with respect to the size of an institution – The total scores of five major indicators divided by the number of full-time equivalent academic staff.

Source: (<http://ed.sjtu.cn/ranking.htm>)

If you win a medal and your university is not informed so that it is announced and celebrated on the website, you are inadvertently reducing the chances of your university climbing high on the ladder. How many Nobel Laureates have we produced in Nigeria? Just one. That is one reason

why University of Ibadan and Obafemi Awolowo University will always be on top in Nigeria. The score allotted to producing Nobel Laureates are extremely high. Harvard University will always be among the world's topmost universities because it has produced 43 Nobel Laureates. A select few of the Nobel Laureates produced by Harvard University alone is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Four most popular Nobel Laureates produced by Harvard University

Name	Class Year	Status
Theodore Roosevelt (1858 – 1919)	1880	25 th President of USA
Al Gore (born in 1948)	1969	Vice President of USA & Global Climate Change Activist
Henry Kissinger (born in 1922)	1950; 1954	Political Scientist; Former US Secretary of State.
Barak Obama (born in 1961)	1991	Current President of USA

I have criticized a few of the criteria for ranking universities worldwide as being unfair to younger universities (see Badejo 2006; 2012) but the reality is that they remain viable criteria. The challenge therefore is that all alumni and alumnae should strive to excel in their various callings because their universities will benefit from their achievements in global rankings.

In Africa, the **University of Cape Town (UCT)** has consistently been the leading university in the continent in the last decade. As at 2009, this university had 23,500 students, 2,520 Administrative and support staff and 1,980 academic staff. Of the 23,500 students, 6,700 were postgraduates while 15,800 were undergraduates. The university has four sub-urban and two urban campuses. It was established in 1829. It is described as a **Public Research University** and it is the oldest in South Africa. Between 85% and 90% of academic staff hold Doctoral or Masters qualifications.

UCT is the highest ranked African university in the QS World University Rankings, the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, and the Academic Ranking of World Universities. It achieved a rank of 156 in the 2011 QS World University Rankings, and a rank of 103 in the 2011 Times Higher Education World University Rankings, making it the only African university in the top 200. Within this same ranking UCT was placed in the top 50 in the categories of Life Sciences and Social Sciences. UCT's MBA programme was globally ranked at 60 in 2011 by the Financial Times and was ranked first in the "value for money" category. In addition to this, UCT was placed as the second best business school in Africa and the Middle East in the 2010 QS Global 200 Business Schools Report. The University also achieved a rank of 141 - 145 in the Russian based Global Universities Ranking.

Five of UCT's graduates have become Nobel Laureates. They are:

- **Ralph Bunche**, American Political Scientist and diplomat awarded the Nobel Peace in 1950 for his role in the 1949 Armistice Agreements.

- **Max Theiler**, virologist awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or in 1951 for developing a vaccine against yellow fever.
- Professor **Allan McLeod Cormack** (Medicine, 1979).
- **Sir Aaron Klug** (Chemistry, 1982).
- Professor Emeritus **J.M. Coetzee** (Literature, 2003)

Names of 10 Notable Staff of this university are listed on their website. These are Academics who are potential Nobel Prize winners due to several breakthroughs in their fields.

This little information I have provided on UCT is just to wet the appetite of those who may like to know through web surfing why there is so much gap between AAUA and UCT. This will definitely stimulate interest in what to do to be able to reach the top not only in Nigeria but also in Africa.

Funding Challenges

I know that AAUA is doing well in terms of funding and staff welfare. I was at your last convocation where the outgoing Vice-Chancellor thanked the Visitor for funding the university very well. How many people know that the mere fact that an institution is able to pay staff salaries punctually does not mean that the institution is doing well financially. I do not know any university in this country that receives 100% of its budget from its proprietors. So, a responsible university administration must have huge profit-yielding investments and must source external funding both locally and internationally. The trend now is for universities to establish a company under which all business ventures will operate and the Alumni Association is represented on the Management Board of the company.

I took a trip on the information superhighway to the website of the Alumni Association of the University of Edinburgh while preparing this lecture. The first thing that amazed me was that the gateway to their website is a Portal on the University's website. The advantage of this to the university is that every available information on this Alumni Portal is of advantage to the university in Webometrics rankings. The amazing contents of this website include several pages that contain information on several university advancement activities which start with their mission: which is " ... to work with the academic community to engage alumni, friends, companies and trusts in the life of the University".

I have visited AAUA website. What I saw there is: "*The Adekunle Ajasin University Alumni Association is mobilized towards promoting meaningful relationship among the graduates of AAUA and strengthening the ties between the Alumni, the University Community, and the society at large*". Although I did not see a vision or mission, what I saw is partially encouraging. It has combined mission with vision. "Promoting meaningful relationship among the graduates of AAUA and strengthening the ties between the Alumni ..." is a pre-requisite for strengthening ties between the Alumni and the university community and of course setting the template for impacting on the society at large. This is what is known as marrying town and gown. The import of my submission is that AAUA Alumni Association should spell out their vision and mission

and be specific on the development goals of the association for the University for efficiency and effectiveness.

On the website of the Alumni Association of the University of Edinburgh, I came across the following:

- Development and Alumni is comprised of three teams who are responsible for all aspects of fundraising and alumni engagement.
- Regents are the way that University recognizes and harnesses the knowledge, expertise and guidance of a nominated group of volunteers.
- Our Development Trusts enable donors to give to the University and ensure the responsible and effective use of these gifts.
- Under the constitution, the University must maintain a register of all graduates for the General Council (Data base).
- The Alumni Portal is a secure website that enables graduates to update personal details, set contact preferences and access secure services.
- We take data protection extremely seriously and all our communications and information management processes comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. We work to generate funds for projects, students and research, advise on relationships with potential donors and help in facilitating discussions about funding opportunities.
- If you are interested in donating to the University or would like more information or advice regarding current projects, priorities or student support then please contact one of our team.
- Our fundraising teams engage alumni, friends, companies and trusts in order to advance the global ambitions of the University.
- The University raises funds for the Principal's Bursary Fund and the Edinburgh Fund through a student telephone campaign.
- The Edinburgh Campaign raised £350 million for the University; its impact is described in 12 stories of research, investment and change.
- 2016 has something extra, a day for free, a whole 24 hours of bonus time that can be used to step out of the ordinary and do something extraordinary. Your support can help create new opportunities for students, inspire pioneering research, open the doors to medical breakthroughs and impact the wider community.
- Find out more about our organized events - from a cake bake record attempt to a virtual row across the North Sea.
- Everything you need to make fundraising for the Big Leap as straightforward, fun and financially successful as possible.
- Discover the wonderful things our supporters are doing to help causes close to their hearts.
- We provide high quality and responsible management of university ceremonial and hospitality activities alongside advice and guidance.
- Current and upcoming university events and exhibitions managed by the Events and Protocol team.
- We are responsible for a range of ceremonial events, official visitors and special graduations.

- Guidance and advice is available to support your university event whatever its scale or intended audience.
- Does your club or society need help with funding? Do you have a great idea for a project or need funds to support your research? Innovation Initiative Grants (IIGs) are financed by alumni of the University, via donations to the Edinburgh Fund, and could provide the kick start that you need.
- IIGs promote new initiatives in teaching, research and student support, and applications are open to permanent members of staff and current students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) as well as EUSA, EUSA societies, the Sports Union and recognized sports clubs.

University of Ibadan (UI) is the first university to be established in Nigeria. Their Alumni website is not as rich as that of Edinburgh University highlighted above.

In my opinion, University of Ibadan, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife (OAU) and those universities who have dominated the first ten in Nigeria are the first to be beat by AAUA before we take the next step towards being relevant in Africa and the world.

I presented a paper at a Lecture organized by The Faculty of Science in OAU to mark the 50th anniversary of the University three years ago (see Badejo 2012).. In the paper titled “*Identifying the Mitochondria in the Cell of Tertiary Education in Nigeria*”: *The Tortuous Journey to Cape Town and Cairo*” I identified adequate funding as the powerhouse of the soul of tertiary education in Nigeria just as the mitochondrion is to a cell of any living organism. I placed Nigeria side by side with South Africa and Egypt and highlighted the correlation between funding level and positions in Webometrics rankings. Please don’t feel upset if I reveal to you that the amount of money spent by South Africa on Tertiary Education in 2010 was more than the entire budget of Nigeria. In that same year, seven out of the top ten universities in Africa were from South Africa, while three were from Egypt. In 2011 and 2012, two of the top ten were from Egypt while the rest were from South Africa. South Africa and Egypt are two countries where the government invests more money in education than many other countries in the continent. The situation remains the same this year (2015). South Africa and Egypt still dominate the top 10 universities in Africa (Table 3).

Table 3. The top 10 universities in Africa in July 2015

1.	University of Cape Town	South Africa
2.	Universiteit Stellenbosch	South Africa
3.	University of the Witwatersrand	South Africa
4.	University of Pretoria	South Africa
5.	Cairo University	Egypt
6.	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South Africa
7.	University of Western Cape	South Africa
8.	Mansoura University	Egypt
9.	University of Johannesburg	South Africa
10.	The American University in Cairo	Egypt

The first university in Nigeria in January rankings ranked fifteenth in Africa and it is a private university. This is an indictment on Federal and State-owned universities in respect of quality of output. Overall, Webometrics Rankings clearly suggest that the limitations of universities which do not rank high could be traced to the extent of funding of these universities. This is why I advocated a trip to Cape Town and Cairo before we start eyeing the achievements of Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Stanford, etc. We have to beat the leading universities in Africa before we aspire to reach out to Europe America.

This problem of under-funding has confirmed that resources available to achieve developmental goals in the education sector are limited. This clearly suggests that evolution of appropriate strategic planning is highly imperative in all universities irrespective of their positions in the Webometrics Rankings. It is the responsibility of AAUA Alumni to ensure that successive governments in the state continue to fund this university adequately.

The issue of Strategic Planning document for the university should also be of concern to the alumni. In his contribution at a symposium jointly organized by CODEISRIA and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) from March 21 to 22, 2005 in Abuja, Fred Hayward, an Ugandan Academic, defined Strategic Planning as, “... *a conscious process by which an institution assesses its current state and the likely future condition of its environment, identifies possible future states for itself, and then develops organized strategies, policies, and procedures for selecting and getting to one or more of them.*” Hayward explained further that the fundamental purpose of strategic planning in higher education is to provide an ongoing process of examination and evaluation of a system’s or an institution’s strengths, weaknesses, resource requirements, goals, and future prospects, and to set out a coherent plan to build a stronger and more effective institution. In a critical appraisal of the Ugandan Strategic Plan 2003 to 2015, Hayward concluded that, “... *the document has combined thoughtful assessments of the current condition with a well reasoned vision, mission, and goals for the future and ties them to a budget that will allow the goals to be met.*” It is the duty of the Alumni Association to continue to monitor the efforts of the university administration in producing and implementing Strategic Plans systematically within the specified time frames as proposed in the document.

May I sound a note of warning here that borrowing ideas from the topmost universities in respect of Alumni operations may be misleading in respect of priorities. Activities of Alumni Associations in such universities that have stabilized in respect of funding are largely dominated by social events. The Stanford Alumni Association for example states on their website that the association “... *exists to help you stay connected to Stanford, and to each other, wherever you are in your life now. Whatever you're seeking, be it Stanford events and connections in your hometown, an excuse to come back to the Farm for reunion, a job lead or a mind-expanding magazine, we've got you covered*” You will all agree with me that your association (AAUA Alumni) needs more than this. Don’t blame Stanford University Alumni for this. They are No 3 in the world. You will benefit more from the activities of University of Edinburgh Alumni which I have already highlighted. Edinburgh is No 50 in the world! May I add however that I am not saying that alumni associations are merely fund-raisers for the universities. This is a misconception and indeed a trivialization of the role of the alumni. Alumni are, first and foremost, stakeholders and lifelong members of the university community that should continue to interact constantly as well as through homecoming events. I agree *in toto* with the notion that

alumni gatherings are first and foremost for social engagements to relieve old time memories of school days as expressed by Ogunraku (2012) as long as such gatherings metamorphose into formal associations committed to giving back to their alma mater. Mimiko (2012) had already made a wake-up call to alumni associations and their respective universities that both of them *“must re-invent themselves to become strategic partners for institutional growth, development, sustainability and advocacy. This can only be attained by evolving a deliberate policy that promotes cordial relationship between the alumni and their universities.”*

In an address delivered by Mr. Wole Olaoye, the National President of Great Ife Alumni Association at the Annual Dinner and Award Ceremony of the Port-Harcourt Branch on Saturday, April 5, 2008, he stressed that: *“In this era of graduate unemployment, I must also mention that it is the duty of the alumni to assist fresh graduates transit painlessly from NYSC to relevant careers. Alumni branches have a duty to help fresh graduates acquire basic skills in Resume writing, preparation for tests and interviews, communication and others. Mid-career members also require assistance in the areas of networking, career transitions and executive placement. We must imbue public spiritedness in them to make them realize that they have arrived at a stage in their lives when they must give back something to their alma mater. Finally, we must get involved in easing our members from career into retirement.”* All these point to the fact that alumni relationship is a lifelong one. I agree totally with this admonition. In AAUA’s case, most of you are still in your middle level career. You are not as lucky as those coming behind you in terms of mentoring opportunities from career to retirement.

Other problems traceable to poor funding

In an article credited to Nasir El Rufai on October 7, 2013 when the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities (ASUU) was on strike, 62 points were harnessed as the reasons why the strike persisted. These are problems that are largely administrative but traceable to funding. I will present 40 of these points that I agree with so that members of the Alumni Association could situate this university within the context of what obtains and what should be corrected.

1. Less than 10% of the universities have Video Conferencing facility.
2. Less than 20% of the universities use Interactive Boards
3. More than 50% don’t use Public Address System in their lecture OVERCROWDED rooms/theatres.
4. Internet Services are non-existent, or epileptic and slow in 99% of Nigerian Universities
5. Nigerian Universities Library resources are outdated and manually operated. Book shelves are homes to rats/cockroaches
6. No university library in Nigeria is fully automated. Less than 35% are partially automated.

7. 701 Development projects in Nigerian universities 163 (23.3%) are abandoned 538 (76.7%) are PERPETUALLY on-going projects
8. Some of the abandoned projects in Nigerian universities are over 15 years old; some are over 40 years old.
9. 76% of Nigerian universities use well as source of water, 45% use pit latrine, 67% of students use bush as toilet
10. 77% of Nigerian universities can be classified as "Glorified Primary Schools" Laboratories are non existing
11. 80% of Nigerian Universities are grossly under-staffed
12. 78% of Nigerian Universities rely heavily on part-time and visiting lecturers.
13. 88% of Nigerian Universities have under-qualified Academics
14. 90% of Nigerian Universities are bottom-heavy (with junior lecturers forming large chunk of the workforce)
15. Only 2% of Nigerian Universities attract expatriate lecturers, over 80% of Ghanaian Universities attract same
16. 89% of Nigerian Universities have 'closed' (homogeneous staff – in terms of ethno-cultural background)
17. Based on the available data, there are 37,504 Academics in Nigerian Public Universities. Out of this, only 28,128 (75%) are engaged on full-time basis.
18. 83% of the Lecturers in Nigerian universities are male while 17% are female.
19. The teaching staff-students ratio is EMBARRASSINGLY very high in many universities: LECTURER STUDENT RATIO: National Open University of Nigeria 1:363 University of Abuja 1:122 Lagos State University 1:111. (NUC recommends 1:15). In Harvard 1:4; MIT 1:9; Yale 1:4, Cambridge 1:3; NUS 1:12; KFUPM 1:9; Technion 1:15).
20. Only 7 Nigerian Universities have up to 60% of their teaching staff with PhD qualifications
21. Majority of the universities in the country are grossly understaffed.
22. 9,376 (25%) Nigerian Lecturers are recycled as Visiting, Adjunct, Sabbatical and Contract lecturers.
23. 700 EX-MILITANTS in Nigeria are receiving more funds annually than 20 Nigerian universities under 'Amnesty Scam'

24. 80% of published journals by Nigerian University lecturers have no visibility in the international knowledge community.
25. No serving Nigerian academic is in the league of Nobel Laureates or a nominee of Nobel Prize.
26. There are only 2 registered patents owned by Nigerian Academics in the last 3 years.
27. Numerically more support staff in the services of Nigerian universities than the teaching staff they are meant to support
28. More expenditure is incurred in administration & routine functions than in core academic matters in Nigerian Universities
29. There are 77,511 full-time non-teaching staff in Nigeria's public universities 2 Times number of academic staff
30. In the University of Benin, there are more senior staff in the Registrar cadre (Dep. Registrars, PARs, SARs) than Professors
31. Almost all the universities are over-staffed with non- teaching staff
32. There is no relationship between enrolment and the tangible manpower needs of Nigeria.
33. Nigerian universities have horrible hostel facilities, overcrowded, overstretched lavatory and laundry facilities, poor sanitation, etc.
34. Except Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, no (public) university in Nigeria is able to accommodate more than 35% of its students.
35. In some (public) universities, female students take their bath in the open because the bathrooms are in very poor condition.
36. Laundries and common rooms in many universities have been converted into rooms where students live, in open prison style.
37. In most improvised cage called hostels in Nigerian Universities, there is no limit to the number of occupants.
38. Most State universities charge commercial rates for unfit and unsuitable hostel accommodation.
39. In off-campus hostels, students are susceptible to extraneous influences and violence, prostitution, rape, gang violence.

40. Over 1000 students being packed in lecture halls meant for less than 150 students. Nigerian University Students sit on bare floor or peep through windows to attend lectures. Over 400 Nigerian University students being packed in laboratory meant for 75 students

The above is nothing but a summary of the problems facing Nigerian universities today. The alumni of AAUA should collectively identify which of these problems persist in AAUA so as to combat it constructively, effectively and sustainably.

Advancement Centre

A vintage publication (Ikotun, 2007) on the Advancement Unit as a new frontier in university management is a must read for every university administrator. In this paper, Ikotun highlighted the roles of Advancement Unit and emphasized Alumni Relations and networking in the operations of this unit. I have read from your website that a University Advancement Office (UAO) whose mandate is to oversee the University's Alumni relationship towards a robust reformation of the AAUA Alumni was inaugurated a few years ago. I have also learnt that this wonderful initiative has given birth to the Alumni Home-Coming which held on Saturday, 7th April, 2012. This is highly commendable. The credit should however go to the university's administration that allowed this to happen. Many older universities in this country waited until they were almost 50 years old before they established an Advancement Office.

In a paper presented by Mrs. Ronke Ajibola, the pioneer Executive Director of the Advancement Centre in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, on "*The Concept of Advancement in Universities: Past Present and Future*". at the First Annual Advancement Lecture organized by the Advancement Centre of the Federal University of Technology, Akure on Friday May 24, 2013, Mrs. Ajibola defined advancement as "... *the process of taking an institution forward on a development path, projecting the institution positively in line with its shared goals, and ensuring that everything we do is in the interest of the Institution.*" The most functional word in this definition is 'development' which is also one of the synonyms of advancement. Many people erroneously refer to growth as a synonym of development and by extension, advancement. The truth is that growth does not always connote advancement. Growth is mere increase in size while development includes transformation from one state to another which may or may not be accompanied by increase in size.

To develop means any or a combination of the following:

- to make/become more mature or organized or more elaborate
- to bring or come into existence
- to bring or come to an active, visible, or mature state
- to make useable or profitable
- to convert to new use
- to build on

- to treat so as to make (something) more visible/real e.g. image

Development therefore is not synonymous with growth although there is a little interface between them.

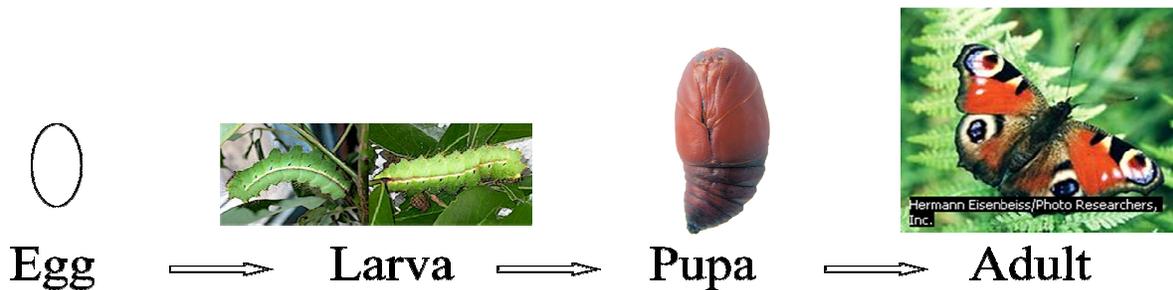
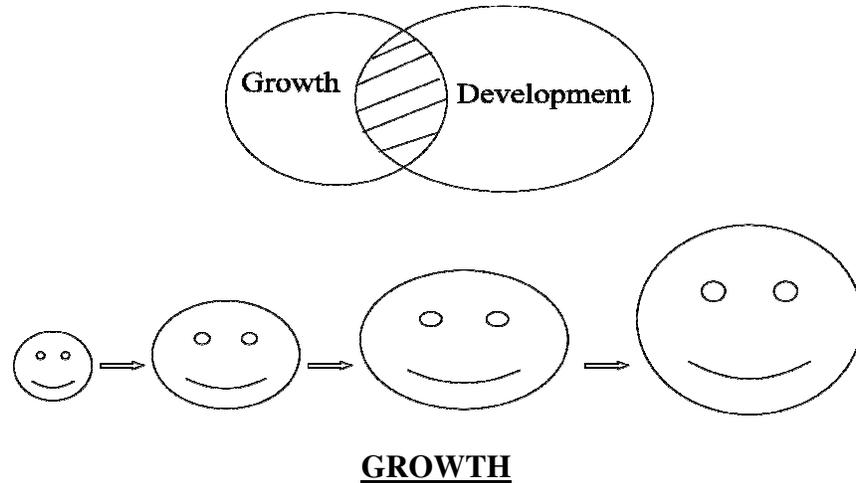


Plate 1. METAMORPHOSIS AS A TYPICAL ILLUSTRATION OF DEVELOPMENT

The phenomenon of metamorphosis in insects provides a good illustration of development. The morphology of the larval stage is radically different from that of the egg from which it hatched and the pupa into which it transforms. The morphology of the adult is also radically different from each of the preceding stages. This is development. Any growth that merely expands size without change of state is not development.

The idea of establishing Advancement Centre crept in when it became glaring that funding demands could no longer be met by the proprietors. Philanthropic support of Educational Institutions dates back to the Medieval when that Greek philosopher, Cimon supported the Academy of Socrates and Plato. So also, Alexander the Great, the King of Macedonia from 336 to 323 BC provided part of the funds used to establish Aristotle’s Lyceum (gymnasium). Aristotle lived from 384 BC – 322 BC. Endowments from wealthy individuals were used to support the financial needs of Oxford and Cambridge which are top ranking universities in the world today. In actual fact, Harvard College organized the first Fund-raising event in USA in

1641. The first Alumni Association was established by Williams College in 1921. Two years later, Brown University established the first Alumni Fund (Ajibola, 2013).

William Lawrence, an Episcopal Bishop and President of Harvard Alumni raised \$2m for Harvard in 1904. By 1936, about 50% of Colleges and Universities in the USA had put in place Alumni Funds from which the extra-financial needs of the institutions were supported. This is not to say that fund raising is the responsibility of Alumni. It is indeed the sole responsibility of the university management under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor/President. All I am saying is that alumni effort can only serve as complimentary to the efforts of the university administration.

In the period preceding the establishment of Advancement Centres, many universities tried haphazard fund raising methods which did not carry them far. University of Ibadan for example was only able to generate ₦22m from endowments and grants between 1988 and 1994 (6 years). Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) generated only ₦0.47m in 1987 during her 25th Anniversary Ceremony. In 1992, OAU generated only ₦5m. In 2002, OAU made ₦25m. None of these funds was up to one month's staff salaries at each of these periods in time.

The direction today is towards foreign (international) funding. This can only be coordinated well by the university's advancement office. I do not know the number of Foreign Grants that AAUA has access to, but I know that foreign grants can never be too many. Carnegie Corporation of New York is one huge source of funding that contributed to OAU's success story since 2003. I say this with authority because I was the Dean of the Faculty of Science in OAU from 2003 to 2007. There are numerous other Foundations such as MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, Bellagio in Italy, etc. that have offered tremendous help to many universities and individual researchers in Africa. Your duty is to encourage the Advancement Centre and individual researchers to apply to these Foundations for assistance.

This is not to say that efforts on endowments should be discarded. Many private universities in America survive on endowments. The concept of endowment in University administration has been well spelt out by Ekundayo (2007). I urge the key officers of this Alumni Association to read this paper as they prepare to engage the university administrators on how to fashion out the cooperative relationships between them in moving the university forward.

In many instances, it takes time to benefit from these philanthropic organizations. Relationships must first be built through a gradual process. This can take a couple of years. It may even take a trip to the donors' domain by the Personnel of the Advancement Office and Principal Officers of the university. In these days of cybercrime, many Foundations don't act on e-mails anymore until after personal physical contact has been established. This is where the concept of '*owo la fi nwa owo*' must be applied. i.e. 'nothing ventured, nothing gained', There must be investment before profit can be realized. A tight-fisted Vice-Chancellor or Proprietor will be an impediment to the success of fund raising exploits in the international arena.

Let me round this section off with one of the five challenges I highlighted at the 50th Anniversary lecture in OAU in 2012. It goes thus: *“University administrators, whether public or private should be more aggressive in seeking funds from channels other than their proprietors and they should never allow their inner ego to misjudge any person they interact with in the course of their official duties.”*

I will explain this further with a true story. The story goes thus: “A lady in a faded grey dress and her husband, dressed in a homespun suit walked in timidly without an appointment into the Harvard University President's outer office. The secretary could tell in a moment that such backwoods, country hicks had no business at Harvard and probably didn't even deserve to be in Harvard. "We want to see the President" the man said softly. "He'll be busy all day “the secretary snapped. "We'll wait" the lady replied. For hours the secretary ignored them, hoping that the couple would finally become discouraged and go away. They didn't and the secretary grew frustrated and finally decided to disturb the President. "Maybe if you see them for a few minutes, they'll leave" she said to him. The President, stern faced and with dignity, strutted toward the couple. The lady told him "We had a son who attended Harvard for one year. He loved Harvard. He was happy here. But about a year ago, he was accidentally killed. My husband and I would like to erect a memorial to him, somewhere on campus."

The President wasn't touched....He was shocked. "Madam " he said, gruffly, " we can't put up a statue for every person who attended Harvard and died. If we did, this place would look like a cemetery."

"Oh, no," the lady explained quickly "We don't want to erect a statue. We thought we would like to give a building to Harvard."

The President rolled his eyes. He glanced at the gingham dress and homespun suit, and then exclaimed, "A building! Do you have any earthly idea how much a building costs? We have over seven and a half million dollars in the physical buildings here at Harvard."

For a moment the lady was silent. The President was pleased. Maybe he could get rid of them now. The lady turned to her husband and said quietly, "Is that all it costs to start a university? Why don't we just start our own?" Her husband nodded. The President's face wilted in confusion and bewilderment. Mr. and Mrs. Leland Stanford got up and walked away, traveling to Palo Alto, California where they established the University that bears their name. Stanford University, a memorial to a son that Harvard no longer cared about.” Stanford is one of the best three universities in the world in the latest Webometrics rankings coming closely after Harvard and MIT.

Today, that university which was established as a result of frustration of the founders in an attempt to be part of Harvard is at the same level with Harvard. Their alumni rule the Technology Universe. At the Inaugural Graduation Lecture of Wesley University of Science and Technology, Ondo on October 9, 2012, Prof. O.S. Adegoke presented a list of applications that

are being used by millions of people on daily basis all over the world. All these applications listed in Table 4 were developed by alumni of Stanford University.

Table 4. The Stanford Solar System: Alumni that rule the Technology Universe. Source: Adegoke (2012).

Application	Year
MICROSOFT	1975
SUN MICROSYSTEMS	1982
YAHOO	1994
EBAY	1995
NETFUX	1997
GOOGLE	1998
PAYPAL	1998
LINKEDIN	2003
FACEBOOK	2004
INSTAGRAM	2010

Every university administrator most especially the Director of the Advancement Centre and every member of the alumni who is involved in building bridges and establishing relationships with potential donors and the university should see every obstacle as an opportunity and every wall as a door. The situation with universities all over the world can be likened to a competitive situation whereby several people are climbing a multipeak mountain from different angles with the sole aim of reaching the top as presented in the plate below. Many will never get to the top because they have chosen a path of development whose peak is far from the real top. All I am saying is that **Egypt** and **South Africa** are on their way to the top in the right direction. Some universities in Nigeria are not only far below them, many are approaching the top from a direction whose peak is far from the real top.

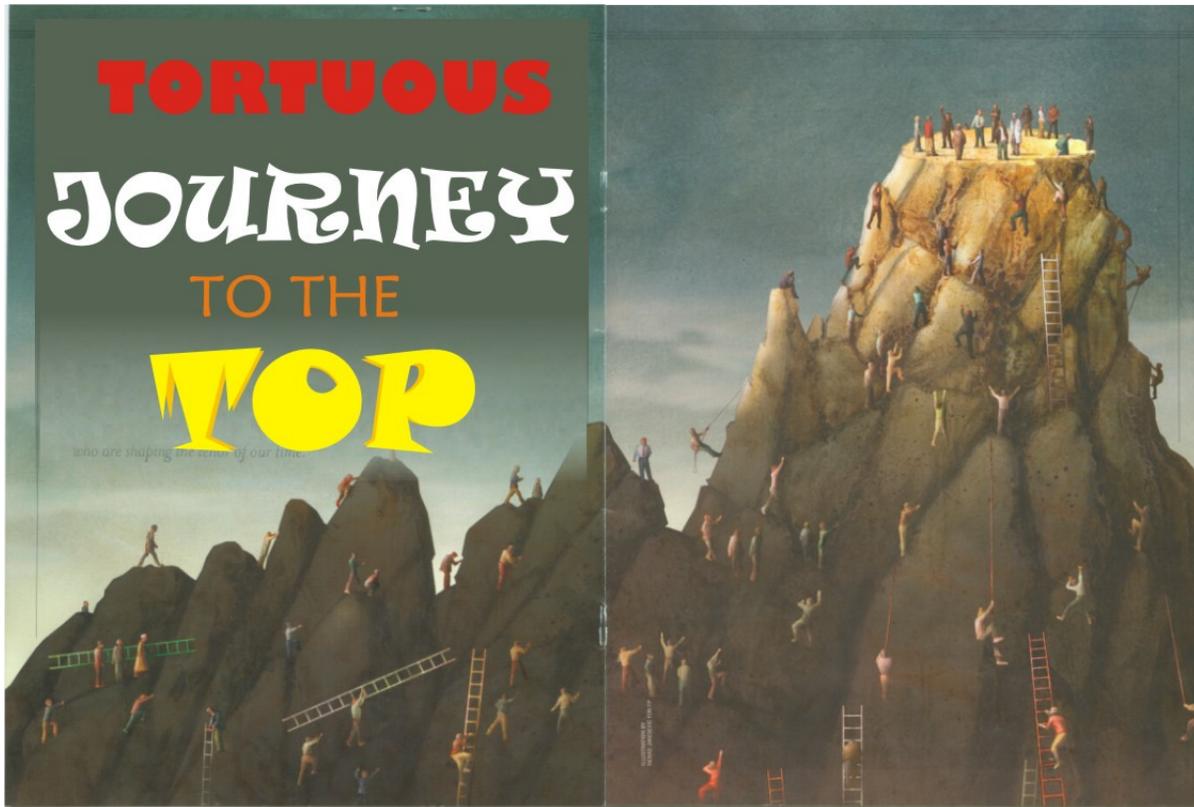


PLATE 2. ILLUSTRATION OF THE STRUGGLE TO REACH THE REAL TOP OF A MULTYPEAK MOUNTAIN.

UNIVERSITY’S INITIATIVES

According to Ogunraku (2012), “...the capacity of a university to secure the support of its alumni is dependent upon the relationship built with the student when on the campus. The student of today is the alumnus/alumnae of tomorrow. It is therefore essential to positively engage the students while on campus. A way of doing this is to ensure that students from entry to graduation are made to gain a feeling of commitment to their institution. The way students are taught, their results processed, their accommodation provided, they are attended to when desirous of such attention, the ambience of the environment of study, all go to prepare them for a committed post graduation life as alumni. In this regard, all those who are employed to teach the students, or facilitate their well-being socially and academically should avoid any situation that will create indelible unsalutary experiences in the minds of the students as they engage them while on the campus. It is even important to state that engaging students positively on campus prepares them adequately for leadership upon graduation. ... where there has been a good relationship with students while on the campus, it will be easy, all other things being equal, to mobilise the alumni into giving to the university.”

In the same vein, Mimiko (2012) opined that “... universities must seek to make themselves an interesting place of abode for their students; create and maintain an updated alumni database; provide a link between the alumni associations and the university, the latter not just

remembering the former only when they need something from them, but keeping them abreast of development of the university.”

As a follow-up to building a relationship with students while on campus, a university should effectively monitor the progress of their students after graduation. I was a post-doctoral student in the Institute of Hydraulic and Environmental Engineering (IHE) in the Netherlands in the mid 80's. The Institute is now called UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education. Up till today, I continue to receive information from this institute monthly. The institute organizes and sponsors alumni to refresher courses in their regional areas every year where the challenges they are facing in their career are discussed. I receive Newsletters every quarter from where I read about the activities in the Institute as well as breakthrough research exploits of the academic staff. This is how to treat a lifelong member of a community for overall mutual benefits.

CONCLUSION

In this lecture, I have tried to highlight the role of Alumni Associations in this relatively new Century. I have stressed that the most challenging role of alumni is to work hand in hand with the university management to generate extra funds for the university, not as individuals as it used to be in the 19th Century, but as a group working through the advancement centre to produce synergistic results. The establishment of endowments which is the major source of funding in many universities in the developed countries should be intensified to complement funding by the proprietors that can never be adequate in both private and government universities. Mentoring of fresh graduates, monitoring them as they grow in their career up to retirement and encouraging them to pay back into the system that nourished them in their formative years were also stressed. In addition, the social aspect of maintaining contacts through home-coming events as well as constant interaction taking due advantage of the facilities available at this emerging digital age were also stressed. I also advised University administrators, to in conjunction with their alumni associations be more aggressive in seeking funds from channels other than their proprietors and stressed that they should never allow their inner ego to misjudge any person they interact with in the course of their interactions with potential donors. On the part of the university, the advancement office should remain in touch with each alumnus/alumna with a view to monitoring their progress and providing support and organizing regular career-benefiting refresher courses sponsored by the university. The issue of data base for alumni should also not be ignored. The alumni should ensure that the university makes frantic efforts to establish alumni data base right from graduation and monitor each alumnus/alumna *ad infinitum*.

Please as you strive to embark on the road towards the first generation universities which have been dominating the scene in respect of Webometrics rankings as well as the tortuous road to Cape Town and Cairo, always remember that there is a fundamental difference between the system we operate in Nigeria and the one in South Africa and Egypt. I will stress this through a story which is a modified version of an Internet joke about Hell.

A Man from a very poor African country dies and goes to Hell, there he finds that there is a different Hell for each continent. Within each continent, there is a different Hell for each country, but one is free to go to the Hell of any country of his choice. He swears never to go to his country's Hell because he feels his suffering will continue. He decides to go round and

choose the least painful Hell to spend his eternity. He goes to the Egyptian Hell and asks at the gate. "What do they do here?" He is told "first they put you in an Electric Chair for an hour, then lay you on a Bed of Nails for another hour, then the Egyptian Devil comes in and whips you for the rest of the day. The Man does not like the sound of that at all so he moves on. He checks out the South African Hell and discovers that it is similar to the Egyptian Hell. Then he reluctantly comes to the Nigerian Hell and finds that there is a long queue of people waiting to get in... Amazed, he asks. "What do they do here?" He is told "First they put you in an Electric Chair for an hour, and then they lay you on a bed of nails for another hour then Nigerian Devil comes in and Whips you for the rest of the Day." But that is exactly the same as all the other hells, why are there so many people waiting to get in?" asks the man... A concerned fellow calls him aside and said:

"Because there is never any STABLE ELECTRICITY in Nigerian hell so the Electric Chair doesn't work. The nails were paid for but were never SUPPLIED by the Contractor, so the bed is comfortable to sleep on... And the Nigerian Devil used to be a CIVIL SERVANT, so he comes in, signs his time sheet and leaves for Personal Business.

When the Secretary of the Convention Planning Committee saddled me with the joyful task of sharing ideas on the 21st Century expectations and realities of Alumni Associations in respect of the advancement of their alma mater, through a phone call and a personal visit a few days after, I was scared. Scared not because I did not know what to put together to satisfy the audience, but because of the time I would have to invest in putting all my thoughts together. For somebody who has been on compulsory and complete bed rest since July after a seven-year period, uninterrupted by annual leaves, as pioneer Vice-Chancellor of a private university, it was a re-awakening call to duty. I thank all those who terminated this boring compulsory rest period for me with this assignment. Now that I have bounced back, I await further invitations to **academic discourse** again from deserving sources all over the country.

Thank you all.

For Further Reading

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