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East London Campus

Sociology Department

Surname and Initials	**Jiboku, J.O.**
Student Number	**201210493**
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Name of Supervisors	**Professor Wilson Akpan**
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY AND ETHICS

I, **Joseph Olutoyin Jiboku**, hereby declare that this thesis is my original effort and that no part of it has been submitted to any other university for any form of award. All secondary sources of information have been fully and correctly acknowledged. The study has been conducted in full compliance with the University of Fort Hare guidelines on social research ethics. Ethics Clearance Certificate No: AKP011SJIB01.

_____ _____

Candidate's Signature Date

STATEMENT BY THE SUPERVISOR

I confirm that the thesis of this candidate, **Joseph Olutoyin Jiboku, Student Number: 201210493,** has been submitted with my approval.

_____ _____

Professor Wilson Akpan **Date**

Deputy Dean, Research and Internationalisation
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
University of Fort Hare
East London, South Africa

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work first and foremost to the **Almighty God** who made all things beautiful at His own time.

Secondly the work is dedicated to **all** who have contended, who are contending, and who will contend with unfulfilled dreams and noble ambitions for no fault of theirs but the social situations in which they found themselves over which they have no control.

ABSTRACT

Against the backdrop of arguments regarding the role of multinational corporations (MNCs) as custodians of modern skills and technology and as agents of socio-economic transformation in developing countries, especially through training and human resource development, this study examined specific claims in this regard in the Nigerian context. Specifically, the study examined how skills development strategies in selected MNCs in Nigeria reflected, or failed to reflect, the "prescriptions" and "idealisations" about national human capital formation as gleaned from the dominant discourses in the country's official manpower agencies, organised labour and organised private sector. Were there, for instance, specific MNC skills development strategies that potentially could undermine the notion of MNCs as "agents of socio-economic development"? Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from three MNC subsidiaries in Nigeria (Lafarge Cement Wapco, Unilever and MTN Communication), and from relevant national manpower agencies, organised private sector organisations, and two labour federations. One key finding was that, viewed against the backdrop of specific national "prescriptions" and "idealisations" about human capital formation in Nigeria, the terrain of skills development in the multinational corporate sector was one of connects, disconnects and paradoxes. While the MNCs maintained a vast and robust canvas of skills development strategies and professed some of the same "ideals" as national skills agencies and even organised labour about, their skills development strategies were overwhelmingly company- and product-centred, and thus lacked wider (societal) applicability. The findings also pointed to practices that appeared to actively "prevent" Nigerian employees from accessing certain levels of know-how. The study concluded that, at least from a skills development point of view, the idea of MNCs as agents of socio-economic development must always be qualified, as it was based on a failure of analysts to carefully distinguish between "everyday" or even "high level" skills (which were readily accessible to, and acquirable by, locals) and "strategic" skills (which locals were prevented from accessing) and how MNCs thereby helped to perpetuate the skills divide between host country and home country. The study thus raises important questions for both skills development scholarship and policy and further sharpens the focus on how best to appraise (and monitor), from the point

of view of skills development, the socio-economic role of MNCs in a developing country such as Nigeria.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AATD	African Association for Training and Development
ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
ARMTI	Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute
ASCON	Administrative Staff College of Nigeria
ASTD	American Society for Training and Development
CAMTIC	Cámara de Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación (Chamber of Information and Communication Technologies)
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CMD	Centre for Management Development
CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
DBIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
DFID	Department for International Development
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
ERNCAWA	Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FIFT	Financial Institution Training Centre for Banking and financial Institutions in Nigeria
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
FML&P	Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIMPA	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration
GMRDC	Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre
GNP	Gross National Product

HRD	Human Resource Development
HRDD	Human Resources Department Division
HRDUD	Human Resources Department and Utilisation Department
ICSOPRU	International Comparative Study on the Organisation and Productivity of Research Units
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFTDO	International Federation of Training and Development Organisations
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
IT	Information Technology
IMCON	Institute of Management Consultants of Nigeria
IPM	Institute of Personnel Management
ITD	Institute of Training and Development
ITF	The Industrial Training Fund
ITT	International Telephone and Telegraph
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JAMB	Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LMIS	labour market information system
MDA	ministries, departments and agencies
MDD	Manpower Development Department
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MNC	Multinational Corporation

MNE	Multinational Enterprises
MPUD	Manpower Planning and Utilisation Division
NACCIMA	National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture
NAMCON	Nigerian Association of Management Consultants
NATAD	Nigerian Association for Training and Development
NBTE	National Board for Technical Education
NCCE	National Commission for Colleges of Education
NCEMA	National Centre for Economic Management and Administration
NCMD	Nigerian Council for Management Development
NDE	National Directorate of Employment
NDP	National Development Plan
NECA	Nigeria Employers Consultative Association
NGOs	Non-Governmental Institutions
NIM	Nigerian Institute of Management
NIMARK	Nigerian Institute of Marketing
NIPSS	National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies
NISER	Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research
NITAD	Nigerian Institute of Training and Development
NITEL	Nigerian Telecommunications Company
NLC	Nigerian Labour Congress
NMB	National Manpower Board
NUC	National Universities Commission

NUCFLANMPE	National Union of Chemical, Footwear, Leather and Non-Metallic Products Employees
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OJT	On-the-job training
OPS	Organised Private Sector
OT	Orientation Training
PEIT	Productivity and Efficiency Improvement Training
PGD-TD	Postgraduate Diploma in Training and Development
PRS	Planning Research and Statistics
PSIRU	Public Service International Research Unit
QA	Quality Assurance
R&D	Research and Development
DBE	Department of Basic Education
SIWES	Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Corporation
SSQ	Six Sigma Quality
Tetfund	Tertiary Education Trust Fund
TRIM	Trade-Related Investment Measures
TUC	Trade Union Congress
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UBE	Universal Basic Education

UK	United Kingdom
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Agreement
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WAISER	West African Institute of Social and Economic Research
WAMDEVIN	West African Management Development Institutes Networks
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

PART I

UNDERSTANDING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT – BACKGROUND, DEBATES AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Skills development has become prominent on the development agenda of nations. Especially for countries of the developing world, the skills development discourse has been fuelled not only by the dire need to promote socio-economic development and transformation, but also for these countries to meet the changing demands of the 21st century (Khilji et al., 2012; Ogunade, 2011; Ejere, 2011; ILO, 2008b). There is a growing recognition of the impact of skills on economic growth (See Brewer, 2013; Khilji et al., 2012; Toner, 2011; OECD, 2011; Onsomu, 2010). Skills not only transform lives and drive economies, but also affect the well-being of nations in ways that go far beyond what can be measured by labour market earnings and economic growth. This was recognised early in this century by Kapstein (2002); Blomstrom and Koko (2001) and recently stressed by Ejere (2011). Skills also relate to civic and social behaviour as they affect democratic engagement and business relationships. Skills contribute to economic growth both directly, through increased productivity, and indirectly, by creating the capacity for workers and firms to adopt new technologies and new ways of working. In other words, skills spur innovation (OECD, 2010, 2011; Martinez-Fernandez and Sharpe, 2010). Empirical evidence is consistent across a wide range of countries confirming that skills have a profound relationship with economic and social outcomes in different contexts and institutions (OECD, 2012:10-11). Conversely, Quintini (2011) has argued that skills shortages and mismatches between the supply of and demand for skills, lead to lower potential for economic growth and waste of resources.

Despite the centrality of skills, for instance in discussions of labour market change and labour economics (Jha, and Golder, 2008; Lafer, 2004:75), and also in the discourse on human capital formation and development (ILO, 2008a, Esposto (2008:100-101), a robust definition of skill has remained elusive. Even so, there is at present no consensus on how to go about skills development. What appears not to be in contention is that skills have a positive impact on national economic growth and development, hence the need at different levels for appropriate policies aimed at promoting skills development (see; Brewer, 2013; Khilji et al., 2012; and ILO, 2008). Put differently, skills have become a key subject in the

development trajectories of 21st century economies (Brewer, 2013; Khilji et al., 2012; ILO, 2008; Ansu and Tan, 2008). However, OECD (2012) warns that this 'currency' can depreciate as the requirements of labour markets evolve and individuals lose the skills they do not use. This suggests that for skills to retain their value, they must be continuously developed. The ability to access the quality and quantity of the skills available in the population, determine and anticipate the skills required in the labour market, and develop and use those skills effectively in better jobs that lead to better lives is, therefore crucial (OECD, 2012:3; Ogunade, 2011). For developing countries, which lack financial resources and technologies, skills development remains a challenge that needs to be addressed if these countries are to compete effectively in the global economy. This study therefore contributes to this debate by investigating the dynamics behind the disparities in skills that are accessible to, and acquirable by, the different demographics within a given organisation in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector. Principally, the thesis looks at how such disparities intersect with "prescriptions" and "idealisations" about skills development and human capital formation as articulated by specific skills development "discourse constituencies" in the country.

The quest for high-level skills is arguably one of the major reasons governments of developing countries compete to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through Multinational Corporations (MNCs). In Nigeria, South Africa, and most other African countries, this competition is partly reflected in the array of liberal policies and incentives offered to attract MNCs. The belief is that "multinational corporations bring scarce technological skills and financial resources, are quick to take advantage of new economic opportunities, contribute to wealth creation, operate based on international standards and market competition, and, perhaps most importantly, offer 'better' employment conditions and product qualities than national firms" (Navaretti and Venables, 2004:1). However, the impact of MNCs on human capital formation through skills development in their host countries has spawned wide-ranging contestations. Different studies have attempted to examine the role of MNCs as key players not only in the economy of host countries but also in the global economy. While Blomstrom and Kokko, 2001; Katseli, 2003; Navaretti and Venables, 2004 called attention to it in early part of this 21st century, it resonates as well recently in the work of Ouandlous, and Narsing (2011). Some scholars argue that human capital formation is enhanced through MNCs' involvement in technology 'transfer' or technology sharing. Technology transfer, the argument goes, is accompanied by training

and skills development imparted to affiliates and local subsidiaries for greater productivity. This is not just through the introduction of new machinery, equipment, expatriate managers and technicians but also through the training and empowerment of local employees at different levels (Ciravegna and Seldin, 2008:1; Blomstrom and Kokko, 2001:9). A relatively long-held view is that MNCs promote skills development through the establishment of training institutions for their personnel and for the benefit of allied organisations and their employees (see Maclean, 2013; ILO, 2008; Lall, 2001:287). These positive contributions have made a number of scholars to view MNCs as agents of socio-economic change in developing countries. This idea has been acknowledged since the 1980s (see Gilpin, 1987:248; Page, 1994:180; Spero and Hart, 1997; Lall, 2001:287; Habib-Mintz, 2009:40; Osuagwu and Ezie, 2013: 260).

Yet there is a flip side to the argument. Some scholars view skills development and a range of other activities of MNCs as a form of neo-colonialism. This has led to calls on governments to regulate the activities of MNC subsidiaries in their territories as a way of curbing 'negative' activities (Erunke and Kigbu, 2012; Prasad et al., 2008). Some scholars suspect that these companies are not necessarily concerned with 'real' socio-economic transformation of the host country, but are driven by the desire for profit, even if by exploiting institutional and policy weaknesses in the host country (see Bakan, 2004; Kapstein, 2002; Stiglitz, 2002; O'Connor and Lunati, 1999). MNCs are big organisations and some have investments that are worth more than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (Stiglitz, 2007:17). However, despite this high level of economic attainment and wealth, for MNCs to invest in a number of countries, they often demand "iron clad" agreements that are both "implicit and explicit" and neither "published nor publicised" (Chase, (2004:6). The secrecy surrounding some of these agreements raise doubt and suspicion about the activities of MNCs in developing countries as such agreements are one-sided. Worasinchai, and Bechina (2010:171); Sambharya and Lee (2014) observe that MNCs invest heavily in research and development (R&D) for innovation and competitive advantage, but that such investments are usually in their home countries or in the developed world far away from the host country. Productive technology, as Hammarlund (2005:240) observes, is usually coded as a form of protection and restricted use. Furthermore, as Setzer (2013) and Kapfer (2006:10) note, MNCs engage as well in 'paradiplomacy' and state capture, either through the parliament or as captains of industry working with economic units of government to ensure

things are done in host countries in manners that are favourable to them. Besides, the argument goes, MNCs not only dominate the economic landscape of the developing countries, they also adopt different protectionist strategies to shield the critical skills and strategic aspects of production processes from the host country. Some scholars emphasise, for instance, that skills development for the transformation of society must incorporate technology and be geared towards the empowerment of people, reducing inequalities, alleviating poverty and promoting economic growth.

Based on these divergent and seemingly contradictory arguments, this study examines the discourse and practice of skills development in the MNC sector. With its focus on the skills development programmes and strategies of three multinational companies in Nigeria, the study examines how the skills development strategies of these MNCs draw on, and/or feed into, the "prescriptions" and "idealisations" about skills development and human capital formation in some of the country's dominant skills development and labour organisations. The study seeks to ascertain whether there is perhaps a form of 'skills protectionism' in a manner that ensures the perpetuation of multinational corporate domination of the host country, as alluded to in the literature. The MNCs selected for this investigation are Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria PLC; Unilever Nigeria PLC and MTN Communications Nigeria Limited.

1.2 The challenge of skills development in Nigeria

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, and is endowed with an abundance of natural and human resources. Nigeria had an estimated population of 173.62 million people in 2013 (World Development Report, 2014), which ideally could trigger industrial production and also provide a large workforce for economic development, if the workforce were appropriately skilled. However, the country lags behind in economic and social progress. For instance, the 2014 United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index Report ranked Nigeria and South Africa at 152nd and 118th respectively out of 187 countries surveyed. Over 62% of Nigeria's population still live below the poverty line (less than one dollar a day) (CIA Fact book, 2014; Ajibola, 2013).

Some analysts have argued that national industrial skills development is of utmost importance to Nigeria's quest for industrial development (Ogundele and Abiola, 2012).

Inadequate skilled human resource has remained a perennial problem in many sectors, notwithstanding Nigeria's efforts at ensuring skills and human resource development for the nation. For instance, shortly after independence from Britain in 1960, Nigerian leaders formulated a comprehensive plan for overall development encapsulated in national development plans: 1962-1968, 1970-1974, 1975-1980 and 1980-1985. The first plan led specifically to establishment of the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Manpower Board (NMB) in 1962. These were to act as think tanks for government in the area of developing relevant skills for national development. Other institutions have also been established for the training of human resource for different sectors of the economy.

Demographically, the country has a huge young population, with 63 percent under the age of 24 years (NBS, 2014). This has impacted on the limited opportunities available for education, training and skills development. From about 15, 000 applications to tertiary institutions in the 1970s, 1.7 million applied for admission to tertiary institutions for acquisition of high level skills provided by tertiary institutions in 2014 (Ademola, Ogundipe and Babatunde 2014: 56). Despite over stressed facilities, table 1.1 below presents the number of applicants who applied to acquire high level skills over a five year period (2010 - 2014).

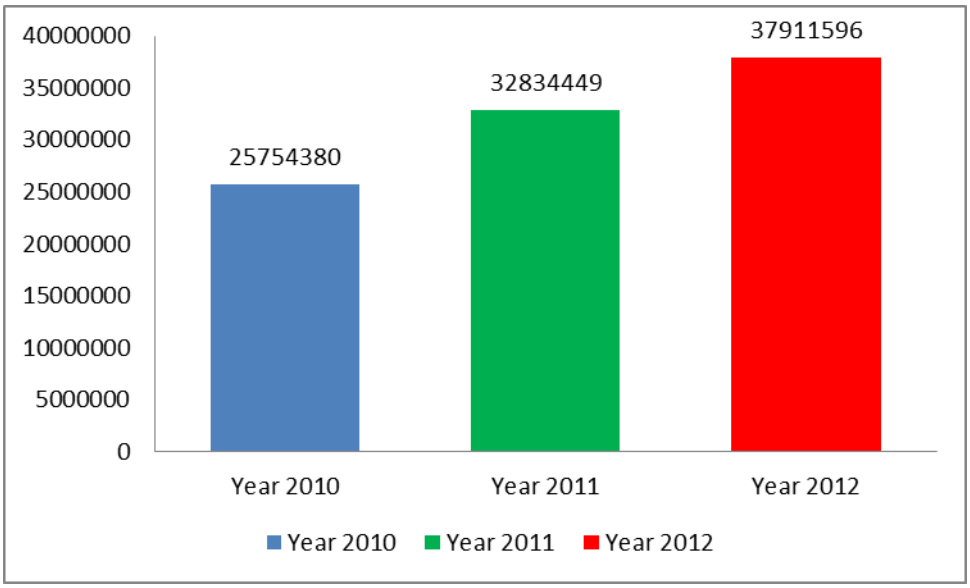
Table 1.1: UMTE Applicants and Tertiary Admission 2010 - 2014

Year	No of Applicants	No Admitted	% of applicants admitted
2010	1, 182,381	148,000	12.5
2011	1,375,652	360,000	26.2
2012	1,493,604	400, 000	26.8
2013	1,503,889	500,000	33.3
2014	1,670,833	520,000	31.1

Source: World Educational Services. An NGO, available at wenr.wes.org

While the data presented above were provided by a Non Governmental Organisation, based in the United States, The Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2015) revealed the increasing enrolment of Nigerians for education and skills acquisition despite inadequate funding between 2010 and 2012. The number of students enrolled in the formal education sector in Nigeria in 2010 stood at 25,754,380 which increased by 27.49% to 32,834,449 and by 15.46% to 37,911,596 in 2011 and 2012 respectively, showing an average growth rate of 24.48% for the period (NBS, 2015),

Figure 1.1: Total Formal School Student Enrolment in Nigeria 2010-2012



Source: Nigerian Formal Education Sector Report 2010-2012. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2015.

As the figure 1.1 illustrates, just as the number of enrolments have increased, the number of tertiary institutions have also increased. From one University College in 1948 and few technical schools for the development of medium and high level human resource, the number of tertiary institutions in the country stood at 549 comprising of federal, state and private institutions in 2014. Table 1.2 shows the number of schools and proprietors:

Table 1.2: Institutions and promoters or Owners

INSTITUTIONS	FEDERAL	STATE	PRIVATE	TOTAL
Universities	40	39	59	138
Polytechnics	21	38	25	84
Colleges of Education	22	46	14	82
Colleges of Agriculture	17	19	-	36
Monotechnics/Specialised Institutions	23	02	02	27
College of Health Technology/Allied Institutions	09	40	01	50
Technical Colleges	19	110	03	132
Total	151	294	104	549

Source: Compiled in 2014 from the official websites of NUC, NABTE and NCCE.

With the increase in population and high demand for education and skills, the number of institutions has also risen over the years. However, while Nigerians crave for education and high level skills, the increase in number of schools has not witnessed a commensurate level of funding to ensure appropriate development of medium and high level human resource. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recommends that at least 26% of annual country's budget should be devoted to education.

Regrettably, Nigeria is far from attaining this recommendation. This is revealed in the table 1.3 below, showing the percentage of national budgetary allocation to the Nigerian public educational system by the federal government for five years.

Table 1.3: Percentage of budgetary allocation to public education (2010- 2014)

YEAR	PERCENTAGE OF NATIONAL BUDGET
2010	7.32
2011	9.32
2012	9.86
2013	10.21
2014	10.63

Source: www.statisense.com[1]

With the low percentage of budgetary allocation given to the education sector and the existence of poorly funded human capacity building institutions, how can the products of poorly funded human capacity developing institutions compete favourably within the global economy in a knowledge, technology and skills driven age? Indeed, the ripple effects of dismally low budgetary allocation to the education sector in Nigeria are: Inadequate and dilapidated physical infrastructure; insufficient and outdated instructional materials; and irregular payment of teachers' salaries culminating in low morale and attendant negative values (see Adedipe, 2013). Arguably, this scenario contributes to the skills mismatch and skills shortage experienced within the Nigerian economy and perhaps heightens the desire of government to look outwards for FDI through MNCs.

Governments have become conscious of the potential contributions of FDI to economic development. Indeed, FDI is now widely recognised as an alternative source of acquiring funds due to declining concessional aid to developing countries (Muogbo and Kayar, 2012:1). Foreign direct investments through MNCs potentially boosts the growth of a country by crowding in other investments with an overall increase in total investments, as well as hopefully creating positive 'spill-over effects' from the transfer of technology, knowledge and skills to domestic firms (Dulupçu and Demirel, 2009). It could also stimulate economic growth by spurring competition, innovation within the economy. The indirect impacts of FDI through MNCs on the domestic economy, particularly in the area of developing local skills, are the main reasons for the intense political focus on MNCs in Nigeria and this may well account for the unprecedented levels of public subsidies,

[1]See, www.statisense.com/wp-content/.../Empirical-Analysis-of-2014-Budget.pdf (Accessed 21 April 2015).

diplomatic shuttles and promotional activities to attract investors, especially after the return to democracy rule in 1999. Among the incentives are tax holidays, tariff protection, accelerated depression allowances and import duty relief for imported inputs (Aniekan, 2011:182).

Notwithstanding that these laudable programmes and incentives exist, and despite the fact that a large number of graduates from the universities have remained unemployed, numerous expatriates are still found within the various MNCs. In reality, local technologies are yet to be developed and the anticipated technologies are not yet transferred despite the institutional frameworks put in place to achieve this objective (See Appendix J on expatriate quota). These challenges persist despite several years of profitable business activities of MNCs in Nigeria. These are critical issues of concern in this study.

The skills development discourses in Nigeria reflect the need for technology transfer, domestication of technology, skills portability or adaptability, employment generating skills and, above all, development of indigenous skills. To this extent, therefore, several questions can be raised about the activities of MNCs in Nigeria considering their several years of operation in the country. For instance, what are MNCs' skills development strategies and how do they impact on indigenous Nigerians? What kinds of skills are developed? What skills do MNCs impart? What factors informed their skills programmes? Are they in line with national objectives? If not, what factors account for this? Since the Nigerian government has signed Memoranda of Understanding between certain countries, as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements, what are the activities of the various government regulatory institutions towards ensuring that the country derives maximum benefits from multinational business activities in Nigeria? These questions constitute the problematic of this study.

1.3 Problem statement

As elaborated on in Chapters Two and Three, both at the theoretical and empirical levels, the role of MNCs continues to spawn critical debates and contestations among scholars. While some view MNCs as vital to national skills development, industrial competitiveness, unemployment reduction, technology transfer and enhanced quality of life, others caution against such optimism. They argue that such optimism ignores, amongst other things, the

‘pathology of profit seeking’ – the fundamental logic that drives multinational corporate operations and indeed the operations of just about any corporations (see Bakan, 2004). The symptoms of this ‘pathology’, they argue, run a wide gamut: widening inequalities between home and host countries, ruthless exploitation of host countries to enrich home countries, and migration of skilled human resources away from host countries (brain drain) (Kapstein, 2002). Among other 'nefarious activities', MNCs engage in technological coding for restricted usage and adoption, and ‘paradiplomacy’ to ensure state capture and manipulation of regulatory institutions (Setzer, 2013; Kapfer, 2006:10).

The reality, however, is that MNCs occupy a vital space in the economy of many developing countries, and Nigeria is a good example. Although MNCs employ a relatively small number of people, they dominate the petroleum industry (Nigeria’s most strategic economic sector) as well as the manufacturing and telecommunication sectors. Indeed, the dominance has been such that in recent years, in the oil and gas industry in particular, new legislation has been enacted compelling multinational operators in the sector to source their engineering and high-end human resources locally rather than continue to import them from abroad. The ‘local content’ legislation, as it is colloquially known in the country, is a crucial intervention in a long-simmering discourse about the indigenisation of skills in Nigeria. This then raises several questions: To what extent do the skills development programmes of MNCs in the country draw on, and/or feed into, such discourses? What are the realities, contradictions and paradoxes of skills development in Nigeria’s multinational corporate sector? Despite numerous incentives and years of business successes of multinational operations, are they really developing 'strategic' skills within the local population? Or, are such skills shielded and protected as part of corporate objectives in Nigeria? It is these concerns that necessitate the present inquiry into the hidden dimensions of skill development in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector.

1.4 Research questions

The following research questions guide this study:

i. What are the salient features of the human capital formation discourse in selected national skills development agencies and labour organisations in Nigeria?

ii. What are the skills development strategies of the selected multinational companies?

iii. How do the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs intersect with the dominant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria?

1.5 Research aim and objectives

The central aim of the study is to investigate the dynamics behind the disparities in skills that are accessible to, and acquirable by, the different demographics within a given organisation in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector. Principally, the thesis looks at how such disparities intersect with "prescriptions" and "idealisations" about skills development and human capital formation as articulated by specific skills development "discourse constituencies" in the country.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To examine the salient features of the human capital formation discourse in selected national skills development agencies and labour organisations in Nigeria.

2. To examine the skills development strategies adopted by the three MNCs selected for this study.

3. To assess the extent to which the skills development strategies of these MNCs are informed by extant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria.

1.6 Significance of the study

The theoretical value of any empirical study – especially a study anchored on specific theories – cannot be overemphasised. The hope is that findings from this study will add an important (local) nuance to the propositions of both the Human Capital Theory and Foreign Direct Investment Theory with a view to improving the deductive value, or indeed, debunking some of the core assumptions. At the policy level, the study will, hopefully, highlight the connects and disconnects between the national human capital development aspirations and one of the key vehicles through which those aspirations could be achieved, namely the skills development strategies and programmes of companies in the

multinational corporate sector. Even so, the fact that MTN is one of the selected companies means that the findings of the study will be relevant in both the Nigerian and the South African contexts. Finally, it must be stated that the subject of skills development holds a very special appeal for this researcher.

1.7 Overview of chapters

As stated in the concluding part of the last section of this chapter, this study emanated from the researcher's apprehension that despite several years of MNC activities in developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, these countries are continually challenged by dearth of skills. The establishment of several training institutions appears not to mitigate the skills challenge, unemployment, and poverty situation. Paradoxically, multinational corporations have continued to dominate the corporate sector in developing countries declaring huge profits and expanding their operations, while skills shortages and skills mismatches abound among locals. This leaves ample opportunities for expatriate technicians and foreigners expatriates to fill the gap. It is this disjuncture that spurs the present inquiry.

Concisely, the thesis consists of eight chapters and they are organised in two parts. Part I titled, "Understanding skills development – Background, debates and institutional contexts" consists of Chapters One to Four which set the platform for ascertaining the state of knowledge. In addition, different initiatives within the Nigerian setting aimed at developing skills through the establishment of skills development institutions were highlighted.

Part II titled, "Skills development discourses and practices: The empirical situation", consists of Chapters Five to Eight. This section is an embodiment of the research methodology as well as the justifications for leaning heavily on the qualitative research paradigm. Chapters Six and Seven present the study's empirical findings. The findings of these chapters provide the basis for drawing conclusions in Chapter Eight.

In Chapter One, the reader is introduced to the background of the study as emanating from the strong desire of the developing countries to acquire relevant skills for socio-economic development through MNCs. While MNCs continue to thrive as custodians of technology and skills, host countries remain in need of relevant skills. The chapter states the problem

of the study and highlights the research questions; the objectives and the significance of the study.

Chapters Two and Three examine the state of knowledge at both the theoretical and empirical levels respectively. The review of theories in Chapter Two led to the choice of Human capital theory; Labour market segmentation; Labour process and Protectionist narrative as the theoretical lenses for this inquiry. While Chapter Three provides a detailed empirical review of the state of knowledge on multinational corporations, it reveals the diverse involvement of MNCs in different sectors of social and economic life.

Chapter Four x-ray some of the institutions that were established for skills development and capacity building in Nigeria for both the public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy, some of which form part of establishments from where data were collected. Chapter Five, which opens part II of the thesis, centres on the methodology and methods. It provides a detailed account of the rationale for the mixed method adopted while leaning on qualitative use of Key Informant Interviews and In-depth Interviews. Documentary review and a survey were also utilised to generate empirical data for the study. These chapters helped to set the stage for empirical analysis in subsequent chapters.

Chapter Six is the first of two data analysis and presentation chapters and focuses on the concerns of Research Question 1. This is where the discourses from the four main 'discourse constituencies' identified in the study are analysed. The 'constituencies' are: national skills development, utilisation and policy agencies; multinational corporate sector; organised private sector bodies; and organised labour federations - the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC).

Chapter Seven analyses the skills development programmes and strategies of the three selected multinational corporations. The different skills development programmes are condensed into On-the-job training and Off-the-job training. This classification is informed by the fact that training and skills development take place either in and within the corporations or outside the corporations. On the other hand, the strategies are condensed into three types, namely: On-the-job training; Formal instruction (School System); Company Training School; Mentoring; Coaching; Online platform; Workshops, Conferences and Seminars; and Staff exchanges and Job rotation .

A section in Chapter Seven presents findings pertaining how the skills development practices of the MNCs mirror the skills development discourse held in the MNC sector. A matrix of skills discourses and practices that emanate from the findings guide the discussion with a view to demonstrating if there is any disjuncture between national skills development aspirations and multinational skills practices, based on the research findings. Key issues in the theoretical and empirical literature are also reflected upon in this chapter. The chapter also provides a basis for inferences indicating the extent to which multinationals develop skills and lurking challenges and contradictions, if any, in those strategies. The discussion of findings happens in Chapter Eight. Here, the major scholarly contributions of the thesis and conclusions of the study are articulated in this concluding chapter.

1.8 Some key points for clarity

It is imperative at this early stage to clarify two issues that would make the thesis more reader-friendly. The issues pertain to manuscripts and publications that emanated from the thesis, and the writing style.

Manuscripts and publications

The scholarly articles and publications that were developed during the course of the study form part of this thesis, as they emerged during the process of this research. A number of the articles were presented at local and international conferences; some are currently being prepared for publication, while others have already been submitted for publication. At this stage[2], eight manuscripts have been developed from the thesis. It is important to emphasise that the manuscripts emerged from (relevant sections of) the thesis and not the other way around, hence, there has not been any need to reference in the thesis material that may coincide with what may be found in any of the manuscripts. The articles are the following:

Jiboku, J.O. and Akpan, W. 2015. Empowering employees beyond the context of company's industrial operations: Dynamics of skills development in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector.

[2] At the stage when the thesis was being prepared for examination – January, 2016

Jiboku, J.O., 2015. Skills development for Africa's renaissance in the 21st century.

Jiboku, J.O., 2015. Multinational corporate sector and skills protectionism: The case of Lafarge Cement Nigeria Plc.

Jiboku, J.O., 2014. Skills development in the Nigeria's multinational corporate sector: Knowledge protectionism in disguise?

Jiboku, J.O., and Akpan, W. 2014. Sustaining global skills inequality? Skills transfer and skills protectionism in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector.

Jiboku, J.O. and Akpan, W. 2014. Skills mismatch and skills shortage: Rethinking skills protectionism in Nigeria's multinational corporate sector.

Jiboku, J.O., and Akpan, W. 2013. The discourse and practice of skills development in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector: The Case of Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria.

Jiboku, J.O., 2013. Skills disparity? Multinational corporations, the hope, prospects and challenges in Nigeria.

Writing style

This thesis has adopted the British English style in line with UFH Sociology Department's *Handout Number 1: General Information and Departmental Rules*. However, quotes that were written in other styles, have been left as originally quoted with double quotations marks (" "), while single quotation marks (' ') apply to words or phrases that are used not necessarily in their conventional meaning. References from all sources (books, journals and internet sources) have been combined and arranged alphabetically starting with the surname of authors.

CHAPTER 2

MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, HUMAN CAPITAL FORMATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: A THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As indicated in Chapter One, this thesis investigates the dynamics behind the disparities in skills that are accessible to, and acquirable by, the different demographics within a given organisation in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector. Principally, the thesis looks at how such disparities intersect with "prescriptions" and "idealisations" about skills development and human capital formation as articulated by specific skills development "discourse constituencies" in the country.

This chapter traces the loci of scholarly thinking on the subject of both multinational corporations and skills development, and thus familiarises the reader with the theoretical and substantive backdrop against which subsequent sections of the thesis are to be appraised. In doing this, a few points need to be clarified at the outset.

First, because of the relatively large volume of material covered, the literature review is undertaken in two chapters – that is, in the present chapter and in Chapter Three. In the present chapter, attention is paid to what may be termed "theoretical literature", while in the next chapter, focus is on material of a more "empirical" nature. This separation does not in any way suggest that "empirical" literature is separate from "theoretical" literature, as they are not. Indeed, they are co-extensions of each other. The delineation made here is mainly for presentational convenience, as reviewing the entire material in a single chapter is bound to create avoidable unwieldiness.

Second, besides organisational convenience, executing the review in two chapters enables the researcher to pay adequate attention to material of a relatively theoretical nature, but also to material of a more "practical" nature, as required by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Fort Hare (see Akpan and Olivier, 2012). Nonetheless, necessary cross-references are made between the two chapters, partly as a way of

highlighting the fact that the two chapters complement each other and are not seeking to accomplish two unrelated purposes.

Three main tasks are accomplished in the present chapter. First, focus is given to the dominant theories of, and narratives about, multinational corporations, as a way of building an understanding of what these corporations are and how they function. It needs emphasising here that this field is traditionally dominated by neo-liberal economic theories – some of which, according to critics, exude a distasteful aura. While neo-liberal theories offer an understanding of how multinationals conduct their operations (including skills development), a critical engagement with these theories reveals clear weaknesses and a level of conservatism that promotes invidious disparities and undermines equity in those practices. Put differently, the challenge has been how to ensure that skills development – a critical mechanism for enhancing employee and organisational productivity - is pursued in a way that boosts an organisation's skills base and at the same time promotes and guarantees equity.

The second key task of the chapter is to review theories and narratives that specifically relate to skills development and human capital formation.

The third and final task of the chapter is to underline those theories and postulates that more directly guide the present inquiry, that is, the perspectives that enable the researcher to pursue the key argument of the thesis articulated earlier. This theoretical/conceptual framework pays attention to the "real" nature of the labour market and why conventional skills development practices have failed to, for instance, address the problem of equitable access to skills. The chapter shows the exact ways in which the identified theories are applicable to the study.

2.2 Understanding multinational corporations – Theories and narratives

Multinational corporations (MNCs) have acquired a number of nomenclatures through the years, such as "transnational enterprise" (corporation) (Poon and Sajarattanochote, 2010: 291; UNCTAD, 2002b: 291), "international corporations" or firms, "global corporations" (Wang, and Chen, 2015:78; Ohmae, 1990), and "denationalised corporations" "supranational" and "cosmocorporations" (Kuşluvan, 1998:163). Despite the varying

descriptions, there is near consensus among scholars that MNCs have existed for several years, dating back to the 18th century, and that they are enterprises that own or possess income-generating assets in more than one country. They include firms with both equity and contractual involvement in more than one country, as businesses have become more diffused in a globalising world in which the trend and emphasis is a knowledge and technology-driven society. A general conceptualisation of a multinational is an enterprise which has some equity investment or contractual involvement such as management contracts, franchising, and leasing agreements in more than one country (see Kuşluvan, 1998:168; Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1990:604).

Scholarly discourse on MNCs revolves around themes such as: internationalisation, forms and strategies of internationalisation, effects of multinational activities on host and home countries, and the political aspects of MNCs' activities (Mpofu and Chigwende, (2013); Navaretti and Venables, 2004). The motive of MNCs attracted scientific and public attention from the moment of their appearance, and especially from the beginning of their intensive growth during the 1960s. In the last few decades, MNCs have been an important subject of political, economic and ideological debates leading to the emergence of MNC apologists who see them as a benign engine of growth, social and economic transformation (see for instance, Wang, and Chen, 2015; Dulupçu and Demirel, 2009; Gilpin, 1987; Page, 1994; Spero and Hart, 1997).

Some scholars argue, for instance, that human capital formation is enhanced through MNCs' involvement in technology 'transfer' (or technology sharing). Technology transfer, the argument goes, is accompanied by training and skills development imparted to affiliates and local subsidiaries for greater productivity. This is not just through the introduction of new machinery, equipment, expatriate managers and technicians but also through the training and empowerment of local employees at different levels. This vital discourse has prevailed over a long time, as pointed out in (Blomstrom and Kokko, 2001:9; also see Page, 1994; Spero and Hart, 1997). It equally features in the contemporary scholarly debates (see Wang, and Chen, 2015). A relatively long-held view is that MNCs promote skills development through the establishment of training institutions for their personnel and for the benefit of allied organisations and their employees (see Agbodike, 1998:168). MNCs are therefore seen, from these perspectives, as agents of change in host countries (see for instance, Blomstrom and Kokko, 2001, Prakash and Griffin, 2012, Vance et al., 2014).

On the other hand, there are critics who view multinational corporations and the whole range of their activities as being driven by self-interest and 'irreversible' commitment to exploitation and maximisation of profit through the use of political, economic and technological advantages, particularly in developing countries (Stiglitz 2002, Bakan, 2004). These scholars view MNCs as agents of capitalists who are in business to perpetuate the capitalist tenet of profit maximisation in their subsidiaries and are therefore less concerned with skills development in a given host country. Thus, some argue that there is a need for government to act as a mediating force to curb the 'excesses' of MNCs (see Bohm et al., 2008:169-182; Prasad et al., 2008; Erunke and Kigbu, 2012).

The divergent views of scholars are also reflected in different theories which, over the years, have been developed to explain international investments of multinational enterprises. Yet, very little effort has been made to discuss the strengths and/or weaknesses of such theories in explaining the form, extent and pattern of MNC's international investments.

Among the neoliberal economic theories reviewed are international capital flow theory, location theory, supplementary international trade theory, market imperfection theory, product cycle theory, transaction cost theory, and eclectic theory. Specific narratives drawn from the concepts of skills protectionism and 'profit pathology' are also provided.

2.2.1 International capital flow theory

The International Capital Flow theory regards MNCs' activities as a form of international capital flow, usually from the advanced countries to the developing countries (Lipsey et al., 1999:311). Wang, et al (2015:1) joined in the debate and argued that there are different types of capitals flows. They argued that in reality, the bulk of foreign direct investment (FDI) is between the industrialised countries in the global North through multinational corporations.

According to Wang, et al (2015:1), the theory posits that financial capital flows from one country to another, depending on prevailing interest rates or rate of exchange. The argument is that since the prevailing interest rate influences the direction of capital flow, multinational enterprises tend to invest actively in economically prosperous countries where

there will be higher returns on investment. This was the prevailing discourse and argument for understanding MNCs' raison d'être until the 1960s, before the emergence of alternative arguments that revealed that financial capital flows from developing to the developed countries.

Beckley's (2011), contributions to this debate was focused on the seminal work of Stephen Hymer in 1960. Beckley argued that while John H. Dunning's work on *International Capital Movement* in 1958 had laid the foundation for the Capital Flow Theory, it was Hymer's work in the 1960s that first concretised the theory and this period should be seen as when the theory emerged. Lipsey et al. (1999) stressed that international capital flows as a form of direct investment accounted for a quarter of total international capital flow up till 1980s. This form of investment was spearheaded by the United States and was emulated by Europe which eventually caught up with the US in 1980s in investment drive. Japan also followed suit in pursuance of international capital flows and was able to match Europe and America in international capital flows to the developing countries by the 1990s through massive investments (see Lipsey, et al. 1999).

The International Capital Flow Theory explains the reasons for numerous investments of the West through MNCs to the developing countries. It sheds light on the fact that capital flows to the developing countries are informed by the returns which such investments could crowd in for the investors. However, Hoekman et al (2004) stated that in reality, MNCs are not only concerned with the transfer of capital but also technology, management expertise and organisational skills for maximisation of profits, and that these are usually transferred within the firm while the parent company retains control over their use -- a form of techno-protectionism. As Desai (2009) points out, exporting technology within the MNC's subsidiaries while retaining control perhaps explains the issue of 'protectionism' by the company. Such policy decisions and economic strategy subtly implemented, ensures competitive advantage of the MNC.

The International Capital Flow perspective does not explore several other reasons especially the new approach whereby multinational enterprises as currently experienced with reference to Asia, move to relatively poor countries which have labour cost advantages. In addition, with the increasing globalisation, the current trend of portfolio investment by MNCs across the globe is not captured by the theory and this makes it

inadequate for explaining such mode of multinational investment across the global landscape. To this extent, while the theory sheds light on MNCs' investment motives in developing countries, Prasad et al 2006 caution that achieving the benefits of international capital flow depends greatly on the quality of the financial system of recipient country. These scholars argue that, while capital flow could be advantageous, excessive reliance on foreign capital could result in currency overvaluation. Overvaluation has negative consequences for the economy if the quality of investment flow into the country makes the country prone to massive importation of production materials; it will affect the quality of human capital and development in host country. In essence, while alluding to the positive effect of capital flow to a country, Prasad et al (2006) idea is that over reliance on capital flow for investments could negatively impact on a country (see also Alfaro et al, 2003).

2.2.2 Location theory

Location Theory explains the emergence of MNCs' investment as being influenced by the preference of location; in essence, the decision to site an enterprise in a particular country considered favourable (See Kim and Aguilera, 2015; Parry et al. 1980). In line with this theory, a labour-intensive production of components will be located to low-wage areas, usually developing countries. This explains the extensive concentration of MNCs' industrial production in developing countries where abundance of low wage labour exists and regulatory institutions are weak. On the other hand, production of high-tech and high value-added production which will require a skilled or well-educated workforce are sited in developing countries that have not just large pool of labour but relatively skilled labour (Creal, 2013). Location Theory has two strands, that is, MNCs operate from two location advantages – supply and demand standpoints. From the 'supply dimension', MNCs are motivated to establish ventures where the production advantage in terms of factor cost and distribution is lowest. The second strand is 'demand oriented location theory' which stipulates that the location of a firm is influenced by the location of its market and competitors (Dunning, 2002) in order for the firm to take advantage of market proximity. Merging the two strands culminates in four main factors that can influence MNCs' location decisions:

a. Cheap labour force advantage: This is another motivation for multinational investment and perhaps explains the location or relocation of some firms to the

"South", particularly to countries in Asia, in order to take advantage of the skilled labour force that abounds.

b. Protected and untapped markets: Countries that are densely populated and at a low level of industrial development also offer a strong attraction to MNC investment. The population becomes a ready market for the MNCs, and if the companies can influence state power, then for a long time it could enjoy a monopoly advantage.

c. Transportation costs: Where cost of transportation for raw materials is high, companies site their firms near the raw materials, but when the cost to be incurred in transporting the products to the market is considered high, market location is given prime importance (see Denisia, 2010; Kuşluvan, 1998).

d. The location advantages are believed to influence MNCs' decision to establish businesses in a particular country, thus the model provides valuable insights as to geographical distributions and spread of MNCs in different parts of the world (Kim and Aguilera, 2015).

Location Theory highlights the underlying philosophy guiding MNCs' location. It also sheds light on why, for instance, Africa is considered favourable for some industrial establishments. It is purely economic decision for profit maximisation. However, while profit calculations may predominate as reasons for the location of a corporation in a given area, other factors are equally vital. These include the political system in place, social, as well as cultural contexts. Location theory could account for the large concentration of MNCs in some areas of a country and attendant crowding of human resource. Nonetheless, Buckley and Cason (2009) argue that the location strategy of MNC is complicated in practice because a number of factors outside the organisation or industry exert some influences that affect location decision. These scholars stress that modern businesses perform many activities other than routine production. Such non-production activities include marketing and Research and Development (R&D). To this extent, Buckley and Cason emphasise that the location strategy of a firm that integrates production, marketing and R&D requires a highly complex decision to be made beyond just economic considerations. In making a decision of the nature, a firm's activities are normally interdependent; information flows as well as transport costs must be considered. Information costs that increase with distance, encourage the centralisation of activities where exchanges of knowledge through teamwork are of the essence and not the economic consideration alone. The spillover effect

contributes to human resource development in such an area. The South Western region of Nigeria is a good example that shows the impact of location on human capital formation as the region is the base of human capital and skills in Nigeria as a result of numerous MNCs operating in the region.

2.2.3 Supplementary international trade theory

Supplementary International Trade theory is a strand of International Trade theory developed by Kojima (1978). As the name implies, the theory has its root in International Trade theory, one of the classical theories developed by David Ricardo and Adam Smith in the 18th century. The international trade theory emphasises 'comparative advantage', the notion that countries should specialise in the production and export of those goods which they can produce at relatively lower cost, and import goods which they produce at a relatively high cost, that is, where it does not have efficiency (Oduro and Offei, 2014; Schumacher, 2013). This position is due to the fact that countries have specific endowments of factors of production and relative demands. While some countries are rich in minerals and other natural resources, some others have demographic advantage, that is, labour power, but lack intermediate inputs. Some others have technological know-how, managerial or entrepreneurial skills and capital.

It is in the light of the unequal endowments, natural resources and human capital of different countries that some scholars (Ozawa, 2006; Morgan and Katsikeas, 1997b; Kojima and Ozawa, 1984) attempted to integrate trade theory with MNCs. Ozawa, (2006) argues that multinational investment represents attempt at building or consolidating on a country's natural endowments in order to ensure efficiency and enhance productive competitiveness in the host country. The view of Ozawa (2006) is that MNCs' investments would culminate in improvement of production through the incorporation of external capital, managerial skills and technology advantages such that the MNCs contribute to the productivity and, by extension, enhance the comparative advantage of host country (Kuşluvan, 1998:164). The Supplementary International Trade theory emphasises that by consolidating the natural and productive resource endowment, the host economy is secured, as products that would otherwise be imported will be produced locally.

Importantly, production of such goods could be a means of job creation and empowerment for the people in the host country. In addition, production in the local environment portend avenue of technological transfer, sharing and adaptation in the host country. It has the potentials to facilitate development of the host country if pursued in good faith. In a labour-intensive environment, idle hands are employed. It should be noted, however, that it is only the trained but 'idle hands' are employed. MNCs could only consolidate on existing skills and not developing skills from the very foundation. They do not have the patience to do that because of the need for quick returns on investment and for the fact that development of skills requires patience and time.

The Supplementary International Trade theory as revealed interrogates MNCs' operations and provides useful insight for explaining why MNCs invest in some countries and through the employment of trained able hands, help to empower individuals, reduce unemployment and associated vices. The theory however, appears silent on training and skills development as a major reason for incentives offered by the host countries but explains that MNCs would rather take advantage of abundant human resource for profit purpose. However, the window of employment opportunity created by investment has the potential of enhancing human capital formation and skills development a form of spill-offer effect. In addition, Dunning (1988) observes that the assertion of this theory is only applicable in the short run as minimal investments bring in returns. However, in the long run, as (Denisia, 2010:106) observed, it is the reduced business transaction cost that will help sustain MNCs' operations. While Supplementary International Trade Theory lays emphasis on the internal market considerations, Fleetwood (2008) emphasises that other social factors external to MNCs are of vital consideration. The form of government, whether it is democratic or authoritarian, as well as extant national economic policy will have a bearing on MNCs' decisions.

2.2.4 Market imperfection theory

Developed by Hymer (1960), this theory has over the years acquired a number of tags: it is known also as 'monopolistic or oligopolistic power', 'structural market imperfection', 'market power' and 'industrial organisation' theory (Kuşluvan, 1998:169). The theory shed some light in explaining the widespread of American MNCs in the 1960s, Hymer argues that the financial muscle, experience and technological advantages of American MNCs as

elsewhere gave them an unequal advantage in their host countries. It is difficult for local firms to compete and in most cases are forced out of production; the repatriation of profits by the MNCs results in uneven development or consolidates the dichotomy between the home and host country (Dunning, 2006).

As a result, MNCs are considered as agents of an international capitalist system, which causes economic inequality in the world and contributes to poverty for developing countries. In addition, the market imperfection theory argues that MNCs, through the establishment of cartels in host countries, consolidate and deepen their oligopolistic dominance (Buckley, 2006). This allows MNCs as a cartel to obtain monopolistic advantages in their host countries based on their economies of scale, superior technology and knowledge in marketing, management and finance. The theory therefore advocates that governments should exercise some level of control to regulate the market in order to prevent the firms from obtaining unlimited monopolistic advantages and dominating the market to the detriment of the host country (Andersen 2014).

The conclusion of the theory therefore represent a distinctive approach that has become the guide for current theorising on the need for governments especially in developing countries to ensure that liberalisation is not left unregulated (Kuşluvan, 1998:169). According to Dulupçu and Demirel (2009:11), Hymer's thesis provided answers to three questions which are fundamental to MNCs' investment:

(a) Why do firms seek to invest abroad?

(b) How are they able to survive in foreign markets in which they bear initial costs such as advertisement and communication vis-à-vis local firms that are already known?

(c) Why do they want to retain control and ownership?

The Market Imperfection Theory posits that because of their widespread network and experience, foreign firms possess superiority such as the "ability to find cheap capital, marketing experience, privileged (liberal policies) entry permits for some markets, patented or non-tradable technology, managerial efficiencies and economies of scale" (Dulupçu and Demirel, 2009:11). With these advantages, a foreign firm is well positioned to thrive in any environment of operation. Dulupçu and Demirel (2009) further stress that while the option of licensing or contractual agreements can be explored to achieve the same end, the desire

for protectionism -- technology and similar inputs of production -- would perhaps limit the pursuit of licensing and contractual agreement to enable the organisation to maximise returns and secure its patent rights.

Although the Market Imperfection Theory provides answers to the three questions above, these answers are basically geared towards the interests of the MNCs and not towards the interests of employees and host environment. In addition, the theory explains the logic of multinational protectionism principle in business operations which tends to limit MNCs from engaging in licensing and contractual relations with other companies. This speaks of inherent protectionism of productive ideas from being diffused. However, investments by foreign concerns will no doubt create employment for the host country and individuals employed could tap from their skills advantage. Like many theories before and after it, the phenomenon of skills development that could have a long lasting impact on the host economy and its broader developmental implications appears remote - at least from a developing country perspective. Bandelj (2009) argues that host states contribute to the institutionalisation of the global economy, which MNCs represent, by granting formal and substantive legitimacy to FDI. Formal legitimacy reflects in a state's efforts to institutionalise formally, free market policies as the policy strategy of government for desirable development. Such a policy option opens window of opportunity for MNCs to thrive in the country. The state also demonstrates its substantive and legitimate commitment to a liberal policy for FDI through MNCs with incentives to attract the investments. This is reflected at informal and practical formal economic interactions. In essence, a multiplicity of factors comes into play in FDI drive and all these influence MNCs' operations.

2.2.5 Product cycle theory

The classical theorists Adam Smith and David Ricardo in the 18th century emphasised in their idea of 'comparative advantage' that countries should produce and specialise in products for which they have better productive potentials than other countries, and import goods which they do not produce at less cost. According to these economists, this would enhance product specialisation, production efficiency and improvement in quality of goods produced. Product Cycle Theory has its focus on the industrially advanced countries. According to Dulupçu and Demirel (2009:9), the theory became important in the

development discourse with Vernon's celebrated scholarly work "*International Investment and International Trade in the Product Cycle*" published in 1966.

Vernon observed that an innovation occurs in unsatisfied markets where per capita income and purchasing power are high, and this is reflected in the purchase of high priced product that contains the innovation. As a result, Research and Development (R&D) activities are high and the investment incurred is more easily recouped in such an economic environment. In addition, the advanced nature of the socio-economic environment facilitates communication between producers and consumers of the products. With this feedback loop from the consumer, product standardisation is ensured in the home country of multinational production. And as production goes on in such an environment incorporating R&D innovations, the demand for the product increases and the product becomes standardised (Dulupçu and Demirel, 2009: 10; Denisia, 2010).

Vernon compressed the conventional five stages of product cycle to three distinguished stages in the life of a product. They are: the new product, the maturing product and the standardised product (see Kuşluvan, 1998:170). Kuşluvan advanced the theory that the first stage takes place in large markets; the second stage, maturing product, still occurs in the home country; and with the emergence of the third stage, standardised product, the work of R&D is accomplished. This is accompanied by competition and the need for economy of scale to maximise returns and, in order to achieve this, the location of production is likely to move somewhere outside the home country. It is a critical decision for the firm to take whether to continue production in home country usually the 'North' and continue to export to the emerging and developing countries. However, such a decision will be predicated on a host of considerations. These vital considerations enumerated are: cost of production, protected patent rights, and threats of new competition in the country of import, the level of tariff protection, and the political situation.

At this last stage of product cycle (the standardised product), the less developed countries, the 'South' offers attractions and is considered to provide competitive advantages for production, especially in terms of labour cost. The Product Cycle theory helps to provide understanding concerning the dynamics that influences MNCs' investment decision in the countries of the South for profit maximisation. This theory thus provides some insights into MNC's operations and decisions. Extensively, it reveals the capitalist orientation of the

MNCs' and intervening factors that influence their decisions and guided by profit. In addition, the idea of retaining R&D in the home country also sheds some light on protectionism such that the productive ingenuity of the companies through research and innovations will not be diffused beyond the particular MNC. This scenario perhaps explains the inability of developing countries generally to match the developed home countries of MNCs in the production of goods and services. Despite the number of trained human resource available in these countries especially Nigeria, the liberal investment climate and incentives offered with the hope of tapping into the productive technology, managerial knowhow and skills of MNCs, attaining the much desired socioeconomic transformation has remained a tall dream yet to be realised. This challenge points to one of the strategies of protectionism usually deployed by multinational corporations in their host environments. Rugman et al (1990) argued that product cycle did not take into account various comparative advantages of different countries at the initial stage of production because not all countries are equally endowed. In addition, products are not developed for specific market only but for general market to maximise returns on investment.

As compressed by Vernon, the three product stages identified, are indicators of the reality of productive dichotomy between the home and host country of MNCs. It is structurally designed and sustained.

2.2.6 Transaction cost theory

Although the origin of transaction cost theory of the firm dates back to the 1930s, and especially the work of Ronald Coase in 1937 (see Tadelis and Williamson, 2010), other scholars have expatiated on it. Transaction cost implies the cost of providing for some goods or services through the market mechanism rather than making arrangements for provision within the firm (Tadelis and Williamson, 2010). According to Tadelis and Williamson (2010), Coase contend that in order to carry out a successful market transaction, it is important to have certain information. These include: to know who one will be dealing with; how to conduct negotiations and bargain; how to draw a valid contract; and ensure the monitoring of the contract for compliance among others (see also Williamson, 2002). These are costs that are germane to the success of a firm and are external costs congealed into three transaction costs. They are: search and information costs; bargaining and decision costs; and the costs of policing and enforcement (Tadelis and Williamson,

2010). These scholars also contend that knowledge of these transaction costs is vital to understanding the working of an economic system which informs investment by MNCs. With this background, this study examines the debate on Transaction cost theory based on the profit maximisation principle and it is premised on the study of Buckley and Casson in 1976. According to the theory, the question on MNCs' operations no longer seems to be if to expand abroad but rather the strategy and approach to use as globalisation and liberalisation has allowed for free choices. Companies will determine the most profitable approach. A company could begin with exports or engage in contractual relationship with other companies before venturing into foreign direct investment (Dabica, et al 2014). All these are informed by the desire of the firm to maximise their profits at least cost in an imperfect competitive business environment taken into cognisance the three costs earlier identified. Such decisions are based on possession of some advantages such as transportation, foreign market information or feedback from the market, among others. These factors will influence an MNC's decision to internalise markets across national boundary or to internationalise production (Kuşluvan, 1998:174). Internalisation, according to Dulupçu and Demirel (2009:10), is a firm's business strategy of controlling markets across national boundaries, while internationalisation involves producing across national boundaries through licensing, leasing or other forms of contractual agreements. Internalisation strategy according to Dabica (2014:131) facilitates three important economic principles of MNCs. They are:

- An MNC internalises markets when the benefits of doing so out performs their costs,
- They locate each activity according to the least-cost principle, and
- The dynamics of both the firm's profitability and growth are based upon a continuous process of innovation stemming from R&D. This culminates in the idea of internalising operations and knowledge.

Ultimately, the various principles help in ensuring that the MNCs continue to operate profitably in host country because the cost benefit analyses favour their corporate objective. Although the Transaction Cost Theory assists in explaining how MNCs operate in different environments, adopting different entry strategies based on the perceived advantages. The emphasis of the theory is on strategy of penetrating markets, to facilitate the achievement of corporate objective. According to Bandelj (2009), these identified costs associated with

transaction are legitimate and institutionalised costs determined by the state. In essence, the transaction cost theory of the firm need to take into cognisance, the invisible hands of the state in a firm's decision as revealed in the various costs that reflect the influence of the state in vital decisions of the firm. Thus, the social structure within which a firm operates cannot the insulated in the decisions of the firm.

2.2.7 Eclectic theory

The eclectic paradigm, a theory of MNCs propounded by John Dunning (1980 and 1988) emanated from a combination of many theories. According to Dulupçu and Demirel (2009:10), Dunning created the theory out of existing studies, thus making it perhaps the most "extensive" and "encompassing" theory among other theories on MNCs. In the opinion of Dunning, the decision of MNCs to invest outside the home country of origin is based on three essential socio-economic conditions which he termed "OLI": Ownership, Location and Internalisation.

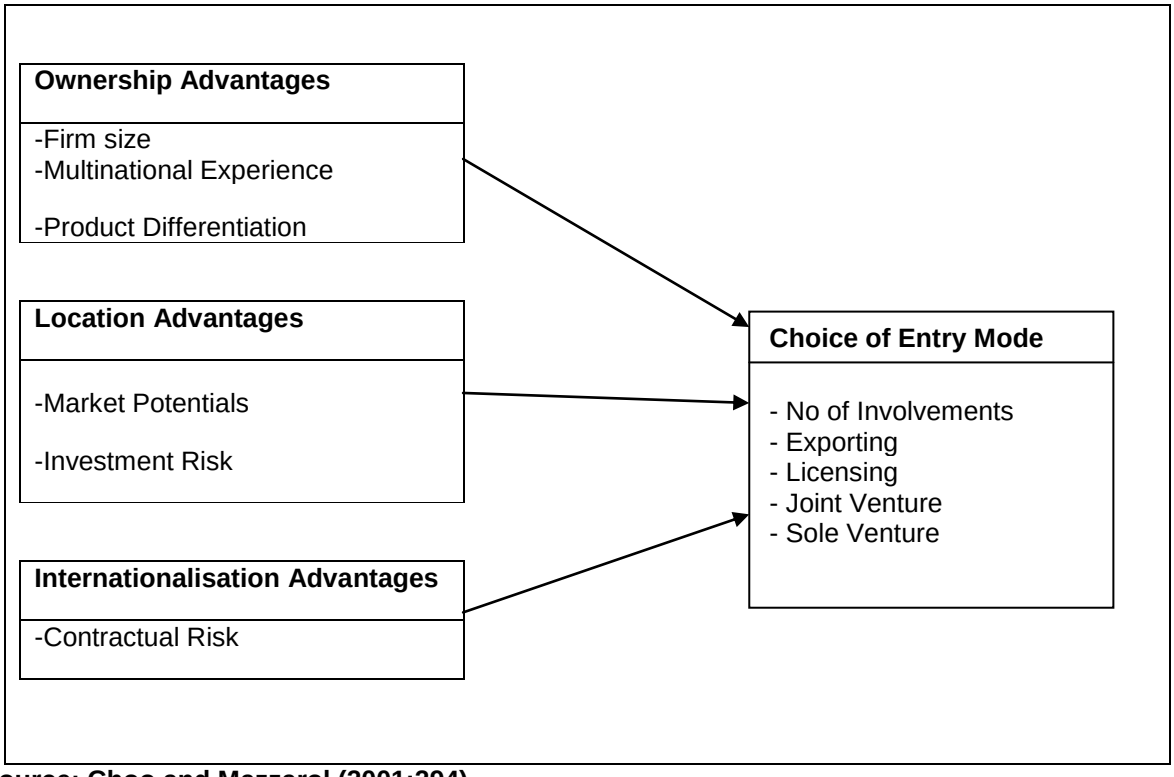
The first "O" (Ownership) implies firm-specific advantages that could be tangible and intangible assets, or perhaps skills that would enable the company to compete with the domestic firms of the host country which already have knowledge and experience of the host country. The Ownership advantage includes patents, entrepreneurial skills, trade secrets and trademarks jealously guarded from the competitors. The extent of competitive advantages possessed by the investing firms, the more the likelihood of engaging in their foreign production.

The "L" (Location) advantage implies the conviction by MNC that establishing a business venture in a particular location outside the home country should offer more returns on investment than producing in the home country and exporting, taking into cognisance, transportation, labour, consumers of products, advertising, and the political situation in the host country. Other location attractions include existence of raw materials, low wages and investment incentives among others. These factors are considered in relation to other countries for the best location that offers 'adequate' returns on investment. The more an MNC relies on immobile or natural resources such as in mining and other extractive industry for production; or in the alternative, if an MNC needs to use some inputs jointly and

then add with their own competitive advantages or business 'secrets', such MNC will favour establishing its presence in a foreign location.

The “I” (Internalisation) advantage portrays that establishing a business venture in a foreign country will be more beneficial and profitable than pursuing the alternatives such as leasing, licensing and other contractual arrangements of production because all countries are not equally endowed. Where a company perceives greater returns on investment by owning production rather than the alternative of a partnership arrangements or a joint venture, MNCs may explore the option of organising the creation and exploitation of their ‘core’ business competencies. In essence, if there is a greater net benefit of internalising product markets, there is more likelihood that an MNC will prefer to engage in foreign production itself. In the alternative, if leasing and other contractual arrangements would result in greater net benefits, such will be pursued. Choo and Mazzarol (2001) presented these points on Eclectic theory in the figure 2.1 below:

Figure 2.1: An Eclectic Model of Entry Strategy



Source: Choo and Mazzarol (2001:294)

Even though the Eclectic theory is accepted as having a wider application and as a more all-embracing theory, it clearly depicts a capitalist profit focus. All the decisions at the three stages are informed solely by profit considerations. However, it should be noted that

realising corporate objective under any of the three strategies is predicated on availability of suitably skilled and capable human resource and a host of contextual environmental factors. Itaki (1991) has observed that the OLI distinction of MNC's activities has implications for the welfare of workers in different environments as the same company might operate under different economic policies. According to this scholar, what is considered a low wage in a host country might be a really comfortable living standard in another country depending on the level of economic development. Eden (2003), on his part, contend that OLI should be seen as an 'envelope' encompassing a number of theories that address vital issues related to MNCs' activities. As Fleetwood (2008) contended, the envelope is embedded with social, economic, cultural, political, ideological and social-psychological phenomena within which a firm operates and exert profound influence on activities of the MNCs. OLI should therefore be explained in relation to the contextual environment of MNC's operations.

2.2.8 The concept of 'profit pathology'

Multinational corporations undoubtedly have contributed to improvement in quality of life globally through the production of goods and services. However, the modus operandi of MNCs has been described by Bakan (2004) as 'pathological' taking cognisance of their ruthless pursuit of business interest, that is, profit. The profit motive of MNCs, according to Bakan (2004), knows no bounds, and anything and everything could be done to ensure profit maximisation, whether moral or immoral, legal or illegal, humane or cruel as long as it leads to profit. Such pursuit manifests in recklessness and disregard for safety of people and the environment. A case in point is environmental degradation as a result of the activities of numerous oil MNCs in the Niger Delta area in Nigeria. MNCs are sometimes alleged to be insincere and cunning in realising profit motive; they undermine standards and societal norms; they are unconcerned and could as well be described as callous in their pursuit of profits.

It is in reaction to the MNCs' profit pathology behaviours that Corporate Accountability International (CIA) an NGO has been in the fore front of leading public campaigns and sensitisation of the people against what it called 'irresponsible' and dangerous activities of MNCs as some of their actions are known to have had devastating effects on people and environments. A good example was the aggressive and unethical marketing of infant baby

formula by the world beverage giant Nestle which resulted in the death of many children in the developing poor countries. Other unsavoury manipulations of public policies abound in different parts of the world resulting in dire consequences. Another popular example is the case of ITT and the alleged destabilisation of Chile which eventually culminated in the overthrow of the legitimate government of Salvador Allende, all for protection of economic interest.

Some MNCs are so wealthy and powerful because of their huge investments that they interfere in the internal affairs of their host countries; they suppress legislations where such impinge on their economic interests; they could close plants or relocate to compel host countries to grant them concessions. And because MNCs control the world's big organisations, they therefore determine what is produced, how it is produced, and for whom, where and when, among other decisions. They influence governments and thus ensure remote or subtle manipulation of rules to satisfy their selfish profit purposes (Bakan, 2004; also see Stiglitz, 2002). The media as source of information responsible for disseminating vital information to the people is controlled by MNCs, who thereby censor or condition the society with information – a strategy of public manipulation and control. The Pathological Profit narrative therefore explains the manipulations of MNCs in order to facilitate profits. Bakan (2004) for instance, does not see MNCs as agents of technology transfer or entrepreneurial skills development as all these endeavours are guided directly by their profit motive. From this theoretical expose, an inference could be drawn that MNCs will engage in any form of protectionism, be it skills or technology, in order to ensure profit maximisation. However, it is instructive that we do not lose sight of the corporate social responsibilities of MNCs, however small they may be.

While the idea of profit pathology speaks to the ruthless pursuit of profit by MNCs, it grossly underplays the beneficial side of multinational enterprise and sees this merely as an 'unintended consequence'. The narrative is thus problematic in this respect. While Bakan (2004) examined corporations within the economic space, Fligstein and Dioun (2015) argued that the economy and society can in reality not be separated because social arrangements constrain, enable, complement, and constitute economic phenomena. In any modern system, the economy and markets depend on governments, laws, and culture to function and operate successfully (see Fligstein, 2001). In essence, operations of business

corporations could not be detached from the larger society, as society is an embodiment of institutions and structures.

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The theories on multinational corporations reviewed in this section revealed a number of nuances on the specific activities in the multinational corporate sector. In the main, the review shows that while the dominant theories provide a useful frame for appraising the activities of MNCs, they do not contain sufficient analytical ingredients for understanding the paradoxes and 'hidden dimensions' of skills development in the multinational corporate sector, especially in the Nigerian context. In a way, they do not adequately explain why there appears to be a persisting disconnect between the skills development and human capital formation aspirations of host countries and the skills and technological 'prowess' of MNCs, despite MNCs' decades-long presence in the same developing countries. It is for this reasons that the subsequent section reviews Human capital theory, Labour market segmentation theory, Dual labour markets theory and Labour process theory as specific theories of skills development. With these theories, the paradoxes and 'hidden dimensions' of skills development will be explored for a clear illumination of dynamics within the multinational corporate sector that accounts for disparity in access to skills by different demographics within work organisations.

2.3 Skills development: Theories and discourses

This section of the thesis examines, as pointed out earlier, the specific theories that are germane to understanding the issues of skills development in the multinational corporate sector. The review looks at how each theory handles, if at all it does, the dynamics within the multinational corporate sector that account for disparities in access to skills by different demographics within the sector. The theories reviewed in this section are: Human Capital theory, Labour Market Segmentation, Dual Labour Markets and Labour process as specific theories of skills development. The concept and narrative of "Protectionism" is also reviewed as part of the broad canvas of narratives and postulates pertaining to dynamics of skills development in the multinational corporate sector.

2.3.1 Human capital theory

The fundamental role of human capital for socio-economic transformation is well articulated in the literature (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961; Friedman, 1962; Sweetland, 1996; Xiao, 1999). Conceptually, the foundation of human capital is based on knowledge and skills acquired by an individual through education, vocational training or other learning activities (OECD, 2009a: 2). Human capital therefore implies investments that are made in people or that people make in themselves to improve their creative potentials or skills, empower themselves in the labour market and by extension increase productivity (Rosen, 1999). In effect, training and capacity building invested in people (employees) for better productivity are all embodiments of human capital. Frank and Bernanke (2007:355) explain that human capital is "an amalgam of factors such as education, experience, training, intelligence, energy, work habits, trustworthiness, and initiative that affect the value of a worker's marginal product". According to Sheffrin (2003), human capital is "the stock of skills and knowledge embodied in the ability of labour to produce economic value". To Rodriguez and Loomis (2007), human capital is "the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being". To this extent, therefore, investment in human capital plays an important role in a country's economic development. This assertion is corroborated by Barro's (1991) empirical evidence from 98 countries. In a study covering the period 1960-1985, Barro found a positive relationship between initial human capital and the growth rate of real per capita GDP. In essence, this means that when all other factors are controlled, countries with higher human capital may have higher economic growth. A higher level of human capital has a correlation with a nation's productivity which is considered a very important source of social and economic transformation.

In a comparative study of Western and developing countries Todaro (1986) concluded that the economic growth and transformation of Western countries were clear indicators of their investment in the improvement in skills or human capital as the leading source of their economic growth and development. As Schultz (1992:6) asserts, competent and skilled human resource is not only important in the quest for development but empirical evidence reveals that it was the "secret" for the quick recovery of Western Europe and Japan after the devastating effects of the Second World War which almost led to the total ruin of this axis of the world. This perhaps explains the high level of Western countries' investment in

education for human development. The fast-growing Asian economies such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore are remarkable models of the vital role of human resource to economic growth and transformation. Despite the fact that these countries were not rich in natural resources and minerals, they have managed to grow faster than many other countries, because they have had high quality and highly skilled human capital (Becker, 1993). The success of the Asian Tigers through investment in human capital perhaps added momentum to the quest for skills development in Nigeria. The government has established skills development institutions to facilitate development of human capital in the country. In addition, it might also have spurred the country into the extension of liberal incentives to attract foreign direct investments through the MNCs' as a strategy of tapping into their skills advantage. However, the skills challenge still persist in Nigeria due to factors which could be attributable to inadequate funding and capacity development of skills development institutions, among other endogenous factors.

Bryman (2001) observes that since the 1950s, social scientists have applied the concept of human capital in different ways. Schultz (1961, 1971) assisted in streamlining the concept of human capital into two – formal education and learning, and informal learning and training – all geared towards enhancing human capital and ensuring greater productivity. Although the concept of human capital has been used in different perspectives and is subject to diverse interpretations and applications, the focus in this study is on Gary S. Becker's (1964) perspective. Becker (1992) analysed the concept of human capital within the context of the labour market, and viewed employees to be of prime importance in wealth creation, economic prosperity and the survival of society. Emphasising the core importance of human capital, Becker (1992) concludes that to discuss social and economic growth and development outside the concept of human capital would be as paradoxical as to discuss the former Soviet Union without the doctrine of Karl Marx. This emphasises the centrality of human capital to economic transformation of any country. Human capital is similar to what Marxists refer to as the infrastructure of society upon which the other superstructures rest (Marx, 1890). It serves as the foundation for societal transformation. In Nigeria, the quest for social and economic transformation has not been accelerated due to inadequate investment in the development of human resource. The effect has been the dearth of essential skills necessary for development.

More importantly, the vital role of human capital in development discourse is corroborated by Schultz (1961:1), who observes that even though it is obvious that people acquire useful skills and knowledge, many are not conscious that these skills and knowledge are a form of capital. He emphasises that this capital is a substantial part of a product of deliberate investment that has helped the growth of Western societies at a much faster rate than conventional (non-human) capital, and that its growth may well be the most distinguishing feature of the Western economic system. For developing countries, therefore, Schultz (1961:1) advocates investment in human capital as a way of enhancing the quality of human efforts for improvement in productivity. According to Schultz (1961:2), for a long time economists have known that people are an important part of the wealth of nations which is measured by what labour contributes to output: the productive capacity of human beings is now vastly larger than all other forms of wealth taken together. Labourers, he asserts, have been transformed into owners of capital not from a diffusion of ownership of corporation stocks, but from the acquisition of knowledge and skills that have economic value. This knowledge and skills, in great part, is the product of human investment and accounts predominantly for the productive superiority of technically advanced countries.

Both Becker (1964) and Schultz (1961) agree that investment in education, training and skills development generate externalities for firms and conclude that it remains the most distinguishing feature of the modern economic system. Without training and improvement in skills, there would only be manual work and many, except for those who have inherited property, would be poor. As Schultz (1960:16) asserts “the man without skills and knowledge is leaning terrifically against nothing”. Becker (1962:11) notes also that many workers increase their productivity by learning new skills and perfecting old ones while on the job. For instance, the apprentice usually learns a completely new skill while the intern develops skills acquired in school, but both are more productive afterwards. On-the-job training, therefore, is a process that raises future productivity (Becker, 1964:21). Skills acquisition is another form of job security, and Becker (1964) observes that employees with specific training have less incentive to quit, and firms have less incentive to retrench them, than employees without specific skills or general training, which implies that quit and layoff rates are directly related to the level of training and skills acquired.

In essence, acquisition of skills have multiplier effects on the trained employees beyond efficiency on the job. On the flip side, lack of skills portend grave consequences for the

society. This arguably, accounts for poverty, unemployment and associated criminal activities in the Nigerian society such as the Niger Delta. The Boko Haram Terrorism ravaging the North East of the country that is accredited to be the poorest region in Nigeria, could also be the aftermath of lack of skills, unemployment and poverty. Development of skills especially of the youth might be a sustainable approach to a lasting peace necessary for development in Nigeria. Human capital is seen by Ghalandarzehi and Safdarie (2012:164) as a prerequisite for development because the extent of growth and rate of development depends on the quality and quantity of an efficient workforce. Human capital provides potential and a springboard for change and improvement, optimises the use of physical and tangible capital, increases the efficiency of production, and accelerates the rate of economic growth (Ghalandarzehi and Safdarie, 2012:164).

It could thus be deduced that the most important factor for growth and development of any country is an educated, well-trained and skilled labour force which is used according to the needs of each country and the global community through migration. The modern knowledge-driven society has shown that wealth of each nation goes beyond underground mineral sources, mining or financial investment. Wealth now emanates through each nation's share of knowledge that has become the 'global currency'. Thus, developing countries such as Nigeria, have to key into this development paradigm in order to achieve the needed transformation through identification of talents of human capital for optimum use and development. A nation's educational system has a significant role to play towards the realisation of this objective. In addition, it is important to produce new knowledge and technology or transfer it from developed countries and to learn how to use the new technology in different areas. These account for liberal incentives by developing country like Nigeria to attract FDI through the MNCs to facilitate development of skills that will aid technology transfer, domiciliation and domestication. Developed and skilled human resource can reduce technological gap and reduce comparative costs. In other words, knowledge and skills are key factors in economic growth. Therefore, developing countries need to devote a considerable share of resources annually on educating their citizens. As Jean-Jacques Servan puts it (in Ghalandarzehi and Safdarie, 2012:165) "not the armed forces nor raw materials, nor capital is the sign of power any longer. Today, power lies in invention and transforming those inventions to goods and work equipments".

The experiences of most of the newly industrialised countries reveal that the reason for their economic growth is an increase in the education and skills of the labour force. Therefore, all developing countries need to accelerate their economic growth by investing in the education of their labour force. If production becomes complex, only the trained workforce who can coordinate the technology will be employed. Just as mobile phones and computers have provided many occupational opportunities, only people with basic educational skills, knowledge and training could benefit, therefore education and training should be regarded as a national capital. In most Western countries, investment in labour force training is one of the major factors accounting for consistent development. Developed countries consider their power due to management, creativity, innovation and a skilled labour force and they try, in order to gain consistent development, to establish wide policies and programs to attract skilled human resource wherever they are available, leading to migration and a brain drain in developing countries. The 1971 Nobel Prize winner, Simon Kuznet, stated that 90% of the development of developed countries is because of improved human capacities. World Bank studies (WDR, 2005) have shown also that in the field of growth, in 192 countries surveyed, 64% of their growth comes from labour force, 16% from physical capital and 20% from natural sources. Thus, it can be stated that the development of today's developed countries is the result of great consideration for human capital. In contrast, less developed countries with lagging economies have less prosperity.

Human capital is regarded as an essential part of the infrastructure of all economies and a source of permanent development of all countries (Ghalandarzehi and Safdarie, 2012:171). As can be inferred from the foregoing analysis, for instance, MNCs are very much aware of the importance of the human capital, they offer relatively good salaries and allowances to their employees in order to retain them and invest enormously in their training, skills development and capacity building, which enable these companies to maintain a competitive advantage. It should be noted that emphasis on MNC's training of employees is to maximise the employees' potential within the firm and industry.

In sum, Human capital theory looks at issues of training and skills development within the context of the socio-economic transformation of a country. However, the theory does not interrogate the *nature* of training and skills imparted to employees and *systemic* imbalances - even inequities - in the skills impartation process, especially within the multinational corporate context. Indeed, while the theory notes that skills acquisition is good for the

individual and society, the inherent inequalities in the society that affect access to acquisition of skills by the vast majority, especially in developing countries, is not appropriately recognised and accounted for by the theory.

2.3.2 Labour market segmentation theory

The issue of segmentation of labour market has been attracting interest from the 19th century (Jakstiene, 2010). While the human capital theory emphasised the supply side of labour, an issue subject to contestation by social scientists because of the complexities of modern society, the labour market segmentation theory emerged as an attempt to develop alternative ideas to the human capital theory. As a new theoretical approach, labour market segmentation theory rejected, in the main, a competitive demand analysis dimension stressed by human capital and as an alternative, explained that the nature of labour market is fragmented with a number factors have bearings on the labour market.

Labour market segmentation theory is connected with segmentation of markets into separate parts identified by peculiar characteristics. The basic idea in the segmentation theory is that all the labour markets, because of economic and political forces are split into separate segments which function and adjust separately to specific peculiarities. The advantage of the segmentation theory lies in the fact that events in the labour market are analysed not only from economic points of view, but also from social aspects. Among the segments that influence labour markets are – political economic and social forces. Labour market segmentation theory defines employees as labour groups or segments. It argues that people are not equal in the labour market but differentiated by profession or qualification (Jakstiene, 2010). These vital external factors identified by the labour market theory influence employment, remuneration, promotion, skills development and other aspects of employment relationships. Thus, the Labour Market Segmentation theory helps to explain the persistent inequalities within the labour market and not the monolithic approach of investment in skills emphasised by the human capita theory. The theory underlies the fact that, just as we have in the larger society, multiplicity of roles and interests, and as there are different people of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds that exert some forms of influences on them, the same exist in the labour market. Such segments could be viewed as manifesting in high-wage segment employees, male dominated occupations. On the flip side is another segment characterised by low-wage, female

dominated occupation within the same labour environment. All these social factors bring to bear one form of influence or another on the labour market and such factors need to be factored into analyses of labour market issues. The analyses of labour market situation should put into cognisance, forms of social differentiations that are objective aspects of modern society. As such, applying this theory could help in explaining the dynamics and social situations in the labour market that are germane to holistic understanding of the system.

As Bauder (2001) explained, Labour market segmentation theory represents a challenge to neo-classical economic model promoted by human capital theory on the grounds that workers and jobs are not matched smoothly by a universal market mechanism. Instead, it suggests that jobs and labour are divided into different labour market segments with different rules governing the behaviour of labour market actors differently from one segment of the labour market to the other (see also Clairmont et al., 1983). Furthermore, segmentation theorists have argued that labour market segments are able to function relatively independently because both jobs and workers are identified by demand-side and supply-side processes (Bauder, 2001). In this context, the supply-side refers to attributes of labour such as education, job skills, occupational preferences which are issues that the human capital theory contends with. Labour demand relates to the characteristics of jobs, such as skill and educational demands, employment stability, wages, among others (Lee and Loveridge, 1987). Other scholars such as Gray, Kurihara, Hommerand Feldman (2007) point out that Labour market segmentation is the social division of work into: skilled, relatively secured, elite, core occupations; and unskilled, insecure, non-elite occupations with little or no market mobility. The theory has also been used in reference to gender in labour market where Gray, Kurihara, Hommerand Feldman (2007) argued that there is overwhelming evidence that female dominated occupations, even when skills, experience and working conditions are controlled, still experience some forms of inequality within the labour market.

In the contemporary world, education, qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience are probably the most essential things in the work environment. It is possible to state that these things determine how successful an employee will be integrated into the labour market (Jakstiene, 2010). The Labour market segmentation theory emphasised that the segmentation that exists in the labour market primarily reflects the nature of internal labour

markets**.** Internal labour market is the labour market that exists within a firm – it influences how wages are set and labour is allocated within the firm. Internal labour markets can best be thought of, as the type of labour market that exists within an organisation through which employers sustain their suitably qualified labour force. Such methods include promotion, payment of good allowances and bonding of employees to serve in the employing organisation for specified period after having been trained by the organisation.

In summary, Labour market segmentation is the alternative theory that attempts to draw a greater attention to “supply-side” processes in the segmentation of labour. The risk of the approach emphasised by the human capital theory with lots of emphasis on the “demand side” of the labour market process is reduced. Human capital theory in the process of its emphasis on demand side of labour, neglected the obvious interdependencies between demand and supply sides of labour. Both demand and supply coexist and interact within wider social, political and economic contexts that reproduce inequality - a reality of modern society. The theory contends that the labour market should likewise be seen as a social system and replica of society where structures, institutions and organisations make up external environment and exert both direct and indirect influences on labour markets. These environmental external causal influences are: social, economic, cultural, political, ideological and social-psychological phenomena. The theory takes into cognisance both supply and demand sides of labour market. It equally points to the unequal relations in the labour market which explains disparity in access to skills by different segments within multinational corporate sector. It equally points to why MNCs may operate in a host country for years and yet not have a transformative impact on the skills base of their host economies.

2.3.3 Theory of Dual labour markets

The demand focused and neo-classical criticisms of the Human capital theory, has over the years, elicited several reactions from many economists. In this respect, the Dual labour markets theory has been developed as a way to counter the monolithic demand focus human capital analysis of labour issues (Hacısalihoglu, 2015; Wachter, 1974). The Dual labour market theory was popularised by its claim that the Dual labour market theory is non-neoclassical in nature and has been heavily oriented towards the specific policy challenges in the labour market and associated disparities of different demographics in the labour

market. The central theme of the dual model is the existence of two sectors of the economy: a primary sector characterised by good jobs, high-wage and progressive career pattern; and secondary sector, characterised by menial jobs, low wages and no job ladders or career development (see Doringer and Piore 1971).

The model of the Dual labour market rests on three general hypotheses. First, the economy contains two parallel sectors - a primary high wage and a secondary low wage sector. The behaviour of firms and individuals in the two sectors requires different theoretical explanations due to disparity in their socio-economic contexts. The second is the important distinction for economic analysis is the dichotomy between “good and bad” jobs rather than between skilled and unskilled workers even though this is implied in the analysis. Third, by virtue of the “bad job” in the secondary sector, workers are confined to this sector and they develop a pattern of job instability, moving frequently among jobs into and out of unemployment and labour force participation. In the secondary sector, jobs are plentiful to employ a substantial number of job seekers, but they are low paying, unstable, and generally unattractive to a large number of people within the sector. Furthermore, “Good jobs” make up the primary sector of the dual economy, while bad jobs and the workers are frozen out of the primary sector. The mobility of secondary sector workers to the primary sector is hampered not so much by their lack of human capital and skills required for the sector but social restraints such as discrimination, lack of good jobs – a form of occupational segregation (see Meyer and Mukerjee, 2007).

In analysing the logic that sustains the primary market, the dualists have concentrated on exploring the "internal labour market", a construct that emphasises the use of internal mechanisms to retain employees through their motivation and thus reducing employees’ turnover. The main assumption of the dualist is that efficiency plays only a small part in the internal labour market because of the wage rates and jobs are distributed among primary workers according to such factors as customs and other primordial considerations within the primary sector rather than productivity. In essence, the primary market operates a closed and restricted system which helps in sustaining the primary market and thereby restricting diffusion by secondary labour market segment employees.

The dual approach to the secondary sector revolves around four inter-related hypotheses: First, it is useful to dichotomise the economy into a primary and a secondary sector.

Secondly, the wage and employment mechanisms in the secondary sector are distinct from those in the primary sector. Third, economic mobility between these two sectors is limited; hence, workers in the secondary sector are essentially confined there. Finally, the secondary sector is marked by pervasive underemployment because workers who could be trained for skilled jobs are confined to the unskilled lower jobs.

Bulow and Summers (1986) observed that Dual labour markets provides avenue for employers to motivate workers in order to elicit efforts from the workers. Employers may find it optimal to pay more than the going wage. This changes fundamentally the character of labour market where an employer decides to pay more against the prevailing market rate. The model of dual labour markets is applicable to a wide range of labour market phenomena. It provides a coherent analytical framework for understanding the claims of industrial policy advocates. It also provides basis for occupational segregation and discrimination that will not be eroded by market forces as jobs are classified as primary and secondary. In addition, the theory provides a basis for explaining voluntary unemployment often experienced in the primary sector (see Clark and Summers, 1979). A worker who is paid minimal wage has very little incentive to perform well, since losing his job will really not be seen as having enormous cost to the employee. This is unlike a policy in which a firm pays their workers more than the ongoing wage in an effort to elicit commitment, loyalty, reduce labour turnover or to attract highly qualified employees in many respects. Such workers will be more committed and dedicated to their jobs. The theory thus explains the potential importance of the linkages between the level of wages paid and workers' productivity.

Improving employees' welfare through approach such as "profit sharing" method as was applied in Ford motor company goes a long way in boosting the employees' morale. This policy assisted Ford motor company tremendously in reducing labour turnover, employees' idleness and docility at work (Bulow and Summers 1986). In the final analysis, Ford motor company concluded that the high wage policy had turned out to be good business strategy as the company realised that it had improved the discipline of workers, given them more commitment and loyalty in the institution, and, by extension, raised their personal efficiency. In addition, it was reported that Ford motor company's productivity increased substantially when profit sharing was introduced, while absenteeism was considerably reduced in the company.

In sum, while the dual model could not be said to have provided an overall theory of the labour market, it provides some bases for understanding occupational segregation and discrimination. The classification of occupation into primary and secondary, in which one segment of society have access to “good jobs” and other “bad jobs” speaks of inherent disparity within the labour market. This will consequently impact on the workers’ access to training and skills development.

2.3.4 Labour process theory

The Labour process theory emanated from the *Labour and Monopoly Capital* work of Harry Braverman published in 1974. The publication revitalised critical thinking and scholarship in work organisations (Spencer, 2000). Braverman attempted to develop a credible and acceptable model of the relationships between capitalist economy; work systems; as well as the strategies and practices of actors in the employment relationship with the use of Marxist lenses. His *Labour and Monopoly Capital* encapsulated in Marxist epistemology influenced a great deal of scholarly thoughts and analyses on different disciplines and intellectual discourses in labour history, labour economics, industrial relations, industrial sociology, management and organisation among others. It is a theory that attempts to blend the practical experiences of those working for capitalism with a grounded political theory of the dynamics of the social system because the social system is embedded as well in work organisations (Hirsch, 2015).

Braverman in his *Labour and Monopoly Capital*, engaged in Sociology of Work and Industry by developing rival insights into capitalist work organisation and control of production within the Marx's theoretical framework. Labour process theory analysed transformation of labour process with the aim of provoking social and political actions, and by so doing, reinvigorates the campaign against the perpetuation of capitalist property relations. The whole essence of labour process analysis of Braverman is the emancipation of the working class who bear the burden of capitalist exploitation in work organisations. Labour process theory explores Marxism beyond an academic endeavour but as a theory of revolution and worker's ‘combat tool’ for emancipation against capitalist domination and exploitation.

In essence, Labour process theory aimed at situating the issues of class and history at the centre of its analysis of work processes. It therefore located workplace transformation in a broader understanding of specificities of capitalist production and demonstrated the vital role of class conflict in shaping organisational outcomes. Labour process analysis went beyond the universal conceptualisation of work and work relations to emphasise the capitalistic specific character of work processes. The universalistic character looks simply at how to make workers productive. The emphasis is on appropriate management strategy and practice for productivity enhancement - such as job enrichment, without taking cognisance, the exploitative disposition and tendency of employers as imparting negatively on productive potentials of employees.

For Labour process theory, the production of surplus value is predicated on the progressive erosion of workers' control and dehumanisation over work process. The theory posits that workers would want to thwart efforts by employers to realise fully inherent potential in employee's labour power, unless the control of labour process passed into the hand of management to enable management have total control and direction (Braverman, 1974). In order to achieve this, management/capitalist would devise strategies to influence their workforce in production process. This informed the capitalist adoption of the principle of Taylorism, thereby separating mental work from manual work. With this separation, capitalist would tactically take over work processes and undermine workers collective (unionism) because labour inevitably has to be exploited for the realisation of capitalist desire in work process. The inhumanity of capital, according to Labour process, has its root in unbridled quest for accumulation of profit in work process by the capitalist culminating into workers' alienation as a result of separation from the means of production. An employee performs only one aspect of production routinely which has tendency to degrade and deskill the employee's labour potential. These are manifestations of class domination of capital over labour, a root of conflict in capitalist-labour relations. And to address the conflict and workers' alienation, the capitalist explores job enrichment schemes for the employee as a means of adjustment of workers to productive activity rather than to the work itself. For Labour process theory, alienation is not caused by degradation of work alone but a combination of factors with overt signs of dissatisfaction manifesting on the part of employees. The theory, therefore, concluded that the only remedy to alienation of workers is the abolition of capital - an allusion to Marxist revolutionary overthrow of capitalists, a pre-

condition for the establishment of classless society which will itself create other unanticipated challenges for society as the experience of former Soviet Union has shown.

Furthermore, in exploring the capitalist work process, the Labour process theory tried to situate revolutionary potential in the working class under capitalism. The contention is that alienation of workers impacts on the working class as a whole and could therefore serve as the basis for the unification of working class for collective revolutionary action. The theory concluded that working group as a class must be studied within work process rather than analysing fragments. Labour represents a class, a body of alienated people within capitalist production system and they have the potential for the formation of a revolutionary working class that could be galvanised for workers emancipation to put an end to capitalism. Workers' alienation, the theory posits, represents an invaluable weapon that could be explored for the emancipation of working class within capitalist dominated labour process. In essence, the duality of capitalist domination and labour alienation would help to galvanise class struggle in labour process. According to the Labour process theory, capitalism is the antithesis of humane production that needs to be changed through workers revolution. Reforms in organisations are seen as superficial palliatives and strategy for creating a new capitalist model with the fundamental objective (exploitation) unchanged. Therefore, the theory calls for a return to the basics that incorporate both mental and manual work as a strategy of restoring humanity in work organisations (Braverman, 1974).

Notwithstanding Labour process theory remains contentious as basis for understanding labour process because of its premise on Marx's conceptualisation of work relations, thus making a one sided materialist subjective analysis of labour process. A broad based conceptualisation that must transcend unipolar dimension of Braverman is therefore emphasised (see Spencer, 2000). Despite this shortcoming, the theory brings to the fore in its analysis and carries through the inherent inequality in capital-labour relations in the workplace. In addition, it suggests that the dynamics of this unequal social relationship both limit, condition and drive the structuring of work process to the detriment of employees. The evolution of management thought, especially around the arrangements of production, is a countering measure to follow the evolution of labour organisation’s increasing sophistication, education, enlightenment and expectations of work relations. It is a challenge that equally led employers to develop ever more sophisticated control techniques

and practices to maintain their power in the employment relationship exemplified by Taylorism.

The Labour process theory could help in understanding a number of phenomena in work process including - management strategies, occupational segregation, the issue of technology in work organisations, white-collar work, disparity in access to skills, as well as the dynamics sustaining inequality among others. Braverman's idea of 'work degradation' is relatively applicable in different societies depending on level of development. However, the issues of 'skill polarisation' or bifurcation remains as managers of firms remain committed to rationalising work through skill substitution as well as skill upgrading for maximisation of corporate objective - profit (see Altmann et al, 1992). Finally, the duality of capitalist domination, and workers alienation and dynamics that sustain it in work organisation remain issues of contention for the welfare of all in the society. And as Burawoy's (1979) puts it, the dualistic presuppositions of orthodox Labour process theory where structure is opposed by agency, management is pitted against labour, and control is confronted by resistance are vital lessons of Labour process theory.

2.3.5 Protectionist narrative

The narrative of "protectionism" explains one of underlying activities of multinational corporations in their quest for control and domination in areas of operations especially in developing countries of the world. Protectionism manifests in different shades in MNCs quest for profit maximisation. It ranges from monopoly of products in a host country to include avenues of skills development and human capital formation. More often than not, MNCs demand from host country safeguards, protection and concession such as the employment of expatriates that are brought from home country for business advantages even when the host country has competent and qualified human resource. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other member countries, especially from the 'North', have identified aspects of the Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIM) many of which are considered inadequate for the economies of developing countries and have advocated for reform (Malhotra, 2003:238). Abolition of TRIM will result in uninhibited access of the developed countries to the economy of the developing countries and could result in untoward consequences for human capital formation and skills development of these developing countries. The technological advantage and skills of the developed countries

could be deployed for productive purpose that could culminate in the collapse of local productive initiatives and thereby stiffen the modest efforts at local production and development of complementary technical skills.

Through TRIM, hosts of MNCs are persuaded to make binding commitments to allow the company to operate on some concessions like bringing in some staff from home country even when locals could be found. TRIM, it is argued is a political economic agenda that is rooted in tariffs and other 'border barriers', despite the existence of individual nation's industrial policies (Guisinger, 1986). Guisinger (1986:86) further emphasised that TRIMs are "confidential undertakings negotiated between foreign investors and host governments on a case-by-case basis; and such arrangements between foreign investors and host governments are neither published nor made public". This explains why despite the existence of a country's legal framework, some MNCs operate outside this, while the state appears silent. Examples abound in the Nigeria's oil sector where more than fifty years of oil production has not been translated into the development of local skills in the sector.

The secrecy surrounding TRIM is an indicator that it would be negatively inclined and detrimental to the socio-economic environment of developing countries and its human capital formation and skills development aspirations. In the opinion of Greenaway (1992:145), TRIM "interacts with other interventions" to manipulate the environmental conditions in favour of foreign investors. Without entry restriction, for instance, the entry of other firms could lead to the diffusion of skills that a company shields successfully because of monopoly it enjoys. This is another form of protectionism which MNCs also enjoy in order to further their interest in host countries and thereby contain other avenues of human capital formation and skills development (see Chase, 2004). It should be realised that protectionism in multinational operations manifests in a number of ways including transitional protection to enable MNCs to recoup investment (Chase 2004:12), lobbying and 'paradiplomacy' to ensure that state laws, institutions and government policies sustain their businesses (Stopford, 1998-1999:12-24; Boddewyn, 1988:341-363; Hammarlund, 2005:240), and coding of productive technology and inventions of their R&D outcomes to ensure non-replication for the company's maximum advantage (Kapfer, 2006:7). These are some of the different strategies by which MNCs could contain skills development and human capital formation in their developing host countries.

Skills protectionism helps in understanding some of the unspoken aspects of why MNCs establish in some locations and how they ensure monopoly in such environments of operations. They make enormous profits for several years of operations and yet local skills are not developed because the dynamics of protectionism is subtly at play. It equally points to the inability of governments to act against MNCs even when they are involved in activities considered to be at variance with the collective interests such as bringing available skills from home country. For instance, in Nigeria's Niger Delta region where many of the oil companies operate, despite local content legislation, the companies appear to operate with little regards for the country's legislation and this impact negatively on skills development and human capital formation in the sector. The Nigerian state has not been able to act against the oil companies despite agitation by the host communities and NGOs. The Protectionist narrative is fully business oriented; it is pro-investors and does points to the underpinning dynamics of MNCs operations that inhibit skills development and human capital formation in host countries. However, from the profit drive of MNCs, an inference could be drawn that, MNCs will protect skills from competitors and host environment if that will facilitate the maximisation of business interests in both short and long run. In addition, it could also be deduced that the R & D investments and innovative activities of MNCs in the home country are meant to ensure protection of such inventions. Also, patent rights which MNCs enjoy endlessly as a result of innovations are equally meant to ensure that the investments in research and development and the emerging inventions are protected to rake in extensive profits. Protectionist narrative reveals some of the underlying philosophy behind MNCs' activities and it equally provides a relative analysis of the dynamics influencing operations which could impart negatively on host country's human capital formation and skills development aspirations.

2.4 Theoretical framework utilised in this study

This thesis is guided by a triangulation of: Human capital, Labour market segmentation and Labour process theories. As shown in the previous section, Human capital theory emphasises that possession of productive skills plays a very crucial role in the lives of individuals and ensures the success of an organisation as well as the well being of a nation. The theory thus serves as a useful tool for analysing Nigeria's skills situation as well as efforts by the government to address the skills challenge through the establishment of skills development institutions. The theory reveals the importance of human resource for

corporate success and the concerted efforts of MNCs and other stakeholders to ensure that productive skills are available through different skills development initiatives. These are aspects of the Human capital theory that have direct applicability to this thesis. The theory helps to shed light on the importance of training, the need for training and skills development and efforts made by all the stake holders (government, labour, MNCs and organised private sector agencies) towards ensuring human capital formation and skills development in Nigeria. However, what types of skills are developed; what informs the types of skills developed and the inherent inequalities in the society that affect access to acquisition of skills by the vast majority, especially in developing countries, are not adequately accounted for by this theory. This is the area in which the Labour market segmentation theory provides useful insights, hence its adoption in this thesis as a complementary analytical resource.

As shown earlier, Labour market segmentation theory emphasises the reality that the labour market is not monolithic but is influenced by both the supply and demand sides of labour market. The theory posits that markets could be identified in different segments with its own characteristics which influence the type of training and skills development acquired by employees in different segments. The market is part of the larger society; as such, social and economic factors within the larger society influence the operations of the labour market. Finally, all these factors help or contribute in accounting for inequities in access to skills within the labour market.

Yet, while the Labour market segmentation theory combines both the demand and supply sides of the labour market, the fundamental forces of capitalist system that sustain inequality and unequal access to skills within the market system appears not to have been given due attention. Therefore, the study sees within the Labour process theory certain underlying economic forces of production in capitalist economic system which account for the domination of capital and resistance of employees, as well as the strategy that sustains inequality in the labour process. Labour process theory explains history and class as shaping organisational outcomes. In addition, it points to the root cause of resistance and conflict in labour relations.

To further enhance the robustness of this framework, given the demands of the three research questions guiding the study, the study also draws on the explanatory utility of the

(skills) protectionism narrative, primarily to understand how employers essentially “disguise” (sometimes crude) profit-maximisation stratagems as “skills” development. The narrative of Protectionism particularly sheds light on capitalist corporate lobbying and paradiplomacy – both strategies to secure their economic interests at the expense of skills development and human capital formation in developing host countries.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an understanding of: (a) multinational corporations and how they conduct their operations, (b) the key theoretical discourses around skills development and human capital formation – especially within the multinational corporate sector – and how the theories “see”, or fail to “see”, the problem of invidious skills disparities within an organisation - and (c) the specific skills development theories and narratives that have direct applicability to the present study. The next chapter is, as pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, devoted to a review of pertinent “empirical” literature. It provides substantive insights into some of the same issues highlighted in the theoretical literature.

CHAPTER 3

MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS, SKILLS AND NATIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter extends the 'theoretical' debates reviewed in Chapter Two, and focuses principally on material of a more or less 'empirical' nature. The reasons for this 'delineation' were explained in detail in the previous chapter (Section 2.1). The chapter is organised into several themes, reflecting the locus of thinking on the subject of multinational corporations, skills and national socio-economic development. The second section examines the definitional contentions around the concept of skills. The third focuses on skills development and national development, highlighting different perspectives on the impact of skills on national growth and socio-economic transformation, while the fourth section examines the debate around the concept of education and general skills development. The fifth section reviews empirical evidence reflecting the effects of on-the job training strategy in different countries. The challenge of skills development for developing countries is reviewed in the sixth section, while the discourse on skills development and MNCs is reviewed in the seventh section. The eighth section reviews scholarly debates on MNCs and how the operations of MNCs impact on human capital formation vis-à-vis skills development in a given host country. Section nine reviews the different elements scholars believe should be considered when formulating skills development policies. The final section presents a conclusion.

3.2 Concept of skills - The definitional challenge

Skills development occupies a vital space in the development agenda of developing countries. According to Young (2005), skill is "the creative force that propels economic growth and socio-economic transformation of a country". This assertion illustrates that skills positively influences productive efforts in socio-economic life. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2008b:17) defines a skill as a "person's ability to perform specific physical or mental tasks". This implies the possession of applied or direct knowledge that enables performance. The concept of skills has two dimensions. On the one hand, it is physical, involving extensive use of energy, which is a characteristic feature of shop-floor

employees, craftsmen or low level workers, and on the other hand, there is the mental dimension which represents the unique attribute of highly skilled knowledge workers (ILO, 2008b). Gardner (1999:2), differentiating between physical and mental skills, states that both skills have their peculiarities and features but influence productivity positively. Physical skills, according to Gardner (1999:2), need close monitoring and supervision while mental skills require less supervision. Both are needed in society for production and human welfare in Gardner's view.

The notion of skills, according to Ugwu and Ezeani (2012:4), implies “abilities or proficiencies required of a person in a position to plan and execute an action geared at accomplishing some tasks or achieving some goals”. Skills, Ugwu and Ezeani (2012:4) note, are the “learned capacity to carry out predetermined tasks with the minimum outlay of time and energy”. This assertion corroborates Ozoigbo and Chukwuezi (2011:98), who refer to skills as “an individual’s knowledge and ability to perform specific tasks successfully based on acquired attributes”. This definition aligns with the OECD’s (2008) definition of skills as the ability to perform specific tasks that are for productive purposes for the well-being of society. The views of OECD and those of ILO (2008b:17) portray skills as the ability and capability that enhances the performance of complex motor and/or complex activities with ease and precision, a demonstration of mastery, while at the same time being able to adapt to changing or emerging situations in the performance terrain.

The changing conditions vis-à-vis skills have been propelled by globalisation, which has brought everything, including skills, to the global domain. Technological innovations such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have compressed space, thus making the best skills available within the global arena and within easy reach of MNCs. As Acemoglu (1999:3) notes, skills have implications, for instance, on earnings and human welfare as remuneration is sometimes tied to skills. A person with high education may be paid highly due to his years of schooling. However, this may not be correct at all times as other factors come into play. In what Acemoglu tagged the “unobserved heterogeneity issue”, this scholar notes that not all pay differentials are necessarily linked to skills but to other factors. Bowles et al. (2000:2) argue that possession of skills and remuneration may not necessarily correlate as there are some privileged individuals in society who earn what is not commensurate with their skills due to inheritance or their privileged background. In

essence, pay differentials may not necessarily be due to skills acquired but to other extraneous factors.

The OECD Skills Strategy (2011) shifts the focus from traditional proxies of skills, such as years of formal education and training or qualifications attained, to a much broader perspective that includes the skills people acquire, use and maintain – and also lose – over a lifetime (OECD, 2011) People need both 'hard' and 'soft' skills that help them to succeed in the labour market and a range of skills that help them to contribute to better social outcomes and build more cohesive and tolerant societies. Hard skills are technical skills and functional skills acquired mostly through formal instructions and training and are in most cases certified. They are the basic skills for securing jobs. On the other hand, soft skills are the skills required for retaining jobs and progressing on the job. They are socially determined and context specific and includes motivation, work habits and adaptation (see Fan et. al 2005; Hsin and Xie, 2012).

The foundational skills, core skills for work, are the generic skills that enhance employability and enable labour market participation. These have been defined as "the skills, knowledge and competencies that enhance a worker's ability to secure and retain a job, progress at work and cope with change, secure another job if he/she so wishes or has been laid off and enter more easily into the labour market at different periods of the life cycle" (ILO, 2008:19). Ogunade (2011:9) writes on 21st century skills which represent a unique blend of all the skills subsumed in technological literacy, which involves informational science, digital media fluency and advanced computer and internet communication. This summarises the whole essence or need for development of skills.

Over time, the concepts of "skill" and "competence" have been used interchangeably. In South Africa's Department of Labour Green Paper (1997), for instance, the notion of skill is explained as the necessary competencies and expertise that can be applied for specific tasks for production or services that will improve human welfare. According to the Green Paper, the applied competencies focus on three different aspects of skills application:

a) Practical competencies for performing a specified set of tasks.
b) Foundational understanding and interpretation of the complementary role of others within the productive system.

c) Reflexive understanding to be able to project and adapt to the requirement of changes, innovation and unintended circumstances and development within the society. The Green Paper emphasised that competencies of skills are essential in modern knowledge society that is technology and skills driven.

According to the ILO (2008:17), skills and competencies can be grouped and categorised in many different ways: there is no universal standard as people use a variety of terms, sometimes in overlapping or contradictory ways, to define skills. As a result, there is no single definition for skills. The distinction between general and specific skills was first made by Becker (1964). According to this scheme, general skills increase the productivity of workers with many employers, while specific skills only increase their marginal productivity in the current job. As David and Lopez (2001:46) argue, the distinction is crucial because firms are willing to share the cost of specific investments, as workers can only recoup these in the current job, and therefore have no incentive to quit and work for another firm. But employers will not finance general skills since the worker can leave after the investment is made and the benefit from the general human capital is taken elsewhere, therefore workers must finance general skills (Hashimoto, 1982; see also, David and Lopez, 2001). This argument is important for the present study in that there is an assumption in certain 'discourse constituencies' in Nigeria that MNCs should somehow invest in training programmes that make their employees 'mobile' and useful in the broader economy. In the event of quitting in the current employment, referred to as 'skills portability' in this work, this subject is taken up in greater detail in Chapter six and seven.

Skill itself is dynamic. As Autor (2003) observed, the specificity of a given skill may change as the industrial structure evolves, thus affecting the incentives for firms to provide and pay for training. For example, knowledge of computer programming may only have been useful to one firm when computers were initially used in business, but it is now valuable across a wide range of firms. Another reason why some training for general skills may be provided by firms is in cases where these skills are complementary to specific skills. Alternatively, general training could be used as a screening device to discriminate between workers: with this, firms may have an added incentive to provide nominally free general skills training. For screening to be feasible, however, training must be more productive and therefore valuable to workers. The importance a firm attaches to training as a device by the firm to gain private, in-depth information on workers' productivity will determine the intensity or

frequency of the training programme as a screening device (Autor, 2003). As stated earlier, this debate is revisited later, in the empirical chapter of this thesis.

Although skill has been defined from different perspectives as shown above, it is an important element that impacts on national growth and development. It is evident in the literature that skills 'matter' for the good of the individual (that is, for the realisation of his/her goal in the society) just as it matters for the entire society in providing for sustenance and socio-economic transformation. According to the OECD (2012:71), "the sum of all skills available to the economy at a given point in time forms the human capital of a country" and to this extent, developing skills is a substantial investment for any country's future growth and development.

3.3 Skills development and national development

The role of skills in national economic growth and development is a subject that has generated several discourses in recent years, especially with the global shift in emphasis to human capital formation in the quest for sustainable socio-economic development (Maclean et al, 2013 Khiji et al, 2012; Brown, et al, 2008). Scholars are increasingly realising the impact of skilled human resource on national development (Nkogbu, 2014; Ogunade, 2011). While the countries of the developed world have invested in the area of skills development and have advanced in the use of technologies, for developing countries, however, skills development has continued to remain a challenge especially in the light of a rapidly globalising world economy which is technology-driven and knowledge and information-based. Hence, there are different discourses centring on 'what', 'why' and 'how' the issue of skills development is addressed in developing countries. A number of scholarly studies have focused on the question of what skills need to be developed to stimulate economic growth in the developing world (Ogunade, 2011:7). As much as scholars are interested in empirical research on how skills positively impact on economic growth of different countries (Kanayo, O. 2013; Isola, and Alani, 2012), there is growing scholarly interest on skills development as one of the key strategies for addressing human capital formation challenges.

Scholars agree that skills are a factor in promoting national economic growth and development (OECD, 1996; ILO, 1998; Somavia, 2008; Toner, 2011; Khilji et al., 2012).

Ogunade (2011) notes, in particular, that any discourse on human capital must consider its relation to the level of economic and industrial development. Productivity growth is founded on “making changes in production processes to lower unit costs and shift production to goods and services that yield higher returns” (ILO, 2007:41). The vital role of skills is visible at individual and corporate levels. Skills raise productivity in a number of ways. First, skills improve the productivity of the individual in terms of employability, wage rates, job stability and employability across jobs and industries (Ogunade, 2011; Onipede, 2010). Second, skills improve productivity at the enterprise level in terms of output per unit of labour, market share and export performance (Omoniyi and Omoniyi, 2014; Ogunade, 2011:10). By fostering productivity, skills create competitive advantage and surplus value used to upgrade technology and diversify economic activities, facilitating economic growth (ILO, 2008). This interplay between skills, competencies, productivity and technology produces employment opportunities that increase GDP and overall growth. Thus, “while technological change increases productivity in enterprises and value chains, diversification into non-traditional activities creates demand for labour and new employment opportunities” (ILO, 2008b:9). In developing countries, however, productivity in formal and informal economies remains low as a result of shortages in skills and skills mismatch, and these inadequacies impact negatively on the economy.

There is consensus in the literature that skills development is essential to improving productivity, income and access to employment opportunities. Training and education improve the capacity of workforce to absorb information and operate new technologies, and enhances flexibility. “An educated and competent workforce is an important factor of economic growth: it facilitates the move away from traditional production models towards more sophisticated and high value-added products, commodities and services for global markets” (ILO, 2007:41). This emphasises the role technology plays in linking skills and productivity to economic development. At the tertiary level of analysis, there is a link between the skill level of a country’s workforce and the level of economic development. Without certain kinds of skills, the transformation of the productive process necessary for economic development cannot occur (ILO, 2008). The transfer and successful absorption of new technologies in developing countries is by and large dependent on the availability of competent professionals, technicians and skilled workers (ILO, 2007). Moreover, increased international economic integration (globalisation) has led directly to the emergence of many technologies that facilitate communication and improve economic production processes.

These technologies require a better trained, skilled workforce to manage them and it makes human capital development an economic imperative (Ogunade, 2011).

In examining the multidimensional role of skills in the economy, Bloom et al. (2014) assert that a nation's human capital endowment -- the skills and capacities that reside in people and that are put to productive use -- can be a more important determinant of its long-term economic success than virtually any other resource. As such, this resource must be invested in and leveraged efficiently to generate returns, for the individuals involved as well as for the economy as a whole (Bloom et al., 2014). Despite the high unemployment levels in many countries, the global economy is entering an era of skills scarcity and skills mismatch which, if left unaddressed will hinder economic growth worldwide. To this extent, "understanding and addressing challenges related to human capital is thus fundamental to short-term stability as well as the long-term growth, prosperity and competitiveness of nations" (Zahidi, 2014:92). It becomes imperative for states to implement policies through education and skills development that will address these challenges in both the short and long run. In essence, the state of a country's education provides signals for the current state of a country's human capital as well as measures that reflect the results of a country's past practices. In addition, it includes indicators resulting from practices and policy decisions that impact on children today and will shape the future workforce in years to come (Banerji et al 2014). In essence, the human capital of the moment is a reflection of past investment, while investment today in human capital will manifest in the quality of human capital in the future.

3.4 Education and general skills development

The enormous contribution of education to the collective development and well-being of individuals and nations is well documented. Studies suggest that education is the key that unlocks individual and group potentials. It opens up individuals' thinking faculties, transforms individuals and, by extension, the society. Education creates an avenue for every child to reach its potential to lead a productive, healthy life and to acquire a decent job (Ai Group, 2012). Thus, a new and expanded vision of education and training that is inclusive, responsive and of quality must play a central role in this endeavour. Quality basic education must commence from the formative years of life in order to prepare the young ones to meet the vision of development (Mohammed, 2013:7).

However, the complexities of new and emerging global challenges demand that the education agenda must be more inspirational in focus. Provision of quality education and skills training at all levels, seamlessly linking with pathways to lifelong learning, must be equitably accessible to everyone through a range of flexible modalities in order to cater for the diverse needs of all in modern society (Banerji et al., 2014). It is for this reason that Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) defines education as a "basic human right" and calls for free and compulsory education at least at the foundational levels. This is meant to achieve the full development of the human personality and to enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society. As Steyn (2009:71) asserts, in order to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations without prejudice to ethnic or religious groups, education should be accessible to all. This explains why "countries at all income levels have expanded and improved their education systems so significantly in the past half century" (Mohammed, 2014:7).

The reality, however, is that considering diverse societal needs, provision of free and compulsory education as stipulated in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) in the situation of limited resources becomes a challenge. Steyn's (2009:71) classification of education into general or national system and mini-educational systems sheds light on the requirement, components and funding of education for skills development at different levels of society.

3.4.1 National or general education

National education, according to Steyn (2009:74), refers to the education system that is intended to provide for the educational needs of all the inhabitants of a particular country. It is this type of education system that should provide education according to the unique needs of both the majority and the minority groups in the society. In essence, national education is expected to be widespread and to cater for the general needs of the society (Steyn, 2009). This type of education is referred to today as basic education (UN-ECOSOC, 2011; RSA, DBE, 2013) and it involves basic numeric, literacy and vocational education (Aitchison and Alidou, 2009). It is worth noting that, despite the fact that the United Nations in its Universal Declaration called for accessibility to national education by all in society, this has not been the case particularly in the third world countries. Furthermore, because national or general education provides the foundation for education, there has remained the

contentious issue of funding: for instance, the question is frequently asked: who should provide and fund this education? Some scholars consider this foundational stage of education to be the responsibility of government given its multiplier effects on society, while others have called for partnership between the state and the beneficiary (Njeru and Orodho, 2003; Addae-Boahene, 2007). Yet national education is expected to be a broad-based endeavour to prepare the beneficiaries, particularly youths, for all aspects of life. It is expected to provide for basic numeric, literacy and vocational training such that those who pass through this level of education successfully will be fit for the industrial system. While basic education provides the foundational 'tools' that are required for many tasks, secondary schooling can better equip workers with the knowledge and skills that economies demand as they develop (Njeru and Orodho, 2003; Addae-Boahene, 2007).

According to Bloom (2014:60), "education also promotes the ability to learn new skills and adapt to new circumstances, the need for which is heightened in a rapidly changing world." Similarly, Mahroum and Scott (2014:84) argue that:

> Educational systems are a key driver of human capital development and represent a fundamental pillar on which the future economic and social welfare of nations are built. It is therefore not surprising that the funding of education is a growing problem...Education is widely considered a means to increase workforce productivity, promote social mobility and reduce poverty and inequality. Consequently, primary education is nearly always compulsory in most countries, while many countries also require some level of lower secondary education (see also UNESCO, 2012; OECD, 2012).

Another argument is that the provision of basic education that equips the citizens with basic skills is one of the major factors that act as a motivator for multinational investment (Ritchie, 2002), as MNCs make use of existing stock of a nation's human capital (Blomstrom and Kokko, 2001). A good basic educational foundation prepares a country for high technological investment and facilitates technology transfer as technology brought in by MNCs can be utilised and decoded and possibly adapted by those who have attained certain level of educational proficiency and skills (OECD, 2001). In most countries, therefore, the important foundational stage of education is laid through the provision of free and compulsory primary education as advocated globally (UN-MDG, 2000; UN-ECOSOC, 2011). In other countries, especially in Europe, free and compulsory education is extended to the secondary education level, while in Finland, education is free at all levels (WEF, 2013:23). In Switzerland, beyond secondary education, the preference is on vocational

skills, such that there is a synergy between the vocational training institutions and the companies in that country. As pointed out by WEF (2013:12), the types of training offered by the vocational and technical institutions are tailored to the needs of the companies and this training provides avenues for the absorption of graduates of these institutions by the companies. Some believe that this is why Switzerland has the lowest rate of youths going onto acquire university education, and yet has consistently won the skills competition programme of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (WEF, 2013:12).

Reflecting on the important roles of education and skills in societal transformation, Schultz (1992:4) observed that "casual empiricism had previously explained the recovery of Western Europe and Japan after the devastating effects of the Second World War as due to the highly skilled, educated and disciplined labour force of these countries". Education and skills acted as trigger for technological change. The investments in education and skills by the Asian Tigers[3] also paid off with the astronomical growth that the economies of these countries have attained. The Korean Republic, for instance, has sustained perhaps the most rapid expansion of its educational system and skills since the early 1960s and has experienced a marked increase in returns on investment from the late 1960s as the country experienced export-led growth in light industries. A similar positive growth response was recorded for Taiwan, which also has good and stable returns on its education and skills investments (see Schultz, 1992). These examples contrast with countries in South West Asia which have among the worst education and skills systems and are currently at very low level of socio-economic developmental rung with minimal investment in the education sector (Schultz, 1992).

In Brazil, far back as the mid 1970s, Langoni (1977) observed that between 1960 and the 1970s, investments in education and skills also manifested positively in the economy of the country. The same applies in Columbia, where, between 1937 and 1951, the level of education and skills was considered vital to development and a major determinant of wages. This was again stressed by Carnoy (2006) in a study of the BRICS states that investment in education had positive impact on their social and economic development. The above statement on the impart of education on skills development also resonates in recent

[3] A term used to describe the highly developed economies of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan.

work of Ogunade, (2011) citing a number of developing countries such as Mexico, Columbia, India, South Africa among others that the development of education had very significant effect on skills development and employees productivity in these countries. However, while investments in basic education and skills have positive correlations with economic development in other parts of the world, the experience is not the same in Africa as exemplified in Kenya and Tanzania. In Kenya, for instance, minimal investments in education and skills have led to commensurate growth. On the other hand, however, the situation in Tanzania is such that government's massive investments in education and training have not led to corresponding economic growth. This has been the scholarly position from the 1980s to the 1990s (Bosisere, et al, 1985; Schultz, 1992:4). Empirical evidence abounds in many countries of the South where, for instance, MNCs or large businesses, as one of the major users of human capital and skills, face the challenge of skills mismatch between the jobs they need to fill and the people searching for jobs. This skill mismatch results in skills shortages despite the number of graduates produced in some of these countries, a gap evident in many countries such as Nigeria and South Africa among others (Wright, 2010, et al., OECD, 2012). This mismatch is partly because education and the type of skills generated vis-à-vis industrial employment skills demands are still not properly aligned.

3.4.2 The education–skills nexus

Schultz (1992) observes that at the individual level, education has an array of effects that promote well-being. Employment in productive work (and also in the formal sector of an economy, where the most secure and best-paying jobs tend to be available) depends on an individual having the skills that education can provide to take advantage of the economic opportunity. In most countries, a higher level of education is linked to higher income (Acemoglu, 1999). In addition, greater education is often closely connected to the achievement of better health, which in turn allows a worker to be more productive and, often, to reap the rewards of greater productivity. Thus education has multiplier effects on both individuals and organisations. At the national level, countries with effective systems of education reap rewards by recording faster per capita economic growth. A well-educated populace that has both the array of skills needed for a modern economy and the capacity to adapt those skills to new industries and services provides the basis for a country's firms and industries to compete successfully with those of other countries (Hansson, 2009). In an

era in which a large and growing portion of the world's economic output can be, and is, created nearly anywhere (that is, an era of globalisation), such competitiveness is important for raising living standards. In essence, it is argued that possession of skills and education has a correlation with the standard of living of the people. Furthermore, a longer lifespan improves the benefits of educational investments, with the pace of change greater than ever. Educated individuals, and especially those who pursue lifelong education, can adapt more quickly and are better equipped to take advantage of new opportunities that present themselves as education and skills make for dynamism (Marope, 2005). A country that manages to educate its people better can realise the economic and social benefits that emerge from higher-skilled people working for a longer period of time among them, reducing the pressures on pension systems (Wright et al., 2010). At the same time, employers have to be more attentive to workers' needs and capacities as people live and work longer (Wright, 2010). The issue of emphasis here is that greater alignment of education and job skills is a necessity and that lifelong skills updating is more worthwhile with continuous benefits (Hansson, 2009). "Against this backdrop, the global community has made a series of pledges over the past two decades to achieve universal primary education, reduce illiteracy and ensure gender parity" in all areas of socio-economic life (Bloom et al., 2014:9; also see UN Millennium Project, 2005).

3.4.3 Education - Who pays?

At the 2013 World Economic Forum (WEF), Mahroum and Scott (2013:86) reported that "as early as the 1950s, the 1976 American Economics Noble price winner Milton Friedman argued that gains from education are a public good and should be funded accordingly, as benefits not only accrue to the individual but to society at large by promoting a stable and democratic society." Arguments in support of universal access to education therefore advocate public funding of education on the grounds that it is a social investment with multiplier effects necessary to avoid negative societal vices or externalities such as crime and unemployment that could jeopardise the welfare, peace and progress objectives of a state (WEF, 2013). Moreover, it is argued that education helps in promoting societal good through positive externalities such as helping to boost productivity, civic engagement, political participation and equity (OECD, 2012). In order to feasibly enforce a minimum level of education, therefore, government subsidisation is necessary and can be justified by the associated net social welfare gains (OECD, 2012, Boissiere, 2004).

Even though many of the social costs or negative externalities associated with education can be easily observed and measured, such as unemployment and crime, the positive externalities, or social benefits, are not easily visible and quantified and this factor, to an extent, impedes positive debates in favour of public funding. While the arguments advocating universal access to a minimum level of government-funded education are widely supported (UNESCO, 2012), it is clear that this does not always translate into effective education policy on the ground. In analysing the policy debate surrounding UK's education financing, Campbell et al. (2003) argued that funding of education should be considered broadly from economic and social perspectives of its contributions to the society. Finland is one such example that has an education system that is fully government-funded and the establishment and operation of private schools remains highly regulated. The merits of the Finnish system are evidenced in the performance of its students who consistently rank at the top of OECD international standardised tests. Apart from Finland, many other countries provide free education up to university level, particularly in European countries such as Denmark, Greece, Norway and Sweden. In other countries, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, the privilege of free education is granted only until primary or secondary school levels (WEF, 2013).

3.5 Skills development: The On-the-job training strategy

Skills development practice is carried out in different ways. One of these is On-the-job training (OJT) (Nikolova et al., 2014). This involves a lot of practical work and most often has a direct relationship to the employment context. On-the-job training, or workplace learning, has been labelled in various ways. For instance, Marsick and Volpe (1999:80-96) describe it as "informal learning", while Wielenga-Meijer et al. (2011:392-393) conceptualised it as "task-related learning''. Billett (2004:312) described it as "workplace participatory practices" and Maurer (2002:9) looks at the phenomenon as a "developmental activity". Although the concept has been defined by various scholars, there is a consensus that on-the-job training is an attempt to improve the skills potential of the workforce for improved productivity and organisational performance. According to Wright et al. (2010), what is known today as On-the-job training, emanated from the apprenticeship system, a form of OJT which has its origin in the medieval craft guilds. Over time, the system became criticised for the lack of general education and vocational theory being provided for those on apprenticeships, and vocational education became marginalised from academic education. Consequently, the modern industrial system emerged with on-the-job training which is like a

‘reincarnation’ of the medieval craft guild and apprenticeship system (Wright et al., 2010:24).

On-the-job training plays a vital role not only in the development of human capital but also in human capital formation. Lucas (1988) opines, for instance, that human capital formation is achieved basically through education or OJT, and notes that OJT has a greater potential of generating spillover especially where the training is done continuously, as employees who leave an organisation transfer the acquired knowledge and skills to other organisations and for the benefit of the larger society. In essence, while education lays the foundation, OJT consolidates and helps in ensuring a higher rate of spillover within the economy (Lucas, 1988). According to Mincer (1997), OJT is a form of post-school human capital investment. It not only aligns the employee with the peculiarity of his work but also affords him an avenue of consolidating his skills. This in turn becomes a strong factor in wage determination and structure. An employee who has acquired greater proficiency on the job is better placed on the wage hierarchy than another employee who has not yet adapted to the peculiarities of the specific work environment and tools through OJT. This argument is in line with current realities where employers require years of experience before employing prospective applicants because employers desire returns from such employees immediately they are employed.

On-the-job training according Pang (2012), plays a vital role in industrial production especially whenever there is a technological change in the production process. It affords the organisation an avenue of smooth transition from the old technology to the new one at less cost because the skills know-how of employees only needs to be upgraded while on the job without disruption of production. The cost implication of this will be relatively cheap compared to a situation where a new set of employees would have to be employed. The OJT approach, therefore, is a cost saving strategy that employers are generally well disposed to adopt. As Becker (1962) observes, funding training that are general in nature is minimised through OJT especially when it involves the adoption of a new technology. This scholar cites the example of the use of computers in the early days which was a form of specific knowledge but which has now become general due to the wide use and adoption within general society. As De Grip and Sauermann (2013:30) assert, the training which an employee receives, whether on-the-job for specific skills or general training, is a form of improvement and empowerment for employees and increases his bargaining power. It is a

source of empowerment because such training broadens his employment and job chances and also enables him to demand higher remuneration and allowances from his employer. In order for the employer to continue to have the employee in light of his improved productivity or services, some concessions would have to be given in the form of better conditions of employment. In a study of 14 European countries, De Grip and Sauermann (2013) found that employees who had opportunities to attend training programmes experienced about 12% increase in their incomes relative to those who did not attend training.

Corroborating these assertions, Noe (2010) states that through training an organisation systematically helps employees in obtaining capabilities related to their work. These capabilities include knowledge and skills, as well as abilities that facilitate work performance and realisation of the goals of the organisation. The purpose of training is to strengthen employees' knowledge, skills and capabilities through training courses, and for employees to apply what they have learned to their daily work. Training is an important means for an enterprise to acquire knowledge and enterprises that are far-sighted start human training a few years ahead of innovations that will be adopted to make the employees compliant. This is because human capital, according to Noe, (2010) is the key of future enterprise competition. Enterprises can be sustainable only when human training is put into effect. Training should effectively utilise the knowledge that already exists in the enterprise, and try to continuously create and diffuse new knowledge to develop full potential knowledge to a greater extent. The objectives of enterprise training, according to Noe (2010: 262-265) are:

(i) Generating, sharing and diffusion of explicit knowledge in the organisation and creating an environment of continuous learning and sharing of knowledge and skills among employees;

(ii) Establishing an effective training system which can promote knowledge generation, diffusion, transformation and sharing, and forming a think tank of enterprise that is R&D;

(iii) Ensuring that employees' tacit knowledge is open and accessible, accelerating the transformation of the tacit knowledge into experimental and explicit knowledge, and increasing the content of enterprise knowledge in order to continuously enhance the competitiveness of enterprise; and

(iv) Providing a framework for the enterprise to change into a learning organisation, inspire employees to maximise the use of individual knowledge within the enterprise, and build a platform of organisational knowledge capital.

General training, according to Mondy and Noe (2005), is provided by organisations for new employees to provide the skills for new employees to enable them carry out their work. This type of training aimed at newly recruited employees is called Orientation Training (OT), and consists of pre-service induction for new employees in order to reduce their psychological dislocation in new positions and accelerate their socialisation into the new organisation. OT includes learning basic technology and objectives, strengthening their concepts and helping employees to strengthen their professional ability by means of advanced professional training courses so that they can quickly be efficient at their jobs and work independently (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). This is exemplified in Motorola Incorporated of United States where all new employees must receive complete pre-employment orientation training in order to enable the new employees to adapt to the new environment as soon as possible, and ensure smooth operational activities in the workplace. This training is also carried out so that new employees can engage in work independently after they have been awarded professional certification and certificates. If a new employee fails in the internal Quality Assurance (QA) and examinations conducted by the relevant department, the employee will not get the qualification for engaging in the job (Lin et al., 2009). After passing the certification examination, new recruits will continually be checked at random by the auditor. When the new recruit gets out of line or below the certification standard, the certification for working in the workstation will be cancelled, and the training will be re-implemented, re-evaluated and re-certificated to ensure that the system of the Six Sigma Quality (SSQ) is maintained. In essence, OJT in an American company such as Motorola is a continuous process that involves examinations and certification.

For Zhao et al. (2012:567), OJT training is one of the most important and reliable human resource techniques to enhance organisational and employee productivity. Enterprise training institutions not only provide multi-level and multi-functional business training as well as follow-up education for the entire staff of an enterprise, but these institutions are committed to the diffusion and use of knowledge to facilitate effective management and full utilisation of the enterprise for greater productivity. Enterprise knowledge is generally divided into ‘explicit knowledge’ and ‘tacit knowledge’. According to these scholars, explicit

knowledge can be expressed in language and shared with others while tacit knowledge is sub-conscious knowledge that cannot be easily expressed in words but requires demonstration and mentoring. Thus, OJT provides a good medium for acquisition of such knowledge within the industry. It is an effective means to achieve knowledge sharing, transfer and preservation. OJT is an effective measure to reach the goal of an enterprise. Through this learning platform, an organisation can achieve effective knowledge transfer and knowledge acquisition, and make acquired knowledge become a valuable asset through knowledge integration (Noe, 2010).

The vital role of OJT in human capital formation was also addressed by Cowan et al. (2000). In their paper titled: “The explicit economics of knowledge codification and tacitness”, these scholars state that some intangible assets are unsystematised, not compact and are not easily thought and transferable as they are not easy to codify. Such knowledge tends to be expressed in a practical form that makes it easier to transmit to others. While formal schooling is based on the transmission of systematised information, there is a need for workers and firms to use other mechanisms of knowledge transfer in which the knowledge holders actively participate. OJT is the key in this respect because ‘tacit knowledge’ cannot readily be expressed outside the production context in which it is generated. It is instructive to note, however, that OJT training is not the only way in which people can acquire the ‘tacit knowledge’ needed for production, however it remains an important medium of acquiring tacit knowledge. For instance, the case of the circulation of post-doctoral students among university research laboratories, between universities and specialised research institutes (David and Lopez, 2001) and the movement of newly trained researchers from academic institutions into industrial organisations, are an important aspect of technology transfer, diffusing the latest techniques of science and engineering research for better productivity (see David and Lopez, 2001; Haldin-Herrgard, 2000). All these approaches are forms of OJT that have long been in practice within the economy. Such transfers also occur in industry, but where firm-specific knowledge is involved, efforts are usually made to minimise such ‘knowledge spillover’ in order to maximise the advantage-profit. OJT therefore represents an avenue of technology transfer which is an urgent need in developing countries.

Koen et al. (2012) argue that during economic recessions, fresh graduates in the labour market are most likely to find it more difficult to get a suitable job than in periods of

economic boom. In addition, these fresh graduates are more likely to experience job mismatch in their bid to survive and are most likely to suffer from underemployment (Kahn, 2010; ILO, 2011). As a panacea to prolonged unemployment, underemployment with negative consequences both for these graduates and the society generally, Koen et al. (2012) proposed simulation training as the first step in assisting university graduates to find a job. The simulation training provides them with the 'tools' to cope with the transition from school to work (Koen et al., 2012:404). This will afford the fresh graduates a means of gaining insights into the practical world of work. It should be noted, however, that although such training will be limited to some work establishments and cannot cover all aspects of production, the point to emphasise is that it provides way of making the young graduates much more work-fit for the employers who have many of them to choose from. This type of training helps in developing careers and enhancing the adaptability of fresh university graduates in their search for suitable employment during the transition from school to work. It is a form of transitional training for these young graduates. Eventually, the employed participants who had taken part in the training, as Koen et al. (2012) found in their study, reported higher employment quality than those who had not taken part in the training. Hence, Koen et al. (2012:404) concluded that their study had theoretical and practical relevance.

In a study titled "Employability and skills in the UK: Redefining the debate", Wright et al. (2010) observe that since the 1980s, economies have advanced as a result of globalisation and advancements in technology culminating in the emergence of a knowledge economy and society.

> Therefore, to transform the UK's economy across all sectors – manufacturing and services, high tech and low tech, domestic and internationally traded, public and private, large corporation and small enterprise – organisations have prospered by allowing highly skilled individuals the freedoms and flexibilities to deploy new technologies to rapidly create tailored products for increasingly sophisticated customers …with the bulk of investment being in human capital and skills" (Wright et al., 2010:6).

In essence, OJT played a pivotal role in the development of human capital and skills which facilitated the processes of modernisation.

Polanco (2013) demonstrated, in a study conducted in the Dominican Republic, that skills generated from institutions exhibited disconnect with the requirements of industry, and that this led to youth unemployment. As such, in order to stem the tide of unemployment, the Dominican Republic government came up with an industry related programme known as the “Youth and Employment Programme” (*Juventud y Empleo*). It combines classroom training with an internship period so that the youth could acquire practical skills relevant to industry. The programme, according to Polanco (2013), has yielded promising results, as beneficiaries are better acquainted with the practical reality of an industrial work environment while still in school. To this extent, internship as a form of OJT performs the dual roles of not only bridging the gap of the skills development disconnect with industry, but also of exposing the youth to the industrial system even before people are ready for employment.

Likewise, the 2013 World Economic Forum brought to the fore the vital role of OJT for the acquisition of relevant soft skills. According to its report, practical OJT resulted in a job offer to an Egyptian girl who excelled in class but found herself unemployable and remained in the job market for three years. This was attributed to her lack of relevant soft skills even though she was in possession of the records which confirmed that she had excelled in technical and written tests. The issue raised was that the Egyptian girl was not accustomed to working in teams so that securing employment became a problem despite the fact that she possessed the raw skills. After having undergone an intensive two-month job training programme provided by Education for Employment, an NGO that specialises in bridging the gap between school and work by providing work-ready skills training, she was able to find a job with an e-commerce company known as Souk.com, the Arab world’s first online auction site. For this candidate and several others in similar situations, the training received was vital in practical life to discover self, learn new skills, and stimulate hope and energy towards the practical world of work. To put it succinctly, “on-the-job training helped in customising her for the practical work environment” (Banerji et al. (2014:38).

In South Africa, according to Statistics SA (2011), only 10% of matriculants manage to find long-term jobs and two out of three South Africans between the ages of 18–28 are unemployed because they do not have the skills that could result in employment. By 2014, Statistics, SA revealed an increased as many as 43.1% of youth who hold a Matric qualification were without jobs and more than three in ten youth aged 15–24 years were

unemployed. It is estimated that more than 50% of South Africans age 22 years were unemployed. These situations have negative consequences for the country's economy. In order to bridge this gap, therefore, a private employer initiative known as the "Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator" was established as a youth employment incubator working with the generation excluded from formal employment because they do not have prior work experience and skills. The skills programmes and bridging courses of the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator have turned the tide for jobless youth into valuable entry-level employees for over 35 blue-chip corporate partners of the initiative. What Harambee essentially does is to make candidates work-ready (Harambee's Newsletter April, 2014). Although a small-scale initiative, the scheme provides a positive model of private sector engagement in skills development, employment generation, empowerment and poverty reduction. Moreover, some of South Africa's large companies in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors are partnering to provide job commitments to the trained youths. The South African Development Bank has established a Jobs Fund that provides resources, matched by private investors and employer fees, to allow Harambee to scale up its programmes and accommodate more youths. It is an indirect form of OJT that helps reduce skills mismatch and gaps (Harambee's Newsletter, April, 2014).

In Costa Rica, the need to match skills with employment is an issue of concern to the operators in the IT sub-sector. The private sector business association (Chamber of Information and Communication Technologies (CAMTIC) began the process of aligning and harnessing skills potential in the area of ICT. This industry association of technology companies implements the specialist programme to match vulnerable young people with needed IT skills to fill a gap of several thousand unfilled jobs in the IT sector. Educational institutions, informed by IT companies such as Cisco, Microsoft and others, have designed certificate-level training courses that combine soft skills and technical training which result in good paying jobs above the country's minimum wage. These initiatives and many others are aimed at aligning skills with industrial production. According to Dobbs et al. (2012), they are demand-driven, responding directly to the needs of the private sector, often with a sector-specific training focus. The employers pre-commit themselves to hiring trainees and this gives educational institutions and youth the confidence that their skills will be put to positive economic use. Training programmes range from several weeks' to several months' duration and include soft skills as well as more specialised technical skills training related to the specific sector of the economy. Youths are able to attain formal sector jobs with decent

wages and benefits and all the relevant agencies and stakeholders (youths, businesses, educational institutions and government) contribute through different measures such as tuition fees, time, matching fees from businesses, subsidised training and government funds or other government complementary policies for the benefits of society (CAMTIC, 2008).

David and Lopez (2001) examined OJT in New Zealand and described it as constitutive of a combination of production, learning-by-doing and mentoring by co-workers. These scholars illustrated the importance of OJT in two ways. First, OJT is seen as a prime source of specific skills that are usually not obtained through formal education or vocational training. Secondly, financing OJT could be a problem as employees may not be willing to fund it: funding this training by employers may encroach into organisations' finances. Despite the benefits of OJT, the concern of employers and firms in New Zealand is that after paying for this type of training, a trained employee may end up quitting the firm and taking the knowledge and skills to another organisation. David and Lopez fail to consider the impact that OJT will have on employees' organisational productivity, especially the fact that employers usually insist that employees sign a bond before they are being trained. Such contracts are often primarily designed to take care of the employer, to enable the firm recoup from the employee what has been invested in his training (David and Lopez, 2001:6).

In their study titled "The impact of job training, job satisfaction and alternative job opportunities on job turnover in Libyan oil companies", Dardar et al. (2012:390) concluded that OJT is a form of job security for employees. It increases job satisfaction, and reduces job turnover in the Libyan oil sector in line with the human capital theory which states that employees who have enjoyed the benefit of organisational investment on training are expected to work longer for such organisations, to exhibit correspondingly high performance practices, and to exhibit a higher level of job satisfaction. This, in turn, contributes directly to organisational performance. It should be noted that organisations train their employees in order to reap greater benefit from the employees who are usually bonded by employers to enable the employer to reap adequate returns on what has been invested in the employees' training. To this extent, the perceived job satisfaction and low employee turnover could be attributed to the bond usually entered into between the employer and the employee before he is sent on training. Hartmann et al. (2013) also

examined the phenomenon of OJT in relation to mentoring through a survey of 580 online sales representatives. These scholars found that organisations spent a lot of money annually to reduce employee turnover and increase performance. Earlier studies such as Meyer et al. (2002) found that firms could reduce turnover while increasing performance by increasing employee organisational commitment. According to Meyer et al, the development of mentoring relationships is one method of increasing organisational commitment and occupational commitment (cf: Brashear et al., 2006; Hartmann et al., 2013:2295). Mentoring relationships are intense interpersonal relationships entered into by parties in order to provide at least one of the parties with career growth (Hartmann et al., 2013). Mentoring, (Hartmann et al., 2013) stressed is a relationship between a younger adult and an older, more experienced adult who helps the younger individual learn to navigate the adult world and the world of work. These scholars concluded that sales employees with mentors exhibited higher levels of affective continuance and normative occupational commitment than sales employees without mentors.

Students' Practicum Performance or Industrial Internship Program in Malaysia was the focus of the study of Jamil et al. (2013) which examined final year Business Management degree students between the years 2010 and 2011 with the objectives of analysing industry feedback on students' practicum performance and their learning outcomes at the end of industrial practicum experience. A total of 623 industrial evaluation reports from various industries were analysed. The result revealed that internship is an opportunity for undergraduate students to incorporate work-related experience and knowledge into their formal education in a university by taking part in supervised and planned work in real-world professional environments (see also Sumathi et al., 2012). This exposure is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable practical knowledge and exposure in real work environment (Jamil et al., 2013:513). Thus, industrial work experience helps in bridging the gap between theory learnt in institutions and the practical work environment, and the phenomenon of skills mismatch of Malaysian graduates is arrested (Sumathi et al., 2012). These scholars emphasise that many undergraduates churned out by universities lack essential '"job market readiness" skills. These factors have prompted the government to place more emphasis on university students' industrial internship program during the course of their studies.

Both employers and academic researchers have identified gaps between corporate needs and graduates' attributes. These gaps indicate that graduates have little real world experience that provides them with exposure and real world experience through internships, apprenticeships or industrial training attachment which can help improve graduates capabilities. There is a need for both university training (for disciplinary knowledge) and OJT (for practical knowledge). It is necessary to incorporate exposure of the work place into the university context. As Le Maistre and Paré (2004:45) assert, there is a need to help students move from the "book and theories" to the "real clients and real work places". Le Maistre and Paré (2004) note further that considering the current global economic recession, educational institutions should incorporate this in their curriculum to bridge the gap between academic institutions and the industry. This will reduce skills gaps and skills mismatch. In this respect, practicum or internship training connotes OJT which aims to impart skills and applications at work in real life situations. It serves to develop a person towards some form of positive growth that embraces the realities of the work environment, as well as to achieve organisational goals and objectives while still in school. Hence, students' exposure to six months practical training in an actual work environment would go a long way to make them better acquainted or fit after graduation.

3.6 Skills development: The challenge for developing countries

Since the 1960s, there has been a growing scholarly interest in skills development as a factor in the economic growth and transformation of nations across the globe. As the global economy shifts towards more knowledge-based sectors: the manufacture of ICT devices, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, and other ICT-based services, research and development (see OECD, 1996), skills development has become an issue of attention for governments and policy makers, especially in developing countries. Empirical studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between investing in skills development with national economic growth and development (Dauda, 2010; Bakare, 2010; Holland et al, 2013). However, skills development remains a challenge for most developing countries, especially in Africa.

Since the mid-2000s, studies have shown that skills development accounts for growth, and this has been particularly instantiated in countries in East and South-East Asia (see Palmer, 2007:1). The countries in this region have taken vocational education and training more seriously than their counterparts in countries of South Asia and this has enormously helped

to transform the region, unlike South Asia which has some of the weakest vocational training systems in the world. The very high growth rates of many countries in East and South-East Asia combined with the changing nature of work, and the challenges and opportunities presented by globalisation, means that skills development requirements are ever shifting and increasing the need for both skills upgrading and skills for competitiveness in the global environment.

Skills development requires an enabling environment when viewed from the perspective of international cooperation in skills development (Rojvithee, 2007). This widely acknowledged fact highlights the need for agencies to balance the provision of skills with the provision of opportunities to use these skills. In other words, skills development cooperation should be integrated with cooperation concerning employment promotion for both the formal and the informal private sector. In particularly, international cooperation is very important in developing an enabling environment for micro and small-enterprises (Langstaff et al., 2007). It is essential, therefore, to examine the interaction between agency-country approaches to skills development and agency country approaches to skills utilisation. Past experience across countries and of agencies themselves suggests that training and skills development will, in most cases, not result in positive developmental outcomes if an enabling environment for skills utilisation is not provided. International cooperation in skills development therefore needs to be situated within a wider cooperation framework that is supportive to the utilisation of skills (Palmer, 2007:16). The ILO (2008:40) argues that education and vocational training policy should be linked to employment policy.

Skills development has never been as important as it is in today's globalising world, where technology dictates rapid changes to the way in which skills are acquired, new skills developed and existing skills upgraded (Rojvithee, 2007). For Egger (2007:36), skills development is not the goal in itself but must serve a higher objective, such as finding a job, improving job performance and/or having a better income. Even though it is very important to have the proper skills, other factors are equally important in ensuring the utilisation of the skills to make for a better society. Thus the wider labour market, business policies and economic environment need also to be considered and addressed to have very valid and relevant skills to the economic aspirations of the state. Egger (2007) notes that, "jobs and skills are pressing challenges for developing countries. Paradoxically, there is also a growing concern of skills mismatch: for instance, the questions are often asked: how do

skills training systems support skills acquisition and continued upgrading? How does the education system interface and intersect with labour markets and industries to coordinate skills development with changing industry needs? What are good practices and lessons from different countries and regions that can better inform skills development policy making?" (see also Maclean, et al 2013:369). These are salient questions that should guide skills development in the national interest.

As Becker (1964) asserts, skills or human capital is the foundation upon which the social and economic balance of the state rests and the extent to which skilled human resource is available is a pointer to the height a country could attain. To this extent, the International Labour Organisation (2008) emphasised that skills development must be made an integral part of broader employment and development strategies to enable it to deliver on its substantial potential, and contribute to overall productivity, employment growth and socio-economic development. There is no gainsaying that most developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, are keen to invest in skills development as this provides a major source of transforming the economies of these countries. For this reason, liberal incentives are offered to attract MNCs as an indirect means of tapping into their skills and technology advantage. The issue of concern, however, is that in order to optimise such investments, key challenges such as large mismatches in skills is a major problem that many third world countries face. The problems of skills mismatches are threefold: demand and supply, geographic and sectoral (Panth, 2013:201). And to overcome these problems, countries at all levels of development have discovered that adequate education, vocational training and skills can improve the employability of workers, the productivity of enterprises and the inclusiveness of economic growth. This realisation has led to increased interest in the formulation of skills development policies to drive the change necessary to meet development challenges. Skills development is attracting heightened interest in many countries and the challenges that are driving the interest are economic, social and developmental. Many policy-makers are aware that if their countries are to gain or maintain their status as high-income countries, they must produce higher value added, higher quality goods and services that can yield higher wages and profits. To do this they need a skilled workforce and an education and training system that adequately prepares young people to enter the labour market. This has been a long-standing imperative and goes alongside current rethinking on the pattern of economic development which seeks not only rapid but also inclusive growth (Ritchie, 2002; Tikly, 2013).

Many countries are concerned about and committed to achieving social equity, social inclusion, poverty alleviation, employment generation and peace. As such, the skills challenges that have led to a focus on policy, especially among low and middle-income countries, are, according to CEDEFOP (2012:69-71) the following:

- Skills mismatch: Skills obtained through training and those required by the job often do not match, resulting in skills shortages in some areas and, simultaneously, a surplus of workers with skills that are not in demand, contributing to unemployment.
- Limited involvement of social partners: Many countries lack the active participation of employers' and workers' organisations that are essential to ensure the provision of relevant and appropriate training.
- Poor quality and relevance of training: Weak quality assurance, too few or poorly qualified trainers, poor working conditions for trainers, and outdated qualifications, curricula, training materials and methods all inhibit the quality of training.
- Limited labour market information and inability to translate such information into improved training undermines relevance.
- Limited access to training opportunities: The outreach of formal training is often very limited, especially where distances are great and political unrest prevails, the informal economy looms large, and literacy and educational levels are low. These are all factors that leave a large number of people with few or no employable skills. Women and disadvantaged groups often face additional barriers in accessing training.

Weak coordination in the system: A large number of actors and providers (ministries, agencies, central and regional governments, NGOs, employers and workers) are involved in skills development. Their efforts often overlap and are not well coordinated, especially in developing countries. Weakness in linking skills supply and demand also limits positive impact on employment and productivity.

Therefore, in order that skills development might be more relevant for the socio-economic transformation and national development, there is a need for the harmonisation of all

institutions and agencies concerned with the issue of skills development for maximisation of results without duplication of efforts.

In light of the above discourses, therefore, the pertinent questions of concern in this study are: how do MNCs, as harbingers of modern skills and technology, key into the national skills development discourse in developing countries? In essence, to what extent do the activities of MNCs align with the dominant national discourses on human capital formation? These are important issues, considering the profit motive of MNCs and their activities in the pursuit of profit. The next section examines some of the activities of MNCs in their host countries. The aim is to identify the various issues of contention on 'perceived' strategies of protectionism pursued by different MNCs in the pursuit of profit.

3.7 Multinational corporations: The 'profit pathology' discourse

The activities of MNCs are described by different scholars in several ways, and these reflect the debates and contestations around MNCs and human capital formation vis-à-vis the skills development challenges in developing countries. According to Rugraff and Hansen (2011:13), MNCs' activities constitute a "bane and boon" especially for the developing countries of Africa. Although the controversy surrounding MNCs is general in the phase of global realities, demands and challenges, there appear to be more scepticism and apprehension than satisfaction. In attempting to describe MNCs, Bakan (2004) scripted a film and authored a book titled *Corporations: "The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power"* which, in the main, illustrated that MNCs engage in a number of activities that obviously demonstrate a "pathological" quest for profit.

Multinational Corporations control the world's big organisations and therefore determine vital socio-economic decisions, for instance: what is produced, how it is produced, for whom, where and when production takes place, among others. In their bid to dominate, they engage in what Haynes (2003:7) refers to as "regulatory capture" of state power or the use of a "revolving door" (Haynes 2003:7). Where it is workable, MNCs influence governments and thus ensure 'remote' or 'subtle' manipulation of rules to suit their business purpose (Bakan, 2004; see also Stiglitz, 2002). The media are controlled by MNCs, thus censoring, conditioning, controlling or otherwise manipulating the information that is consumed by the public. Interestingly, Bakan does not consider MNCs to be agents of

technology transfer, entrepreneurial skills development or skills development, as all MNCs activities are guided directly by the profit motive. Although the empirical review on MNCs' operations in different sectors presented in this section of the chapter draws extensively from Bakan's model, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that MNCs have their corporate social responsibilities which they perform in society, however small these may be.

3.7.1 Profit pathology in commerce

Commerce involves the exchange of goods and services to meet human needs because individuals and nations are not equally endowed with natural, material and human resources. Therefore, in order to satisfy their needs, individuals engage in trading activities with one another. Multinational corporations take advantage of their trading opportunities by making goods and services available in their host countries and thus contributing to social and economic transformation. In essence, the long and ubiquitous activities of MNCs, arguably, have made some scholars to describe them as agents of change without critical inquiry of historical depth of their activities in the host countries (see Gilpin, 1987; Page, 1994).

Conversely, however, Monshipouri et al. (2003) note that MNCs' profit motive hinders, rather than helps the economic development of less developed countries. The major criticism is that MNCs have tended not to bring in needed capital but rather to harness existing capital from within those nations where they set up businesses. Multinational companies operating in the Latin America were observed to be interested in minimal investment for maximum profit to the home country which extensively contributed to the impoverishment of host countries (OECD, 2002). The situation is not different in other third world havens of MNCs' operations where instead of profits being retained in the less developed countries, and perhaps reinvested there, they tend to flow back to the home country of MNCs or to whatever country MNCs judge the most convenient for investment. Monshipouri et al. (2003) alleged that a less developed country, after having welcomed MNCs, often providing them with tax benefits and subsidies of various types and other liberal policies, finds itself in dual negative positions vis-à-vis the repatriation of profits. It can either allow the MNC to export its profits, thereby draining the nation of potential investment capital, or it can restrict the repatriation of profits. In the latter case, the MNC must reinvest a significant part of its profits in the Least Developed Countries (LDC) in

which event a substantial portion of the productive capacity of the country eventually can become subject to foreign ownership (see Monshipouri et al. 2003).

The profit manipulations in the current dispensation in Nigeria are not dissimilar with the situation described above. According to Otusanya (2011), MNCs engage in tax evasion and tax avoidance and thereby reduce government revenues with negative consequences for provision of infrastructure, other public services and public utilities. Multinational companies in the Nigerian oil and manufacturing sectors are suspected to have used various tax schemes to maximise profit at the expense of the public good. This scholar revealed further that the local business elite and local professionals are also suspected of conniving and collaborating with MNCs as key actors in facilitating these anti-social tax practices in Nigeria for their own financial gains from MNCs.

Sass (2011:56) noted that the coming of MNCs to Hungary initially created job opportunities, but in the long run, it eventually resulted in a loss of white collar jobs and eventual outsourcing of intermediate goods for production and even skills. This is usually aside from the profit that is repatriated to the home country of the MNCs. The Hungarian situation may not be different from Nigeria's experience going by an argument put forward by Babatunde (2013). According to this author, Chinese MNCs operating in the country engage in a number of ‘nefarious’ activities ranging from tax evasion, over invoicing, casualisation and outsourcing of employees aside from limited employment for the indigenes (Babatunde, 2013:22). It may thus be argued that MNCs’ activities will definitely have negative consequences for human capital formation in the country. A Nigerian newspaper (*The Punch*, 15 April 2014) demonstrated the pursuit of profit by MNCs in reporting the insistence by some manufacturers in Nigeria on producing lower quality grades of their products in the quest to maximise profit at the expense of the lives of Nigerians. Subsequently, the National President of the Block Makers Association of Nigeria alleged that building collapse in Nigeria is partly attributable to the inferior quality of cement produced in the multinational corporate sector (*The Punch*, 15 April 2014). While the veracity of such allegations remain unproven - and the assumption may very well be unfounded - the mere fact that it comes from a segment of the country's private sector highlights a concern that MNCs do not always take public safety seriously, if doing so would adversely affect their profit margins. As mentioned above, casualisation is not in conformity with labour law in Nigeria. Similarly, outsourcing – which often promotes casualisation – can

hardly be viewed as beneficial to sustainable human capital formation and skills development. However, these practices are rife in the multinational corporate sector even though other employers are not insulated from such practices.

3.7.2 Multinational corporations and local politics

The MNCs' desire to secure profit advantage also manifests in politics and policies affecting MNCs' areas of operations. This is what Haynes (2003:714) refers to as "regulatory capture" or a "revolving door". Regulatory capture is a situation whereby MNCs have undue influence over institutions that ought to regulate their activities, while revolving door is a situation of "I scratch your back, you scratch mine", done through lobbying politicians for legislation that will protect the MNCs and favour their profit drive. In essence, the activities of MNCs, in collusion with government officials, in no small measure help to instigate and sustain conflict in some mineral producing countries. For instance, the involvement of the American telecommunications giant International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT) in the politics of Chile in the 1970s allegedly led to the violent overthrow of President Salvador Allende and the enthronement of Augustino Pinochet, a 'stooge' of the American government. This was because Allende's government was seen to be socialist inclined and, as such, was considered an enemy to America and the interest of ITT. The question that could be asked is: what interest does ITT have in the Chile? It is a result of the MNC's obsession with profit and desire to protect investments from imagined threat to American investment. In the same vein, different rebel groups in Africa were able to wreak havoc after accessing some natural resources, the proceeds of which sustain their movement. The rebel group, Unita, in Angola could not have prosecuted a civil war for 27 years without the connivance and collaboration of MNCs.

The situation in the oil rich Niger Delta area of Nigeria is not different. According to Monshipouri et al. (2003:997), the oil giant Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC), which in the local parlance is simply called 'Shell', became so enmeshed with the government in draconian policies against the Ogonis on whose land Shell explored petroleum to the extent that Shell admitted having imported arms for the government under late General Sanni Abacha (Boele et al., 2001). The issue of concern is that Shell, a global oil prospecting company that has operated in Nigeria from the late 1950s (the early days of oil discovery in Nigeria), became "an arms procurement company" for the military

government. For an MNC to be so enmeshed with the government, amounts not only to what Haynes (2003:7) refers to as “regulatory capture”, it will surely pass for “state capture”. The same situation applies in Liberia, where despite the trade embargo on Liberia and because of the quest for profit, Oriental Timber Corporations signed a concessionary timber lumbering agreement with Charles Taylor’s government because of the quest for profit, thus creating a financial avenue for his government’s atrocities for which Taylor is currently serving his sentence in jail (Chella, 2012:2).

The foregoing are examples of MNCs which are expected to contribute to the development of their host countries. Due to their profit motives, their responsibilities towards socio-economic transformation, developing skills and technology sharing have become issues of secondary concern. Even the business ethic and concern for the ordinary people in their host countries are issues of less importance on the MNCs’ agenda. To further buttress the pathological pursuit of profit by MNCs, the American government’s position under President Nixon on the destabilisation of Chile revealed that ITT was the conduit for destabilising Chile in the 1973 coup that led to the overthrow of Socialist party leader, Salvador Allende (Streeter, 2004:3). The conspiracy, treachery and other destructive activities of MNCs are not limited to Africa as other developing countries of the Caribbean have sobering experiences with MNCs due to their natural resource endowments. Rather than contributing to local human capital formation and skills development usually promised, MNCs often neglect this in pursuit economic interest especially in weak regulatory environments of developing countries. The cumulative effect is that MNCs could operate profitably for years and local skills may not be significantly developed except adequate regulatory measures are institutionalised to act as a check on their excesses.

3.7.3 Multinational corporations’ profit drive and human health

Multinational corporations have been partners in the provision of food, health and medical facilities, as well as vaccines for diseases and infections for our common humanities. It is, therefore, a paradox that MNCs’ activities have been questioned in some instances and subjected to litigation in some circumstances because of the desire for profit. Boyd (2012:283) gives an example of Nestlé SA of Switzerland, known as the world’s biggest food and beverage company, was involved in a controversy over the marketing of its infant baby formula which resulted in the death of many infants in developing countries and led to

the interventions of United Nations agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (Boyd 2012:283). In the late 1960s, Nestlé was criticised by social activists for its aggressive marketing of powdered milk formula for infants in less developed countries. The case was a global embarrassment as Nestlé became the victim of a well-organised boycott campaign which started from the United States (Boyd, 2012:283). The contention was against Nestlé's aggressive mass advertising and marketing campaigns which included:

> giving away free samples to new mothers at hospitals and the use of billboards and other pictorial images. However, the most widely criticised aspect of Nestlé's campaign was the use of women dressed as nurses in the villages of developing countries. These "nurses" handed out free samples of infant formula, thus giving the impression that the Nestlé product was endorsed by the medical profession. The campaign also gave the impression that the infant formula was a safe and easy-to-use substitute for breast milk in developing countries (Finkle, 1994:603).

This led many mothers, who had a low level of education and some who were not literate and had a poor sense of hygiene, to abandon breast feeding for the infant formula. As a result, many infants in these countries were malnourished and thousands of children died. This eventually led to the banning of baby formula advertising by the WHO until 1984 when the matter was laid to rest. Despite being a world leader in food and beverages Nestlé still went ahead with aggressive advertising to "capture'' the vast market of developing countries for profit.

Another example is that of the tobacco companies which have continued in operation despite the global campaign to discourage smoking. In Nigeria, for instance, after advertising cigarettes, there is always a warning that 'smoking is dangerous to health'. However, this has not deterred the production of cigarettes and smoking. As Stiglitz (2008:474-475) notes, cigarette companies, smokers as well as some members of society have known for decades that cigarettes are bad for human health. An issue of concern has been that the cigarette manufacturing companies have consistently played down the scientific evidence on the dangers of smoking. Moreover, these companies have succeeded in preventing regulations on smoking effects to ensure they do not bear "any liability" for the enormous costs and destruction from their product. Through subtle means, the cigarette manufacturing companies in Nigeria, for instance, have exonerated

themselves with the warning that “smoking is dangerous to health”, and in South Africa that “tobacco is not for sale to persons under the age of eighteen years”. The question to ask is: are these statements of caution adequate to explain the damages inflicted on society, especially on the non-smoking public? These tendencies however exist because of the desire to make profits and the successful infiltration of the regulatory framework.

It is also instructive to mention that in Nigeria, the profit drive of MNCs manifested in the hasty clinical trial of the antibiotic known as Trovaflaxin produced by Pfizer, an American multinational pharmaceutical conglomerate, in Kano during a meningitis vaccination in 1998 which resulted in the death of the ten children who participated in the trial. This occurrence led to the mass rejection of polio vaccines in the Northern part of Nigeria and the eventual increase in cases of polio in Nigeria and other neighbouring countries. It should be noted, however, that a number of foreign agencies, for instance the Ford Foundation, the Carter Centre and others, committed a lot of funds with which the polio menace was slated for eradication (Cooke and Tahir, 2012:11). Regrettably, the clinical trial appeared not to have conformed fully to the medical procedure required for such trials. The fact is that Pfizer was in a hurry to roll out an alternative drug to the existing one in order to make a profit. The corporation has recently been ordered by a court judgement to pay compensation to the victims.

3.7.4 Multinational corporations’ profit drive and the environment

The environment, according to Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary is “the complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors (such as climate, soil, and living things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival”. It is a vital component of the earth as it supports life. Simply put, “the environment means life and its survival” (Farha, 1990:379). On his part Marelli (2011) explained the environment from the dimension of its utilities. He emphasised that human survival is dependent on the environment and the flow of the ecosystems which facilitate provisioning of services for human welfare. These range from food, solid materials, energy among others. Man is therefore inseparable from his environment and with the application of human intellectual abilities in the utilisation of environment and its resources societal development is enhanced.

However, the supportive role of the environment has come under threat because of human productive activities aggravated by some MNCs. Activities of MNCs in relation to the environment is supposed to be guided by what Farha (1990:282) refers to as “corporate conscience” or the “do good” mentality. This appears, however, not to exist in reality. The individual and corporate pathological pursuit for profit has replaced this ideal. As the OECD (2008:19) states, multinational enterprises are expected to operate within the framework of laws, regulations and administrative practices in the countries in which they operate, and in consideration of relevant international agreements, conventions, principles, objectives, and standards, taking due account of the need to protect the environment, public health and safety, and generally conducting their activities in a manner contributing to the wider goal of sustainable development. While MNCs in the North are cautious of the need to operate in relation to the environment due to their strong regulatory institutions, the situation is not the same with MNCs in countries of the South. The literature reveals startling revelations of MNCs’ recklessness especially in relation to the environment (see Boele et al., 2001; Akpan, 2005; Umejesi, 2011).

Rondinelli (2004:6) observes that environmental interest groups have claimed that MNCs, in seeking to maximise profit and based on their intention to avoid stringent regulatory conditions at home, are relocating to what is called “pollution havens”. These are usually poor developing countries in the South where regulations exist only on paper. Monitoring and supervision is inadequate and the institutions in charge of control are grossly ineffective. This assertion falls in line with the idea expressed by Bakan (2004) that MNCs will do anything, anywhere, as long as they can get away with it. This desire for profit maximisation is evident, for instance, in the activities of Royal-Dutch Shell Petroleum. Rondinelli (2004) states that after Shell obtained permission from the British government to sink the unused storage platform in the North Sea, activists from an NGO called Greenpeace protested vigorously, occupied the platform, and organised protests in major European cities with a call for the boycott of Shell’s products. The Greenpeace campaign was successful in organising public opinion against Shell and forced the company to reverse its decision. It is worrisome to note that if Shell could attempt to carry out this decision which obviously would lead to massive sea pollution in the North, it shows, to a large extent, what this company would do in the countries of the South, the “pollution havens’’ (Rondinelli, 2004). Even though it has been argued that MNCs, for many years, have been spending about 10% of their capital investment on health, safety and

environmental protection in their host environments, the trend is that additional costs are simply added by MNCs to the price of their products (in form of price adjustments) so that consumers bear the extra cost (Rondinelli, 2004). This, in effect, further underlines MNC's desire for profit maximisation.

To buttress MNCs' utter disregard for the environment and lack of care for the environment and its people, the activities of Shell in Nigeria remains a clear manifestation of an MNC that is 'socially irresponsible'. Monshipouri et al. (2003:977) state that the Shell has been operating in Nigeria since 1958; its area of oil operation in one of the mostly densely populated regions of Nigeria, an area in the Niger Delta inhabited by the Ogoni ethnic group, has a population of over half a million people. The concern is that although oil production dramatically increases Nigeria's GNP, this growth, Monshipouri et al. (2003) note, comes at a horrendous cost to the six million people living in the Niger Delta. The region suffers severe environmental damage and it will take several years to recover the losses in a situation where serious and conscious efforts of pollution management are deployed. As Monshipouri et al. (2003:977) point out:

> Twenty-seven incidents between 1982 and 1992 resulted in a total of 1,626,000 gallons of oil being spilled from Shell's Nigerian operations...Public health has suffered as a result of a massive pollution of farmlands, fishing areas, and water supplies. In addition to poor environmental and public health safeguards, regional negligence has aggravated the country's income disparities. Since 1958, Royal Dutch/Shell has extracted some $30 billion worth of oil from the region. Despite this, the Ogonis are among the poorest in the country and those who dear to speak out against continued environmental recklessness of Shell are persecuted.

The example of Shell's operations in Ogoniland is one out of the numerous cases of environmental crises in the oil-producing Niger Delta of Nigeria or what some have referred to as "ecological terrorism" (see Akpan, 2005).

3.7.5 Multinational corporations' profit drive and employment relations

In their bid to maximise profits MNCs engage in a number of violations of labour and employment relations. According to Chella (2012), the exploitation of developing countries by MNCs has become, in some situations, egregious. Multinationals have massive budgets, sometimes bigger than the annual budgets of some countries, and are driven essentially by

profit. They use the smallest number of workers possible, move from jurisdiction to jurisdiction with relative ease, import labour to the detriment of local labour, and do not always take into account the social needs of the country in which they are operating. As a result of these factors and many other international economic issues such as insufficient technology transfer, lack of foreign investment and the phenomenon of brain drain, many developing countries require regulation within the framework of the United Nations in order to respond effectively to the situation (Aguirre, 2004:7).

Among the important issues of employment relations identified by the ILO and other international agencies is the principle of collective bargaining, which is often disregarded by MNCs. Collective bargaining by employees is a form of empowerment and protection at work for the employees. It is based on freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. It guarantees workers and employers the possibility of joining organisations and acting together to protect their own economic interests, and also has many implications for industrial peace and harmony. The principle ensures protection against any act of interference and discrimination that employees may experience at work, and against all forms of harassment. In the global economy, freedom of association by employees and the right to collective bargaining constitute instruments to create a link between social objectives and market constraints in an industry. Contrary to this global expectation, however, Hossain and Semeza (2013:3) found in a study carried out in Bangladesh that as a result of the carry-over effect from Pakistan at independence, companies operating in the EPZ of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh had no unions to take care of the interest of employees until 2004. Most of these companies are perhaps MNCs. The practice of not allowing employees to form unions in their organisations is a contradiction of all known international conventions and represents a means of subjecting the employees to servitude (ILO, 2008; ILO-ITC, 2012:5).

Another manifestation of MNCs' pursuit of profit is the issue of forced or compulsory labour[4] which has been globally abolished but which is still subtly practised in MNCs despite claims of global standards and ethics. The ILO estimates of incidences of forced or compulsory labour was 12.3 million between 1995-2005 and by 2012, the estimate had increased to at

[4] The forced Labour Convention (No. 29), 1930, explains the term forced or compulsory labour as "all work or service which is from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily".

least 20.9 million people who were victims of forced labour worldwide (ILO, 2012:11). Freedom from forced or compulsory labour is a fundamental human right linked to the right to choose work freely. This work should be consistent with individual expectations and skills, and should be carried out in decent human conditions (ILO, 2012). Therefore, the fact that the worker receives a salary or a wage is irrelevant to determining if a situation can be considered as forced or compulsory labour. In essence, compulsory overtime work, which employers in many countries of the South encourage in order to meet market demand of a particular company's products, is a subtle form of forced labour. The idea of not allowing employees to go on leave and paying them money in lieu of such leave is another form of forced labour. Many such practices are found in modern industrial systems.

The ILO-ITC (2012:8) also identified other sharp practices or unethical business practice engaged by MNCs as means of disregarding rules, including discriminatory practices in recruitment and remuneration, hours of work and rest, paid holidays, maternity protection, security of tenure, job assignments, performance assessment and advancement. Other aspects include training opportunities, job prospects, social security, and occupational safety and health. MNCs invest in all these endeavours only to make more profits and not just for the benefit of their employees (OECD, 2008:17). Chella (2012:974) found that MNCs' inappropriate employment relations practices included a situation where wealthy MNCs in the globalised world economy routinely displace well-paid workers in the North in order to exploit Southern workers in what amounts to sweatshops characterised by low pay, hazardous working conditions, child labour, and the absence of basic worker rights.

Webster (2011) observes that many countries in Africa (Nigeria and South Africa among others) are guilty of such practices. In Nigeria, for instance, the idea of outsourcing by many MNCs, such as MTN, is a way of denying employees some of the benefits of employment relations. In a recent newspaper report, MTN Nigeria transferred the services of 252 engineers to Ericcson and Huawei, their engineering services provider (*The Punch*, 2 April 2014). This is a subtle way of disengaging some of the employees from the services of the organisation. In a situation where highly technical and professional workers in the organisation are outsourced, it can be imagined what would happen to employees with a liberal arts background, for instance, in such an organisation. The ultimate desire of MNCs is to cut costs and make more profits irrespective of the consequences their actions could have, in this case, on those employees who are transferred to their service providers.

3.8 Multinational corporations and protectionism

Protectionism occurs when there are, deliberately or otherwise, restrictive measures designed to limit trade flows. The rationales for protectionism are diverse and they do not stand up to public debate as they are born out of greed. Protectionism comes in many forms and so there is no general agreement on what constitutes protectionism, although it often involves restricting trade by limiting foreign competition faced by domestic firms. At one end of the spectrum it might be defined as restrictions on imports through tariffs and quotas. But a much broader definition might include the influence of a wide range of implicit and explicit manipulation of rules and regulations in the interest of MNCs irrespective of dislocation and attendant distortions in the host economy (DBIS, 2011:3). While the WTO is not against protection of infant industries, MNCs have often advanced various reasons to safeguard their investments in the host country (DBIS, 2011:5).

According to Harrison and Rodriguez-Clare (2009:18), MNCs will enlist the support of their home governments to force a renegotiation of contracts when they feel they have been underbid by the competition. A good case in point is the Argentine's water concessions won by AGBA, a water consortium, for a period of 30 years at a very low bid but, surprisingly, the company put pressure on government for renegotiation within six months arguing that the concessionary agreement guaranteed a "fair remuneration" on capital invested in the project (Post, 2014). In South Africa, Saur's subsidiary Siza Water renegotiated its contract with the municipality of KwaDukuza on the Dolphin Coast, only two years after the award of a 30-year concession. Siza had ensured that a relief clause was included in the contract which allowed for renegotiation if returns were either above or below a predetermined range. The renegotiated agreement provided for an immediate 15% price increase and a R15m reduction in projected investments, from R25m to R10m in five years (Lobina and Hall, 2003:30). Concession arrangements often guarantee a steady rate of return by shielding the operator from a downfall in revenue due to variations in water consumption. Other examples abound in Chile, Bolivia and Ecuador; among others (see Bucheli, 2008; Bucheli and Aguilera, 2010). This is a clear manifestation of protectionism by MNCs in areas of operations.

MNCs also often lobby and manipulate the government to keep protectionist measures in place so that they can reap the profits from unforeseen market distortions. The case of

Chrysler comes readily to mind: the company deployed outdated and inefficient practices in Mexico and fought to keep the protectionist policies in place “in order to preserve what its managers described as a ‘cash cow’” (Moran 2005, 283-309). Hewlett-Packard, Compaq, Apple, and other high-tech foreign investors also fought to keep Mexico’s protectionist policies in place as it kept competitors out of the market allowing the MNCs to sell two to three year old computer technology in the local market at exorbitant prices (Moran, 2005:283-309). As stated earlier, MNCs are profit-seeking entities in all operations and maximise advantages wherever possible. And so it may not always be the case that using the most up-to-date technology and production techniques maximises profits, especially in an environment where MNCs are able to prevent other competitors (BIS, 2011:16).

Empirical evidence also abounds of protectionism exemplified by the ITT which became involved in Chilean affairs in the 1970s to the point of working with the opposition to destabilise the government because of the desire to protect American investments. ITT was able to do this due to the backing of Richard Nixon’s government in Washington. Despite litigation, Nestlé continued to use aggressive marketing practices to promote the use of infant baby formula in Third World countries, and maintained its global position in beverages despite campaigns against it. The company would not have been able to sustain its dominant position without the invisible power and protection of the state (Paul and Barbato, 1985:10). The prosecution of officials of the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, over a gas leakage that led to the death of many people was stalled by the American government’s refusal to hand over the indicted officials – a clear case of the state shielding officials of corporations. The situation is not different from the story of Shell, which has continued oil and gas exploration in the Nigeria’s Niger Delta despite the allegations of pollution and destruction of the Niger Delta ecological zone and alleged eco-terrorism (see Akpan, 2005). The company not only enjoys local protection in Nigeria but also international protection, otherwise Shell would have been more environmentally friendly in the Niger Delta.

3.9 Skills development and the 'taming' of multinational corporations

Evidence abounds that skills development presents several challenges to developing countries considering not only the several socio-economic challenges which have become complicated with global realities, but more importantly the salient features of the human

capital formation challenges in these countries. Globalisation has engendered the global flow of capital and goods, and global manufacturing has increased extensively the scope of employment for people in the developing world. The most glaring features of this phenomenon, however, according to ILO (2012) are the unjust labour practices including poor wages, extremely long working hours with minimum compensation, lack of occupational safety and health practices, little access to maternity and childcare benefits, arbitrary transfers and redeployments at the workplace. Other untoward activities include the absence of union and low workers' participation, presence of forced and compulsory labour, and persisting workplace discrimination (Stiglitz, 2002; Acker, 2004). These vulnerable and exploitative labour practices, which are the results of global players' desire to minimise cost and maximise profit, have provoked a strong debate on how to improve labour standards at the factories and ensure environmental responsiveness and justice for global workers. Many industrial relations experts have argued that unjust or unfair labour conditions can be improved or eliminated through a tripartite industrial relations system (see for instance, Shen and Benson, 2008; Hossain and Semenza, 2013:2). It is instructive to note, from extant studies, that some MNCs still embrace paternalistic ideas and seek to negate tripartism in their organisations despite International Labour Organisation's conventions and host countries' labour regulations.

According to the ILO, different measures can be utilised to curb the excesses of multinational corporations, with three levels of interventions identified (ILO, 2008:1-3; Kefela, 2010):

- cooperation between the various providers of skills training and development institutions, such as schools, training institutions and enterprises, to establish coherent and consistent learning paths;
- coordination and synergy between skills development institutions and enterprises to match skills supply and demand; and
- the coordination of skills development policies with industrial, investment, trade, technology and macroeconomic policies so that skills development policies are integrated effectively into the national development strategy and policy coherence is achieved for any national economy.

The ILO further calls for cooperation between different agencies of government to ensure the effective harmonisation of information on skills need. The challenge for government policy is to develop and foster institutional arrangements through which the government, employers, workers and training institutions can respond effectively to changing skill and training needs for up-skilling and play a strategic and forward-looking role in facilitating and sustaining technological, economic and social advancement in the society (ILO, 2008:1-3; Maclean et al., 2013).

ILO Recommendation No. 195 (2004) provides policy guidelines on human resources development, education, training and lifelong learning. The key highlights, according to the ILO (2004), are:

- Skills development is the shared responsibility of government, employers and individual workers, with social partners playing a critical role.
- Skills are fundamental to, but not sufficient for, gaining decent jobs: linking skills with employment opportunities and decent work is critical, and skills need to be an integral part of economic growth and employment strategies.

Similarly, an ILO review of country experiences (ILO, 2008) shows that countries that have succeeded in linking skills development to improved employability, productivity and employment growth have directed their skills development policies towards meeting three objectives:

- Matching demand and supply of skills;
- Maintaining the employability of workers and the sustainability of enterprises; and
- Sustaining a dynamic process of development.

3.10 Conclusion

There is consensus in the literature that although skills development is a viable strategy for growth, socio-economic development and transformation of nations, it engenders several challenges for developing countries, especially those in the African continent. The terrain of skills development has become complicated with global realities and demands and as a

result, skills development remains crucial and constitutes a key item in the development agenda of developing countries. The challenges of skills development to developing countries were explained and thereafter, the chapter examined the discourse on skills development and MNCs, highlighting the issues of scholarly debates and contestations in the discourse.

What the review has also revealed is that skills development in the multinational corporate sector is driven by seemingly different objectives. While the multinational corporations train employees for increased returns on their investment, the host countries of MNCs desire socio-economic benefits. The desire of multinationals to increase profit contradicts host-countries' quest for socio-economic benefits.

Together with the "theoretical" review in chapter two, this chapter provides important conceptual insights against which the findings in later chapters are discussed. The next chapter examines the different skills development institutions that have been established in Nigeria to develop, expand and strengthen the country's skills base.

CHAPTER 4

EVOLUTION OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter brings into perspective different skills development institutions established for the training and development of needed skills for social and economic transformation of the country. The Nigerian state came into being formally with the amalgamation of the North and Southern protectorates by Lord Lugard in 1914. Prior to this time, the people had existed for long periods under different empires and kingdoms. As Rodney (1972) observed, before the coming of the Europeans, Africans were a developed people. They had their own institutions and governmental systems which were indigenous. Without doubt, it can also be inferred that long before the experience of colonial rule, skills development, education and training have been part of life for the Nigerian people as the young ones were inducted and socialised about their culture, social activities, survival skills, work or craft. Most of the education processes were informal, and in a number of societies, formal teaching was adopted to inculcate societal values and culture. In essence, the young ones, through socialisation processes, imbibed the social capital to function for personal survival and societal well-being (Otite and Ogionwo, 1979). This represented the manner in which the foundation of human capital formation, education and skills development was laid in Nigeria and thus provided the basis for Western European education which was introduced from the 1840s and began in the colony of Lagos, Calabar and other coastal cities.

For the purpose of this thesis, however, the evolution of skills development institutions in Nigeria will be discussed under the following themes in order to foreground the experience of what in the thesis is referred to as a skills development "discourse constituency" led by the state: the university system, the National Universities Commission (NUC), the National Manpower Board (NMB), Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), the Centre for Management Development (CMD), the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Industrial Training Fund (ITF), and Nigerian Institute of Training and Development (NITAD). The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the efforts made by the

Nigerian government in forging a set of skills development expectations and praxis which is supposed to be mirrored in the broader economy. .

4.2 The university system

University education is generally considered one of the foundations of African countries' economic and social development. The university as a fortress and citadel of learning has a great role to play in the building of a nation. This is because it acts as a space where a nation's brains are trained and profound research is conducted, to enhance national development (Anumnu, 2000). The evolution of university education in human capital formation in Nigeria was to satisfy the desire of Nigerians for highly trained and skilled human resource in the country. Citing an example of one of the oldest universities in Nigeria, Adewoye (2000:16) noted that "the history of the University of Ibadan is, in a sense, inseparable from the history of Nigeria after the Second World War". As the Second World War came to an end in 1945 and with the return of those who fought in the war, the late 1940s witnessed increased enlightenment, culminating in the adoption of the Richards Constitution of 1946, the introduction of regionalism and formation of political activities, and the increase in nationalist activities in the 1950s which were steps in preparation for self-rule. The three regions– Eastern, Northern and Western – as well as the federal government increased the tempo of employment into the civil service with emphasis on Nigerianisation. With this scenario, it could be inferred that the evolution of university education in human capital formation is synonymous with the establishment of the University of Ibadan which evolved after the Second World War (Materu et al., 2011:98).

The tempo of political activities for self-determination and the desire to grant self-rule to its colonies prompted the British colonial government to set up two commissions in 1943: the Asquith and Elliot Commissions. The Asquith Commission looked into the "principles which should guide the promotion of higher education, learning and research and the development of universities in the colonies" (Adewoye, 2000:16), while the Elliot Commission was expected not only to undertake a follow-up on the Asquith Report, but also to report on the organisation and facilities of existing centres of higher education in British West Africa and to make recommendations regarding future university development in that area. The Commissions' reports led to the upgrading of existing post-secondary institutions in different parts of the British Empire. The Yaba Higher College in Nigeria,

which had existed since 1934 for training an intermediate-level indigenous workforce, was upgraded and moved to Nigeria's South-Western city of Ibadan to become a college of the University of London. It was inaugurated in November 1948, and in1962 became the University of Ibadan. This designation University College was in keeping with the recommendations of both the Asquith and the Elliot Commissions that "these universities to be established in British West African territories should aspire from the outset to academic standards equal to those of universities and university colleges in Britain" (Materu et al., 2011:199). The University College Ibadan, remained as the only university in Nigeria for high level human capital formation until independence in 1960.

As independence became imminent and in order to satisfy the yearnings of Nigerians for university education, early in 1959 the government constituted the Ashby Commission to advice on the higher education needs of the country for its first two decades (Ajayi and Ekundayo, 2008). Before the submission of the report, however, the Eastern Region government established its own university, the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1960. The implementation of the Ashby Report also led to the establishment of the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) in 1962 by the Western region, while the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria was established in 1962 by the Northern Region, and the University of Lagos established by the Federal Government in 1962. Babalola et al. (2007) noted that the University College Ibadan became a full-fledged university in 1962 and began to introduce other courses that were not offered at inception. This meant that the University College, Ibadan, and the University of Lagos became the first two federal universities in Nigeria, while the other three universities remained regional. In 1970, the newly created Midwestern region established the Mid-Western Institute of Technology and, following the famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), opted for a university known as University of Benin in 1970. The six universities established during the period 1960-1970 are still referred to as "first generation" universities. Babalola et al. (2007) remarked that, during this period, universities in Nigeria were under the close surveillance of the government through the NUC.

The oil boom era in the 1970s, which drastically increased the nation's oil income, propelled Nigerians' demand for higher education. In response, in the course of the third national development plan (1975–1980), government established seven new universities instead of the four proposed in the plan. These were the Universities of Calabar, Ilorin, Jos, Sokoto

(Usmanu Dan Fodio), Maiduguri, Port Harcourt and Ado Bayero University, Kano — all known as "second generation" universities because they were the second set of universities to be established in the country. The government also took over the four “regional” universities in 1975 through a military decree.

The "third generation" universities are those universities established as the nation returned to democratic governance between 1979 and 1983 when the military returned to power. However, Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008) referred to all universities established between 1980 and early 1990 as part of the third generation of universities. These are the Federal University of Technology in Owerri, Makurdi, Yola, Akure and Bauchi; while universities established by state governments are found in Imo, Ondo, Lagos, Akwa-Ibom, Ogun, Cross River and Rivers states (Anyamele, 2004).

The "fourth generation" universities are those established since 1999. They include more state universities: the Federal universities in the states that did not already have one; the National Open University of Nigeria to provide correspondence and distance learning; the University of Petroleum Resources, for the training and development of skills for the oil industry – the most strategic aspect of the national economy such that Nigeria might not be subjected to skills protectionism by the expatriates operating the sector; and the recently established Maritime University. In addition, the Nigerian Defence Academy for the training of military personnel was upgraded to award university degrees. Three states – Ekiti, Ogun and Rivers –upgraded their Colleges of Education to Universities of Education, and private individuals, organisations and religious bodies were also licensed to establish universities. By the end of year 2013, all the 36 states in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory had a Federal University within the state.

All the states in the country now have their own state universities. Yet, the large number of applicants who are desirous of university education for acquisition of relevant skills and are qualified could not be offered admission into these Universities (Materu et al., 2011:209). This necessitated the issuance of licences to private education providers. Out of about 1.7 million candidates that sat for the Unified Matriculation Tertiary Examinations in 2013, only about 500,000 could be offered admission in the existing universities, polytechnics and Colleges of Education (Ogundele, 2013). The country now has between 125-130 universities that are approved for education and human capital formation.

Despite the proliferation of universities and other educational institutions in the country in recent times, skills shortage and skills mismatch still abound within the Nigerian economy due to the disconnect between education and training offered by these numerous institutions and the economic demand. The quality of some of the graduates of these training institutions has been questioned within the global labour environment, contrary to the high premium placed on graduates of Nigerian institutions shortly after independence. The causes of this negative phenomenon are not difficult to see: they are manifestations of the multiplier effects of the socio-economic and political dislocations within the Nigerian body polity. These have culminated in inadequate funding, a dearth of equipment and materials for training, and corruption and other social vices plaguing the Nigerian state (Odia and Omofonmwan, 2007). The establishment, management and administration of higher educational institutions is no longer insulated from politics. The effects of these negative trends include incessant strikes of academics and administrative staff, student demonstrations and, most especially, the brain drain phenomenon aggravated by globalisation.

4.3 The National Universities Commission (NUC)

The National Universities Commission on its own does not engage directly in training and skills development: its function is to ensure standardisation of training and skills development by the universities and other degree-awarding institutions. Because of this vital role in quality assurance, the NUC is included in this study as one of the institutions involved in human capital formation and in shaping skills development discourse in Nigeria.

After the attainment of regional self-government, it became obvious that as colonial leadership and dominance in Nigeria was ending, human capital development was one of the keys to promoting economic growth and development of the newly independent country. It also posed a serious challenge to the new country (Anumnu, 2000). There was, seemingly, a realisation that with the withdrawal of colonial administrators and officials, there would be problems in administration in Nigeria in the early years of independence due to shortages of trained and skilled Nigerians from the universities. Thus, the need to steadily develop the educational system informed the Federal Government of Nigeria's decision to establish the NUC shortly after independence in 1962. The NUC was charged with the responsibility of generally overseeing and ensuring the balanced development and

growth of universities and university education in the country (Anumnu, 2000). The NUC was established as an advisory agency in the Cabinet Office. In 1974, it became a statutory body and Professor Jubril Aminu was appointed as the first Executive Secretary. The NUC became a parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and in a little over half a century, the NUC had transformed from a small office in the cabinet office to an important agency of government in the area of development and management of university education in Nigeria. Atah (2011) and Bichi (2011) observe that the reconstitution in 1974 gave the NUC a proper scope and broad responsibilities which include orderly development of universities and university education in Nigeria with due consultation of all relevant bodies including the NMB, maintaining its high standard, and funding of universities. The NUC was further strengthened by Decrees No. 16 of 1985 and No. 49 of 1988 which empowered it to:

> Lay down minimum standards for all Universities in the Federation and to accredit their degrees and other academic awards after obtaining prior approval through the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, providing that the accreditation of degrees and other academic awards shall be in accordance with such guidelines as may be laid down and approved by the Commission from time to time (cited in Okojie, 2008:12).

Other functions of the NUC, according to Okojie (2008), include granting approval for all academic programmes offered in Nigerian universities, granting approval for the establishment of all degree-awarding institutions in Nigerian, and ensuring quality assurance of all academic programmes offered in Nigerian universities. In addition, the NUC acts as the channel for all external support to Nigerian universities (Okojie, 2008, see also www.nuc.ed.ng). To ensure compliance by the institutions, regular evaluation of set standards and operational guides are carried out through accreditation exercises. The outcome of the universities and programme accreditation could lead to:

(1) full accreditation, which certifies the programme for six sessions subject to satisfactory sustenance of performance during midterm review after three years;
(2) interim accreditation, which implies that the university must take concrete measures to make some improvements in identified lapses within a period of two years or be prevented from further admitting students and running such programme;
(3) denial of accreditation, which blacklists the university from running such a programme until deficiencies are rectified (see Okojie, 2007)

As the Executive Secretary notes, when a programme is denied accreditation, the commission publishes such for public knowledge. In addition, it will formally inform relevant bodies in both public and private sectors, such as the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), the Nigeria Civil Service Commission, the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) and other relevant professional regulatory bodies. Also notified about the denied accreditation status of the programme of a particular university are the Nigerian Students Loans Board (Education Bank), the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and various Federal and State Scholarship Boards (Okojie, 2008:18). With these efforts, the commission helps in maintaining minimum academic standards in the Nigerian University System. Since 2006, the NUC took a step further in its quality assurance mandate by embarking on the accreditation of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programmes in Nigerian universities and post-graduate programmes (Okojie, 2008:23).

The essence of NUC's activities is to ensure that skills and training are of comparable standard anywhere in the world such that graduates of these universities will be able to compete with the best in the world, in academics and other relevant fields of human endeavour. This summarises the Commission's contribution to the skills development debate. But whether the "high-level" skills produced in the university system is good enough for graduates not to be subjected to "skills protectionism" in the multinational corporate sector remains an empirical question. What is relatively certain is that the NUC assists in ensuring standards and quality of Nigerian universities in human capital formation and skills development.

4.4 The National Manpower Board (NMB)

There is consensus in the literature that the establishment of the Ashby Commission in 1959 and acceptance of the report of the Commission in 1960 led to the establishment of the NMB (see Umo, 1996). However, there appears not to be general agreement on the role played by the NUC towards the nation's human resource development and this contributed to the merger of the NMB with NISER in 2006 by those who had been beneficiaries of the Commission's planning programmes and in positions of authority. The founding fathers of Nigeria were conscious of the vital role of human resource in development and as such, towards independence, they constituted the Ashby Commission

to enable the country, within the first two decades, make “adequate” provision for the development and utilisation of the nation’s human resource requirements. It is this vision that led to the establishment of the NMB in 1962.

At inception, the NMB was a division within the Cabinet office and was responsible for human resource planning in Nigeria prior to 2006. It was first established in 1962 under the umbrella of the National Economic Council as part of the recommendations of the Ashby Commission, and was to give full consideration to all aspects of human resource development programmes in Nigeria (Umo, 1996). In 1984, the NMB was dissolved, but its secretariat continued to function as a human resource division in the erstwhile Ministry of Budget and Planning. In 1991, the NMB became a statutory body under Decree Number 18 of 1991 and was inaugurated in 1992. The decree mandated it to, among other things: determine and advise the government on the nation’s human resources needs in all occupations; formulate human resource development and utilisation policies and programmes in order to ensure optimum implementation of the same for enhancement of the nation’s human resources; coordinate human resource policies and programmes of federal, state and local governments; and collect, collate, analyse and publish manpower employment information and data generated through surveys, studies and enquiries including administrative means. These objectives were informed by the government’s consciousness of the vital role of skilled human resource as one of the most essential inputs of modern economic growth and development and to avoid shortages or surpluses of human resource.

Through the NMB, the nation sought to identify the future requirements for skilled human resource and to design the education system so as to produce a labour force with the necessary skill and technical or professional knowledge. Human resource planning helps to eliminate or minimise problems of human resource wastage that arise from unemployment, over-employment or underemployment, as the case may be (Obasan and Akindele-Oscar, 2011:318). The central objective of human resource planning which the NMB was tasked was to construct a strategy of human resource development that aligned with the country’s broader objectives of social, political and economic development. Human resource planning at the very least includes planning of the formal education system, planning of in-service training and planning of adult education. It should also include an analysis of the structure

of incentives and the utilisation of human resources as well as surveys on unemployment and under-employment, and the development of appropriate measures for their alleviation.

To achieve these objectives in line with the mandate of the NMB, in terms of the scope of the NMB's human resource planning activities, it was stated that the NMB was to work closely with the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) to generate educational statistics used in monitoring human resource trends and patterns at the different levels of Nigeria's educational system. As a member of the governing council of the NMB, the FME collaborated with the NMB in the exchange of data and the formulation of education related policies. In addition, the NMB had a symbiotic relationship with the tertiary education commissions and regulatory agencies such as the NUC, National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), and indeed assisted in the formulation of the programmes and policies of these parastatals. The NMB also coordinated activities of these institutions and those of other government human resource development agencies such as NDE, ITF, CMD and ASCON through seminars, meetings. The NMB further harmonises the programmes of these institutions and agencies into the national development plans when Nigeria operated them, and the subsequent Rolling Plans introduced by the Military. The NMB was also closely associated with the Ministry of Labour and Productivity and its parastatals and worked to obtain relevant data for monitoring labour productivity, labour utilisation and employment promotion issues. In addition, the Ministry of Economic and National Planning, later known as the National Planning Commission, was the Supervising Ministry of the NMB. As a subsidiary of the National Planning Commission, the NMB prepared the human resource section of the National Development Plans. The activities of the NMB cut across all states of the federation in both public and private sectors, and all skills and professional levels in all occupations were monitored by the NMB (Agabi and Ogah, 2010:60).

As Anyanwu (2010) points out, the utilisation of human capital (i.e. employment) is ultimately the whole essence of the establishment of the NMB. Unutilised developed human capital lies fallow with great potential for socio-economic hazards and danger. They constitute great potential for armed robbers, fraudsters, drug users and peddlers and other antisocial deviants and, of recent, agents of terrorists. This scholar further emphasises that Nigeria has made outstanding and indeed commendable strides in capacity building as the NMB's records, especially in its early days, showed a continuing general growth trend at all

levels of the educational system in both the number of institutions and the number of students enrolled. However, although the NMB was to ensure that institutions were established to produce the human resource needed in the right quantity and of the right quality, with the military incursion into politics coupled with the oil boom in the 1970s, the rule of procedure in the establishment of universities and tertiary institutions was jettisoned as the military government established tertiary institutions without recourse to the NMB. This culminated in the universities producing human resource that was not required in the economy. The resultant effect was the high rate of unemployment witnessed especially from the 1980s and that has now assumed a crisis dimension. Because of the unplanned establishment of institutions, Nigeria now has university graduates that perhaps triple the products of polytechnics, culminating in what Anyanwu (1996:55) referred to as an "inverted pyramid which is antithetical to growth and development of any nation".

In January 2006, the Federal Government approved the merger of the NMB with the NISER while at the same time retaining NISER'S name and functions (NISER, 2008:154; Agabi and Ogah, 2010:153). This is contrary to the situation in some of the emerging developing countries in Asia, Malaysia and Singapore where their manpower boards have become full-fledged ministries. This goes to show that human resource planning in Nigeria is an issue that is not attracting the needed attention.

The issues raised above as regards the functionality of the NMB (which has been merged with NISER) are germane to this thesis. The concern is that during the first decade and half after its establishment, there was systemic growth of Universities and the courses they teach, such that unemployment was almost virtually non-existent, and university graduates were considered highly skilled and were recruited even before graduating with mouth watering incentives. Such graduates could not have been subjected by multinational employers to any form of skills protectionism. The massive disjuncture in skills development and utilisation presently plaguing Nigeria has not only led to a high rate of unemployment, but has led to a situation where graduates of Nigerian universities are now subjected to rigorous screening by multinational companies before gaining employment. This, in essence, negates the laudable objectives of the NMB. In short, the resultant skills challenge in the Nigerian economy despite the merger of the NMB with NISER is questionable.

4.5 Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER)

The Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) is the country's foremost socio-economic policy think tank established at independence in 1960. However, it should be noted that its role as a policy research institute dates back to 1950, when it was known as the West African Institute of Social and Economic Research (WAISER), a policy think tank for British West Africa based in Ghana. The independence of Ghana in 1957 marked the beginning of the disintegration of the institute but the vital role it played led to its establishment in Nigeria (NISER Annual Report, 2005; NISEREEL, 2010). Its pivotal role in providing and guiding socio-economic policy direction of the country since then has not changed. Suffice it to say that, based on the exigencies of specific periods in the history of Nigeria from the last decade of colonial rule in Nigeria until now, the institute continues to provide relevant, credible and timely policy direction and advice to the country and relevant stakeholders. Many of the key industrial projects in Nigeria today have benefited from the consultancy advice of NISER such that the economy as a whole may not be subjected to protectionism by capitalist investors concerned with profit maximisation.

One of the functions of NISER is to conduct research on economic and social issues confronting the country. Therefore, the focus of NISER studies at any point in time clearly reflects the attempt to address pressing and prevailing problems. NISER is also charged with the responsibility of organising conferences, workshops and seminars on vital economic and social development issues. In the past, NISER played a central role in preparing grounds for putting together virtually all post-independence National Development Plans (NDPs) between 1962 and 1984 through conferences where technocrats, development planners, economists, academics, interest groups and key stakeholders came together to brainstorm NDPs. It is of interest in this study to examine the role of NISER in skills development, and as such, the focus is on the Human Resources Department and Utilisation Department (HRDUD) charged with the responsibility for human capital development.

The HRDUD is one of the four main departments of NISER. It emerged as a training division in 1982 after the International Comparative Study on the Organisation and Productivity of Research Units (ICSOPRU) project handled by Professor Sanda ended. The training division later metamorphosed into the Manpower Development Department (MDD)

in 1983. In 1992, the name of the department was changed to the Human Resources Development Department (HRDD). In 2006, the NMB was merged with NISER and as a result, the name of the department changed to HRDUD in order to accommodate the utilisation (employment) aspect. HRDUD comprise two divisions: the Manpower Planning and Utilisation Division (MPUD) and the HRDD. As the training division of NISER at its inception, it was given the responsibility of planning and organising distinguished lectures on vital national issues held in different cities across Nigeria.

In 1988, additional responsibilities were added to the division, including research and consultancy on various problems relating to education and employment in Nigeria, and in 2006, the Federal Government merged the NMB with NISER. This department was further strengthened with a Division of Employment (utilisation) to make it strong enough to accommodate all the statutory functions performed by the defunct NMB. Thus, the HRDD has expertise in the issues of human resources development planning; educational planning, management and development; personnel management; organisation of seminars and conferences; and organisation of special training programmes for middle and high level human resource development. The MPUD of this department also engages in research activities such as the Nigerian Labour Market Study, Educational Manpower Supply, and Expatiate Quota Employment Monitoring.

The contributions of the HRDUD in the realisation of the mandate of NISER and the overall development of the country since its inception are indicated by the following:

- Expansion of frontiers of knowledge in the areas of education, industrial relations and human resource utilisation.
- Dissemination of current and relevant information to policy makers at all levels.
- Capacity building through the organisation of specialised training programmes for the public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy.

For many years, the Department has assisted the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity (FML&P) in evaluating the activities and programmes of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). At various times, it has collaborated with relevant government ministries and agencies such as the FME, the FML&P, and the office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation. The Department, on behalf of the NISER, has also collaborated with international development partners such as ILO, the African Capacity

Building Foundation (ACBF) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on issues that are related to the labour market information system (LMIS) in terms of labour supply and demand in the country.

Specifically, the Institute, through the Department, carried out a comprehensive staff audit of the Lagos State Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs in 1988. It was discovered during the study that the quality of human resource in the local governments in Lagos State was extremely low and very poor for meaningful service delivery. The Lagos State Government responded positively to this study by recruiting qualified and relevant personnel which they later sent for specialised training by the department. The successful completion of this assignment culminated in the comprehensive human resource audit of all ministries in Lagos State which was carried out by NISER in conjunction with ASCON and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, between 1990 and 1992. Meanwhile, following the adoption of the recommendations of the report of the 1988 Nigerian Civil Service Reform and the enactment of Decree 43 giving official backing to the reform, the Department of Planning, Research and Statistics in various ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) in the country were created. The HRDUD on behalf of NISER undertook the challenge of training and retraining of staff posted to the newly-created Planning Research and Statistics (PRS) departments in the MDAs to reposition them for their new roles (NISEREEL, 2010).

In 1991, HRDUD organised the first in a series of National Technical Workshops for Personnel in the PRS Departments in the MDAs in the federation. The impact and success of this training workshop resulted in the organisation of another national training workshop on Personnel Management for officers in the personnel departments of MDAs across the country.

The long existence and survival of NISER for over fifty years under different successive governments, shows that the institute plays an important and complementary role in promoting human capital formation and development in Nigeria. However, despite its high level expertise, it does not appear that the dual role of the institute as a policy think tank, as well as the several training and skills development activities align with industrial practices and expectations. With numerous training institutions churning out graduates annually, high level of unemployment especially among graduates are rife and yet, the multinational corporate sector complain of shortage of skills necessitating the employment of expatriates.

This scenario raises compelling empirical questions which are important in this thesis. It appears that between the policy formulations of NISER and its training programmes vis-à-vis government policy on skills development, a lacuna exist that manifests in skills shortage and skills mismatch.

4.6 The Centre for Management Development (CMD)

The indigenisation programme of 1973 which aimed at empowering Nigerians to have control of the economy revealed some gaps which subsequent legislation attempted to rectify. Government took steps to rectify the perceived deficiencies. A good example was in the area of skills and human resources, especially at the managerial level where there were not many Nigerians with the requisite skills and expertise (Umo, 1996:21). As a way of ameliorating this challenge, government established the CMD as the operational arm of the Nigerian Council for Management Development (NCMD), a management think tank. The CMD commenced operations in 1973, although the legal instrument of its establishment was not confirmed until 1976 when the Act No 51 of 1976 was promulgated into law (CMD, 2010). The CMD is actively involved in training, regulation of training standards, and development of managerial human resource for the country and a broad range of skills to enhance the quality of management and leadership for the attainment of national economic objectives. The CMD has also been actively involved in building structures for the enhancement of professional standards, effective management of enterprises and attainment of development goals. The CMD started its operations in Lagos and relocated in 2013 to Abuja. It now has area offices in each of the six geopolitical zones of the country to have a wider spread of its activities. In line with the role of the CMD in building institutions, the CMD has facilitated the establishment of many professional associations with a view to raising the standards and quality of management practice in Nigeria. Among these bodies are the Institute of Management Consultants of Nigeria (IMCON), Institute of Strategic Management of Nigeria, Nigerian Association of Management Consultants (NAMCON), the Nigerian Institute of Marketing (NIMARK) and NITAD.

As part of the CMD's capacity building mandate, it is also involved in management research and consultancy assignments to enhance the quality of management practice and to achieve operational efficiency of its client organisations. The CMD has undertaken consultancy assignments in organisational development, restructuring, job

evaluation, performance appraisal, training needs identification and corporate re-engineering of small, medium and large scale public and private enterprises (see CMD, 2009). And to ensure effective and efficient delivery of its services, the CMD has, over the years, been collaborating with many national institutions, including the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation, international donors, West African Management Development Institutes, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Ford Foundation, the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) (See NCMD, 2010). The collaborations of the CMD especially with international organisations were to ensure that within the global environment, Nigerian managers in various organisations acquire skills and managerial competencies that are relevant and address the human capital formation needs in Nigeria thereby insulating indigenous managers of companies from any form of skills protectionism.

These collaborations have not only deepened its expertise but also raised the profile of the CMD, giving it the opportunity to provide services to varied clientele both within and outside the country. In line with the Federal Government's policy on rationalisation of the public service, the CMD was merged with the National Centre for Economic Management and Administration (NCEMA) in 2004 with the former retaining its name. The merger was aimed at providing a synergy and enhancing the capacity of the two institutions, fused into one, to provide high-end capacity building and professional services. As a parastatal of the National Planning Commission, which has responsibility for driving the vision, plans and programmes of the Federal Government of Nigeria, the CMD has enthusiastically identified with the key agenda of government and the private sector and has taken measures to enhance its competence in the performance of its functions (see CMD, 2010). The capacity building programmes of the CMD towards addressing the problems of skills mismatch and skills shortage -- which negatively affects Nigeria's socio-economic development and transformation -- are examined in the empirical section of this thesis.

The CMD pursues one of its roles of capacity building by: identifying the type and quantity of programmes required for the country's managerial human resource; developing resources for management teaching, training and consultancy; building institutions to meet the need of national development; improving the quality and enhancing the use of management consulting, research and training; serving primarily as a training centre for economic planners, policy analysis, budget and project officers at the federal, state and

local government levels; developing and strengthening the specific skills that will enhance the quality of management of the national economy at the macro and sector levels; and being a policy laboratory for vigorous and sustained development and promotion of highly specialised skills required for enhancing efficient and effective planning and management of the Nigerian economy among others. In addition to these mandates, the CMD undertakes the management development of small-scale industries through the design and provision of suitable training packages for small-scale industrialists and officials of federal and state agencies which have responsibilities for developing small-scale industries in the economy (see CMD Quarterly News April-June, 2012). The expectation is that these activities will go a long way in creating jobs reducing unemployment especially among the youth. The concern of this thesis in interrogating the operations of the CMD is that despite the laudable objectives formulated by the CMD and the programmes put in place since its establishment, Nigeria is still experiencing skills challenge.

The CMD is organised into two departments, eight divisions, and many operating units: the Learning and Development Department comprises the Management Development Division, Entrepreneurship and Business Division and Economic Management Division. The Research and Consultancy Department comprises the Research Division; Consultancy Division; Programme Management and Publication; and Executive Training Programme Division. To ensure the widespread of its activities, the Centre operates five zonal offices which facilitate the services of the CMD in the geographical regions in which they are located as well as in the Federal Capital Territory. The zonal offices are at Abuja, Owerri, Kano, Uyo and Ibadan, and now that the CMD has moved to the Federal Capital Territory, its Lagos office becomes a zonal office (see CMD, 2009).

The CMD's programmes are designed primarily for entrepreneurs and managers in the public and private sectors of the economy; management educators, trainers, consultants, industrial extension officers, researchers, and human resources specialists in institutions and agencies; planners of managerial human resource at the federal, state, local government and organisational levels; professionals and other self-employed Nigerians whose employment and self-fulfilment depend upon enhancing their managerial and supervisory effectiveness; national policy planners, analysts and managers; sector policy designers, analysts and managers; NGOs and members of the civil society.

The guiding principles of the CMD are policy making, promotion and coordination of managerial human resource development, accreditation and registration of management trainers and training institutions, and management advisory and consultancy services to all. Despite the efforts of the CMD towards human capital formation in the country, however, the organisation is treated as an appendage of government. This is contrary to the objective at inception, which was human capital formation and development for the private sector of the Nigerian economy. It would appear that the CMD duplicates functions of other institutions through training and human capital development offered to the public sector. Notwithstanding the numerous training and skills development programmes in place, however, the skills challenge has not been limited to the private or public sector. It is the seeming gap between policy expectations and persisting skills shortage and skills mismatch that has necessitated empirical questioning about the veracity of the CMD's training, training certification and consultancy services.

4.7 The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON)

The Nigerianisation of the public service began towards independence and was vigorously pursued afterwards. The government was conscious of the vital role of public administration in daily life and for it to be able to play this vital role in a dynamic world, personnel must be regularly and adequately trained. This nationalistic ideal for the public service led to the coming into being of the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) which was established by the Federal Government, through Decree No. 39 of 1973, now ASCON Act, Cap.6, Vol. 1 LFN 1990. ASCON specifically is to rectify the critical need for effective leaders at all levels of organisations in the country. As part of its renewed effort to continue to support and enhance the capacity and capability of these organisations, ASCON has put measures in place to be a centre of excellence for the development of leadership in both public and private sector organisations.[5] It should be noted that at inception ASCON was to train senior staff within the Nigerian public service (Umo, 1996:21). However, the collaborative interactions between the public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy have broadened the operations of ASCON to include senior staff in the private sector of the Nigerian economy.

[5]http://www.nigerianseminarsandtraining.com/tprovider/6/Administrative-Staff-College-of-Nigeria--ascon-

The objectives of ASCON include:

- to provide higher management training and skills for the development of senior executives for the public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy;
- to provide and arrange for a comparative study and investigation of the principles and techniques of management and administration
- to exchange ideas and experiences and promote a better understanding between persons connected with management and administration in the various spheres of national life;
- to conduct research into problems of management and administration arising in different spheres of national life;
- to award grants, scholarships or travel fellowships for research in public administration and allied subjects;
- to undertake, organise and facilitate study courses, conferences, lectures, seminars aimed at capacity building;
- to disseminate information by ensuring the publication of journals and of research papers and books in furtherance of the objectives of the College.[6] (see also Brochure of courses for 2013).

ASCON collaborates with West African Management Development Institutes Networks (WAMDEVIN) and other training institutions in Nigeria to ensure the realisation of its objectives of management capacity building and development. While the extension of its services to the private sector may be construed as a negation of the establishment principle of the institution, the desire of its management to ensure a wider audience is captured in its bid to improve on the capacity building and skills development programmes necessitated the extension. The reality however remains that the required skills for economic transformation are still insufficiently acquired by the locals within Nigeria's multinational corporate sector. The skills challenge in Nigeria which persists despite the existence of ASCON over the years as a human capital development agency, necessitates its inclusion for inquiry in this thesis.

[6]http://www.placng.org/lawsofnigeria/node/8

4.8 The Industrial Training Fund (ITF)

The Industrial Training Fund is an agency of government established in 1971 by Decree 47 of 1971 as amended in the 2011 ITF ACT. The objective for which the ITF was established has been pursued vigorously and effectively. In the four decades of its existence, the ITF has not only raised training consciousness in the economy, but has also helped in generating a corps of skilled indigenous human resource which has been manning and managing various sectors of the national economy. Over the years, pursuant to its statutory responsibility, the ITF has expanded its structures, developed training programmes, and reviewed its strategies, operations and services in order to meet the expanding and changing demands for skilled human resource in the economy (2013 training programme ITF skills Centre, Ikeja).

In 1971 the ITF was categorised as a Parastatal “B”, headed by a Director, and by 1981, ITF became a Parastatal category “A”, with a Director-General as the Chief Executive as one of the parastatals under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry. The ITF operates with ten Departments and three Units at the headquarters located in Jos, Plateau State, and has Area Offices in all the states of the federation. It has five Industrial Skills Training Centres and a Centre for Industrial Training Excellence. A Governing Council of thirteen members drawn from the public and private sectors is appointed by the Federal Government to manage the ITF because its activities are for both government and private sectors. In addition, it is to reflect the cooperative spirit of the enterprise, the need for private employers, organised labour, and the providers and users of training to cooperate in identifying training needs and devising training policy and strategy. The whole idea is to ensure that there is synergy with industrial requirements and alignment with overall national desire on skills development (see ITF News Dec. 2012).

As part of its responsibilities, the ITF provides direct training, vocational and apprentice training; research and consultancy services; reimbursement of up to 50% levy paid by employers of labour registered with it, and administers the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). SIWES is a way of exposing students to the practical aspects of organisations. The ITF also provides human resource development information and training, a technology service to industry and commerce to enhance their human

resource capacity, and delivers in-house training as a strategy of bringing development of skills to the organisation of end users.

The main objective of ITF programmes and services is to stimulate human performance, improve productivity, and induce value-added production in industry and commerce. Through its SIWES and Vocational and Apprentice Training programmes, the ITF also builds capacity for graduates and youth self-employment in the context of small scale industrialisation in the economy. As a parastatal operating under the aegis of the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, the ITF has been operating over the years as a specialist agency that promotes and encourages the acquisition of industrial and commercial skills required for national economic development (see ITF website)[7].

The ITF sets and regulates standards and offers direct training intervention in industrial and commercial skills training and development, using a corps of highly competent professional staff, modern techniques and technology. This helps in mitigating the issue of skills mismatch and shortage. The ITF contributes to human capacity building by engaging in industrial training needs identification and intervention; development and implementation of training interventions to address gaps identified during the identification of training needs; engaging in industry-based research activities; undertaking in-depth diagnostic studies of small and medium scale enterprises; Productivity and Efficiency Improvement Training (PEIT) and industry safety training. The philosophy of the organisation revolves around the belief that well-trained human resource is the bedrock of productive effectiveness and efficiency.

Although the ITF is contributing to bridging the gap between educational institutions and the industry by providing the soft skills required for industrial production and assisting in reducing youth unemployment in Nigeria, the real training programmes of the organisation are however limited to the few industrial skills centres which the ITF is trying to overcome with the proposed establishment of skills centres in all states of the federation (See ITF Monthly bulletin, Oct. 2012 and Feb. 2013).

[7] Industrial Training Fund Headquarters Complex, Jos, Plateau State.www.itf-nigeria.com

The skills development activities of ITF includes students or youth through SIWES as a way of aligning their schools training programmes with industrial productivity with the hope of preventing skills protectionism within the industry while adults have the opportunity of developing new vocational skills or improving themselves through the ITF training programmes. It is an issue of concern however; that with all these skills development initiatives, unemployment and dearth of skills still abound at all levels. Is this scenario an offshoot of skills protectionism or, perhaps, the training and skills development activities of the agencies are not formulated in line with industrial requirements? It is this curiosity that motivated the inclusion of the Industrial Training Fund among institutions for human capital formation and skills development in this study.

4.9 The Nigerian Institute of Training and Development (NITAD)

The Nigerian Institute of Training and Development (NITAD) is an offshoot of the Nigerian Association for Training and Development (NATAD) and Institute of Training and Development (ITD) of the UK. The Nigerian Chapter NITAD emerged in 1989 out of the merger of the two associations. It was set up by Human Resource Development (HRD) practitioners and incorporated as a limited liability company in 1994. The institute became chartered after the draft bill submitted to parliament in 2002 was promulgated into law. NITAD is a professional body of HRD practitioners registered in Nigeria and helps in promoting the science and practice of training and development as an integral part of socio-economic development nationwide (Nitad news, 2013).

The professional development activities of NITAD are aimed at facilitating the exchange of knowledge, skills and experience for those engaged in training and development towards achieving a continuous improvement in the utilisation of human abilities and potentials in both the public and private sectors of the economy. NITAD promotes international interaction and exposure of its members to keep them abreast of global development in the area of training and human capital development through affiliation and cooperation with foreign bodies such as the International Federation of Training and Development Organisations (IFTDO), the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), the African Association for Training and Development (AATD) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) of the UK.

Currently, NITAD has more than 2,000 individuals and 300 corporate members. The services rendered are recognised and supported actively by its patrons and clients such as ITF, CMD, ASCON and the Office of Establishment and Management Services at the Federal Secretariat, Abuja. NITAD is also patronised by numerous corporate bodies in the private sector of the economy as well through its various training programmes by those who are conscious of the importance of both the theory and practice of HRD in a country as a determinant of the reliability of its Human Resource profile in the face of continuous challenges and advancement.

This body of HRD practitioners and philosophy is encapsulated in NITAD, and promotes the science and practice of training in Nigeria; provides a forum for exchanging and imparting knowledge, skills and experience amongst those engaged in training; encourages and sponsors appropriate research in the aspects of training and development and publishes such findings for the advancement of public education on training and capacity development; and gives professional accreditation to practitioners who satisfy the necessary requirements laid down by the council. NITAD now runs a Postgraduate Diploma in Training and Development (PGD-TD) (Nitad News, 2013).

The whole essence of NITAD is to ensure improved productivity through training and development of human capital to ensure relevance and compliance with the dynamics of modern socioeconomic life that is knowledge and skills-driven. As a way of propagating the activities of NITAD nationwide, it has established state chapters in all states of the Federation. Presently, where there are no separate offices in a state, the chapters are housed within the area office of the ITF offices located in the state. This is a pointer to the collaborative and mutually beneficial relationship between the ITF and NITAD.[8] The involvement of NITAD as an independent body that is interested in the science and practice of training and skills development without government funding and control, provides a veritable platform for gauging the opinion of the organised private sector agency on issues of human capital formation and skills development. The central concern of the researcher is that institutions such as NITAD has been in existence for several years and yet, Nigeria is still in need of skilled human capital. Thus, it is imperative to raise pertinent questions on

[8]www.nitad.org

the skills development strategies of NITAD and alignment with the national aspirations on human capital formation and skills development.

4.10 Assessment of Skills development institutions in Nigeria

The skills development institutions profiled above illustrate that practical steps have been taken by successive Nigerian governments to establish institutions that support the continuous development of relevant human resource in the country. However, over the years these institutions have not been managed in line with the established objectives. For instance, the National Universities' Commission (NUC) that was established as an autonomous regulatory institution for university education has lost its autonomy, as the government constantly interferes with its activities, notably the accreditation of study programmes of universities. It has derailed from its mandate as a regulatory body of university education and become simply a "governmental body", as universities are now established merely by proclamation without prior critical needs assessment. Besides, the NUC does not seem sufficiently responsive to emerging trends, and does not offer meaningful regulatory oversight in the higher education sector. This has led to the common perception among critics that Nigerian Universities now produce "unemployable" graduates. The failure of oversight means that the curricula do not reflect the needs of society and universities seem insufficiently empowered to produce graduates who can be effective agents of change (see Sobowale, 2015).

According to Adedipe (2013), while the Nigerian University education system was so admired in the past that it attracted large numbers of international students, Nigerian public universities have increasingly turned out to be breeding grounds for cultists. Moreover, the incessant labour strikes by unions in the universities have had negative consequences on human capital formation and skills development. The current state of affairs is that Nigerians are travelling to other countries to acquire qualitative education.

The Nigerian university system has suffered serious setbacks in a number of areas since the late 1980s. One such problem is that the universities have consistently exceeded their admission quota, the result being that available facilities in the universities have become overstressed.

There is also the issue of funding. Government funding for university education, which in the past resulted in highly subsidised tuition costs for those granted admission, has been consistently eroded over the years. As consequence, tuition costs have escalated, and yet this has not been matched by improved education quality. Public perceptions appear to be that the public university system is now more focused on quantity than on quality. Coupled with the competition brought about by the introduction of private universities, the higher education system in Nigeria appears to be on a trajectory that promotes neither quality education nor equitable access.

Furthermore, while the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) prescribed 26% of national budget for the Educational Sector, Nigeria has not attained 10% allocation (see Adedipe, 2013). This is a major challenge plaguing not only the university system but Nigerian educational system as a whole.

Aside from the regulatory deficiencies of NUC and the challenges of university system that have negative consequences on skills development, other skills development institutions are also grappling with challenges of funding. Agencies and think-tanks such as NISER, CMD, ASCON and others discussed above, which in the past, attracted external funding for research, now rely heavily on the state. Inadequate funding has also led to the inability of the think-thanks to retain highly skilled human resource, many of who have migrated to other countries in search of better opportunities. The general problems of skills development institutions in Nigeria include: inadequate funding, undue government interference, proliferation of institutions and expansion of activities beyond established scope in order to remain relevant (see Ibeanu, 2008).

4.11 Conclusion

Nigeria's quest for rapid economic growth and development is inextricably tied to advancement in skills and human capital development (education/training) and utilisation (employment). As such, the role of skills development institutions for the realisation of this vision cannot be over-emphasised. In order for Nigeria to realise the vision of becoming one of the top 20 economies in the world by year 2020 as anticipated, the country must produce world-class, highly skilled and knowledgeable human resource. This is possible only

through good and qualitative skills development strategies and a functional educational system. This will equally assist the country towards reducing poverty and unemployment.

It is in this light that government has given enormous support for the establishment of schools and training institutions. The private sector has also keyed into the national objective of skills development. The private sector is the brain behind the establishment of institutions such as the Financial Institution Training Centre for Banking and Financial Institutions in Nigeria (FITC) and the Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM). Private sector organisations have also developed in-house training programmes that are world class.

It is worth noting that other training institutions and agencies have been contributing immensely to skills development and capacity building within Nigeria. Some of such institutions include: the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), a specialised institution for those in security and other strategic sectors of Nigeria; the Federal Training Centres at Lagos, Kaduna, Maiduguri, Ilorin, Enugu and Calabar for training of civil servants; the Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI) established in 1984; the Chartered Institute of Bankers, founded in 1963 for professionalisation of bank employees; NECA, formed in 1957 which is also assisting in building capacity among employers; the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria established in 1965 for professionalising the practice of accounting; the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) launched in 1973 for development of personnel and human resources for the private sector of the economy; the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs established in 1963 to provide requisite skills and knowledge for personnel in the diplomatic services; and the Maritime Academy of Nigeria in Oron, Cross River State, established in 1988 for the training and development of human capital for the nations maritime sector. There are also consultancy services based in universities as a source of generating funds, and privately owned consultancy services.

According to Tenebe (2014), there has been an explosion in skills and human capital development institutions and this may be attributed to the explosion in the student population who are yearning for education and skills. From a little over a hundred students in 1948, when the University College Ibadan was established, the number has grown largely such that currently, Nigeria has close to 150 universities, with millions seeking admission every year. The number of Polytechnics and Colleges of Education for training of

mid-level human resource has also grown astronomically. This situation whereby millions of Nigerians are seeking for the limited places available in the conventional institutions has led to the emergence of what Tenebe (2014:19) refers to as “later day” skills development institutions which are beginning to emerge. They include: the Chartered Institute of Cost and Management Accountants, the Chartered Institute of Administration and the Institute of Chartered Economists of Nigeria, among others.

Despite the numerous initiatives and institutions established to enhance human capital formation and skill development within the broad Nigerian economy, the paradox is that skills development remains a perennial problem and appears to have defiled all attempts at remedying the situation. The pertinent questions to ask are: Why has the skills situation in Nigeria not changed over the years? Could it be that there are deliberate manipulations aimed at sustaining the north-south divide by foreign employers? Are there institutional impediments outside the industrial system constituting a clog to skills development aspirations? Are there specific dynamics within the Nigerian multinational corporate system responsible for the skills challenge? All these questions have to unravel, through empirical investigation, what seems to be a mystery around the unattainable quest for skills development to turn the wheel of production in Nigeria as in many other developing countries.

In the next chapter, the research methodology is presented detailing how this study’s data was obtained from the different selected MNCs; state policy making and skills development institutions; organised labour and organised private sectors in Nigeria in order to address the central problem of the study.

PART II

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSES AND PRACTICE: THE EMPIRICAL SITUATION

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS

5.1 Introduction

As stated in the first chapter, this study examines the discourse and practice of skills development in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector, drawing from three selected MNCs in the country. The aim is to ascertain the extent to which the skills development programmes and strategies of these MNCs feed into or align with the dominant discourses on human capital formation in Nigeria. The research is also interested in finding out the extent to which these programmes align with national policies and pronouncements on skills development in Nigeria. This chapter gives a detailed analysis of the research methodology and methods adopted in the study to examine the research questions, address the research problem and achieve the research objectives.

The second section of this chapter presents profiles of the MNCs and institutions selected to represent specific 'discourse constituencies' in line with the objectives of the study. In the third section, the researcher explains the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research, and in the fourth section explains the research instruments employed in the process of data collection and justifies the research methodology and methods utilised while also stating the challenges experienced in the data collection process. The issue of data trustworthiness is discussed in the fifth section, while the delimitations and limitations of the study are addressed in the sixth section. The seventh section provides the ethical statements while, in the eight section, the researcher shares some anecdotes related to his fieldwork experiences. A conclusion on the chapter is thereafter presented in the ninth section.

5.2 Research sites

The study was conducted in Nigeria, which is a country considered strategic because of its petroleum wealth, extensive arable land and large population. The vast population, estimated at over 170 million (WEF, 2014), provides an enormous single market that has attracted businessmen and investors. The country has been a host to an array of multinational companies in different sectors of the economy ranging from oil and gas to

banking, manufacturing, construction and telecommunications, among others. Nigeria has since 2014 been declared the largest economy in Africa (Guardian Newspaper 4th April, 2014).

Figure 5.1: Map of Nigeria

Source: Google Maps

Four broad skills development 'discourse constituencies' in Nigeria were targeted in this study and within these, specific organisations were selected. The constituencies and organisations were:

1. The multinational corporate sector, represented by three MNCs: Unilever Nigeria Plc, Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria Plc, and MTN Nigeria.

2. Government institutions, represented by ministries, agencies and commissions: The Ministry of Labour and Productivity; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Trade and Investments. The agencies and commissions are NISER, CMD and Industrial skills Centre of ITF.

3. Organised labour, represented by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC).

4. Organised private sector agencies, represented by National Association of Chambers of Commerce Industries Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA) and Nigeria Institute of Training and Development (NITAD).

5.2.1 Selected Multinational corporations

The multinational corporations selected for this study were: Unilever Nigeria Plc, Lafarge Cement Wapco, Nigeria, and MTN Nigeria. The local head-offices of these companies were in Lagos at the time of this study. The main reason for selecting a minimum of three was to achieve case variation, which, for the researcher, was an important validity and reliability consideration.

Lafarge Cement Wapco Plc. began operations shortly before independence in 1959, with the production of cement at its pioneer factory in Ewekoro, Ogun State with an installed production capacity of 200,000 tonnes per annum which was subsequently upgraded. The company has grown in leaps and bounds with massive expansion and modernisation of the Ewekoro plant with addition of another plant to boost production capacity. It now operates two plants at Ewekoro with a combined production capacity of 2.5 metric tonnes per annum (as at 2013 when the fieldwork was conducted). It also constructed another plant at Sagamu in 1978 with a production capacity of 600,000 tonnes per annum and later upgraded to its present capacity of 900,000 tonnes per annum. Lafarge Wapco Nigeria is a combination of Ewekoro and Sagamu production plants and has a combined workforce of 1,084 permanent employees and a total asset of ₦151,948,633,000 ($949,678,956.25) billion (Lafarge 2012 Annual Report: 50).

Lafarge produces the Elephant brand of general purpose cement for the building and construction industry since inception in 1960. In 2010, the company added the unique Elephant Supaset Cement, specifically formulated for block making and precast segment of the building and construction industry. In 2011, Lafarge commenced the production of

Elephant Ready Mixed Concrete produced to specification of clients in the construction industry, and in 2012 launched a new product, Elephant Powermax Cement for the large construction projects of clients (Lafarge Annual Report, 2012, Lafarge Newsletter, 2010). The company has embarked on expansion with the acquisition of other cement manufacturing plants in different parts of the country. These include: AshakaCem Plc Ashaka, Bauchi State; Atlas Cement Port-Harcourt, Rivers State and Unicem, in Calabar, Cross River State. A combination of the productive capacity of all these factories has enhanced Lafarge's market share in Nigeria and the company now has a combined production capacity of 8.5 million metric tonnes per annum (Lafarge Annual Report 2012:2-5).

Lafarge's cement production activities are not restricted to Nigeria but extend to over 10 other African countries. As a global player and leader in cement manufacturing, with its Headquarters in Paris, France, Lafarge has well over 170 million Euros annual budget in research and development (R&D). The company has the largest building materials laboratory with well over 1,000 employees in R&D and technical programme. Lafarge, in 2010 also launched the 'Sustainability Ambition 2020' which among others, aims at 75% of country operations to implement a plan of local job creation; substantial reduction in emissions; and 35% gender affirmative action of senior management position to be held by women among other projections (Lafarge 2012 Annual Report). It is based on afore-mentioned attributes that Lafarge was selected for the study. The fieldwork was carried out at Ewekoro, Ogun State, the pioneer factory of the company and at the headquarters located in Ikeja, Lagos State at the time of the study. Below are three different brands of cement produced by Lafarge.

Plate 5.1: Lafarge brands

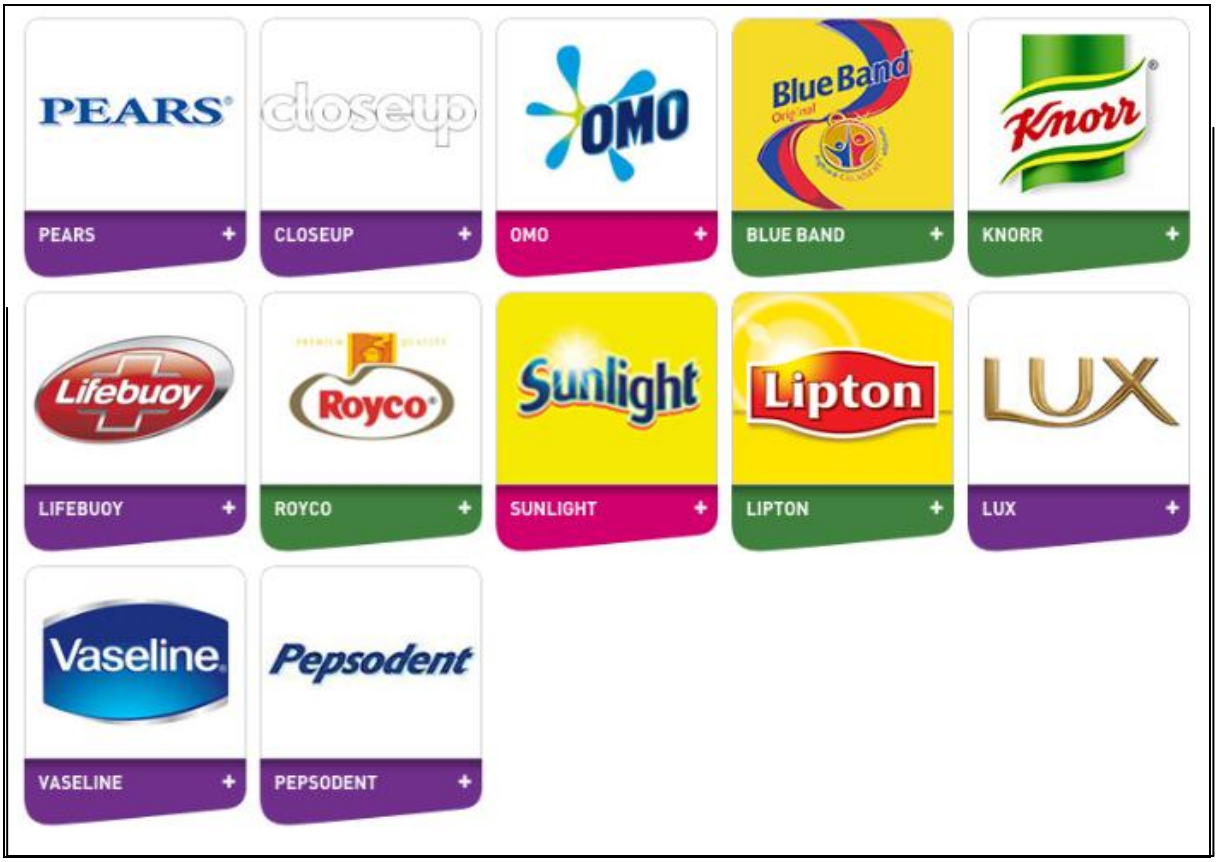
Source: Lafarge Newsletter, 2010.

Unilever Nigeria Plc is the second multinational company selected as study site. The company has factories in Lagos and Ogun State in South western Nigeria, however, the fieldwork was conducted at the Lagos Oregun Factory and Headquarters of the company. Unilever is a household name in Nigeria with speciality in food products as well as home and personal care products manufacturing. The company has operated in Nigeria since 1923, long before the country gained independence.

In line with Nigeria's national projection towards year 2020, Unilever's Sustainable Living Plan (USPL) launched in 2010 aims at achieving (by year 2020) improved health and wellbeing of 1 billion people; halving environmental footprint of products; and attaining 100% sustainability of its agricultural raw materials. In its bid to improve the quality of life globally, Unilever, through the Unilever Foundation, is partnering with a number of global organisations. The global institutions include: Oxfam, UNICEF, World Food Programme, among others (Unilever Annual Report 2012). The company at the end of the 2012 financial year had a total asset of ₦36,497,624,000 ($228,110,150.00) with a total of 944 employees. From its initial Apapa soap manufacturing in1923, Unilever has grown to become a household name in Nigeria with its variety of products. The company's product range include: Blueband Magarine, Knorr Soup and Stew seasoning powder, Royco Soup and Stew seasoning Powder, and the popular Lipton Yellow Label Tea among other food products. While the home and personal care products include among others: Close-Up Toothpaste, Omo and Sunlight Detergents, Lux and Lifebuoy toilet soaps, and Vaseline and

Pears body creams. Unilever is selected for inquiry in the present study because of the long period which the company has operated in Nigeria and its numerous products that touches all households in Nigeria. More so, Unilever has operations in different parts of the world. Below are some of the products of Unilever Nigeria Plc.

Plate 5. 2: Some of Unilever products



Source: Unilever Annual Report, 2012

The third MNC – MTN Nigeria is relatively new in the country as it began operations in 2001. However, it has become a household name in Nigeria, emerging as the leader in the telecommunications sector. MTN Nigeria is a part of the MTN Group, South Africa, and is reputed to be Africa's leading cellular telecommunications company. MTN Nigeria at inception invested $285m to secure GSM operating licence in January 2001. To date, the company has investment in excess of US$1.8 billion building mobile telecommunications infrastructure in Nigeria (see MTN Group Report, 2013). It commenced business operations in August 2001 and has consistently been deploying its wide array of products and services across the length and breadth, nooks and crannies of Nigeria. With staff strength of 2,549 employees, MTN Nigeria now provides services in 223 cities and towns, in more than 10,000 villages and communities and a growing number of highways across the country.

Many of these Nigerian villages and rural communities are being linked to the telecommunications world, a new experience of communication (see MTN Group Report, 2013). MTN Nigeria's expansion reflects in different numbering range of customers. From the initial numbering range of the prefix 0803, it expanded to 0806, 090, 081 and so on, indicating a high level of expansion and coverage. The company through its slogans expresses its paramount desire to be a partner and catalyst in Nigeria's quest for economic growth and development. MTN Nigeria provides direct and indirect employment to a number of Nigerians all over the country and has been a toast of technology savvy youth with its wide range of products and services (see, Punch Newspaper, 2nd April, 2014).

The widespread activity of MTN Nigeria has made the nation's communication company - Nigerian Telecommunications Company (NITEL) which hitherto enjoyed a monopoly, to become moribund. Interview was held with a manager at the company's headquarters in Ikoyi, Lagos. A supervisor at the Customer Care office Apapa granted an interview and a survey was conducted for employees at the customer care department, Apapa representing shop floor employees.

It is on the basis of the afore-mentioned factors that the three MNCs were selected as they would represent a good platform for studying the skills development activities, programmes and strategies of MNCs in Nigeria. The researcher would thus be able to ascertain whether MNCs in Nigeria, as elsewhere in developing countries, are contributing to skills development in their host countries or if there is a form of skills protectionism in this sector.

5.2.2 Selected skills development institutions

The government is an important social partner in skills development as it sets the direction and standards. For any MNC to operate, it must obtain approval from the government. Government sets guidelines, gives approvals and monitors to ensure compliance with rules and regulations, in this case, with regard to MNCs and their activities in the area of skills development. The government in this study is represented by: the relevant ministries, agencies and commissions, including the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity and the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment, all in Abuja; the Industrial Training Fund and Industrial Skills Centre under the Ministry of Trade and Investment in Lagos; the CMD, previously in Lagos in 2013 at the time of the fieldwork before its relocation to Abuja; and

NISER in Ibadan, which at the time of the study housed the defunct NMB. Both CMD and NISER are under the National Planning Commission. In all these government establishments, interviews were conducted to unearth the state discourses on skills development in Nigeria.

5.2.3 Selected organised labour organisations

Organised labour is represented in this study by the two Labour Federations in Nigeria: the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC). The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is one of the two recognised labour federations in the country and was formed in 1978. The NLC emerged out of the merger of four existing different labour federations. They were: Nigeria Trade Union Congress (NTUC); Labour Unity Front (LUF); United Labour Congress (ULC); and Nigeria Workers Council (NWC). The numerous unions that hitherto existed were restructured into 42 industrial unions. NLC currently has a membership of about 4 million and Comrade Abdul-Waheed Omar was the president of the congress at the time of the study. The congress' headquarters is in Abuja. The struggle of the workers federation to ensure improved condition of work has often brought it on collision course with government especially under military rule. In attempt to weaken the solidarity of the NLC, government accorded recognition to another labour federation - the Trade Union Congress (TUC) with emphasis that NLC is for junior employees while TUC is for senior employees. With this decision of government, the number of labour unions affiliated to the NLC has reduced to 29 at the time of this study. The NLC is affiliated to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) a global labour federation.

In light of this development, the Unilever and Lafarge employees surveyed and shop stewards interviewed in the two multinational companies are members of the same union affiliated to the NLC. The union is National Union of Chemicals, Footwear, Leather, Metalic and Non-Metalic Products Employees (NUCFLANMPE). It is a good platform for unravelling shopfloor employees' opinions on multinational corporate skills development discourses.

The second labour federation recognised in Nigeria which is the Trade Union Congress was formally registered as a labour federation in 2005. It should be noted that the federation has existed as far back as the 1970s, long before its formal recognition. At a time, it was a senior staff consultative association and at another time, a union of senior staff employees

before its final registration as a labour federation. The headquarters of the TUC is in Lagos which is the commercial hub and former capital of Nigeria. At the time of the study, Comrade Peter Esele was the union President while Comrade Musa Lawal was the Secretary General. There are 24 affiliated unions to the TUC in Nigeria with well over 2.5 million members. Just as it acts as a federating union for senior staff in Nigeria, the TUC associates with the global central union of workers as an affiliate of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) the main international trade union organisation representing the interests of working people worldwide.

The NLC and TUC serve as umbrellas to which all labour unions in the country must affiliate. By virtue of this important criterion, the two organisations serve as vital platforms for gauging the views of organised labour on the subject of skills development which is the focus of this study.

5.2.4 Selected organised private sector agencies

In order to ensure that the findings of this study are comprehensive and unbiased, the field research activity extended beyond government institutions, MNCs and organised labour to include Organised Private Sector (OPS) agencies concerned with both skills development and skills utilisation. These are National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA); Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA); and Nigeria Institute of Training and Development (NITAD) all based in Lagos.

The Chambers of Commerce - NACCIMA, as an umbrella organisation advices government in relation to their numerous sectors. The Director-General of the NACCIMA granted the researcher an interview at the association's secretariat in Ikeja, Lagos State. The second OPS agency interviewed is the NECA. It is a voluntary association of employers. A deputy director granted the researcher an interview at the secretariat of the organisation in Ikeja, Lagos. At NITAD, the Registrar of the institute granted the researcher an interview at the institute in Lagos. In all, three establishments represented the OPS agencies in this research. The presence of these establishments in Lagos might be explained by the fact that Lagos is the industrial and commercial hub of Nigeria and also the former capital of Nigeria.

5.3 Research design: Reflections on ontology-epistemology-methodology nexus

The study integrates both qualitative and quantitative research approaches of social research for purposes of achieving high levels of validity and reliability (see Hammersley, 1992). It should be noted that methods do not just emerge. They are based on the paradigm within which the researcher operates. While researcher's personal understanding of the reality of human existence (the ontology) and the theoretical knowledge behind the phenomenon under study (the epistemology) are important in the choice of method, they do not determined the method. (see Tuli, 2010:99; Taylor and Medina, 2013). Rather, methods are informed by the realities on ground and the phenomenon of study, in other words, the practical and technical concerns (Bryman, 1984). Table 5.2 provides the details of the practical and technical concerns that informed the methods adopted in this study. However, there are wide-ranging debates about these issues and it is important to first reflect on them briefly as a way of providing a background to the specific research methods adopted for the study.

The ontological issue in social research relates to the researcher's conceptualisation of social reality, or what Durkheim (1982) referred to as 'social fact'. Two broad parallel positions have emerged in social science research discourse. The first, objectivism, believes in the independent existence of social reality and this view aligns with the positivist belief that reality is 'out there' and can be discovered. Under this approach, the researcher is detached from the study and believes that quantitative methods of data collection and analysis can be used and the outcome expressed in numeric values (Tuli, 2010:101). The present study aligned with thinking, in so far as it adopted a survey (encompassing both open and closed ended questions) to elicit information from shopfloor employees in the selected multinational organisations. The survey sought to gauge the views of the sampled employees on salient issues in human capital formation, skills development programmes and strategies adopted by the MNCs to operationalise their skills development philosophies and strategies. At the same time, reality does not always exist 'out there': it is subject to interpretation and social construction. This parallel ontological conviction necessitated the simultaneous adoption of key informant interviews and in-depth interviews. The idea was to elicit the views of officials of relevant skills development agencies who were selected by virtue of their strategic positions in those organisations.

Another conventional view about the social sciences is that social phenomena could be studied as done in the natural sciences. Thus the epistemological debate is about whether or not social sciences could be modelled on the natural sciences. This debate culminated in the positivist and interpretivist conceptions of social reality. The positivists view society as consisting of concrete, observable events, and on the basis of this they explore using methods similar to those in the natural sciences with the hope of generating a general principle of human social life (Bryman, 2001). Interpretivists, on the other hand, believe in qualitative research and are of the view that social fact or social reality is socially constructed, experienced and interpreted within a context (Lincoln and Guba, 2005). The interpretivists believe that real world social situations cannot be predetermined and coded because participants in the society are dynamic and the system within which they carry out various actions is also not static (Tuli, 2010:100).

While the study adopted a survey as a quantitative approach of the positivist paradigm, to gauge the views of a cross-section of shopfloor employees at selected MNCs, the study leaned heavily on the qualitative method of the interpretivist paradigm. The views of the interviewees formed the basis for the thematic analyses of the salient human capital formation and skills development discourses in Nigeria. Interviews were held in the organisations and offices of the interviewees and this enabled the researcher to gain an 'insider' perspective. The researcher was able to interact face to face with the interviewees, observe their emotions and feelings as they gave rich narrative accounts on the subject of the research based on their knowledge and experiences in the organisation. The triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative data was to ensure objectivity, thus addressing the problem of validity which is of concern to the researcher.

Methodology, according to Tuli (2010:102), is a strategy of research that harnesses and streamlines ontology and epistemology as a guiding principle of how research should be conducted (see Lincoln and Guba, 2005; Babbie and Mouton, 2001).The parallel debate that has emerged from methodological discourse is that on one side the positivist requires an objective method that detaches the researcher from the “object” of his study to enable him or her to measure quantitatively with numeric values (Sarantakos, 2005). This argument again is parallel to the qualitative method of “interpretivist epistemology” and “constructionalist ontology” (Tuli, 2010:102), which holds that the meanings which the “participants” attach to their experiences are interpreted by the researcher’s understanding

or discovery of the social situation. The researchers who align with this school of thought see themselves as participants within the research and social setting (see Marvasti, 2004; Taylor and Medina, 2013). Figure 5.2 is a diagrammatic representation of the ontology-epistemology-methodology relationship in social research.

Figure 5.2: Ontology-epistemology-methodology Nexus

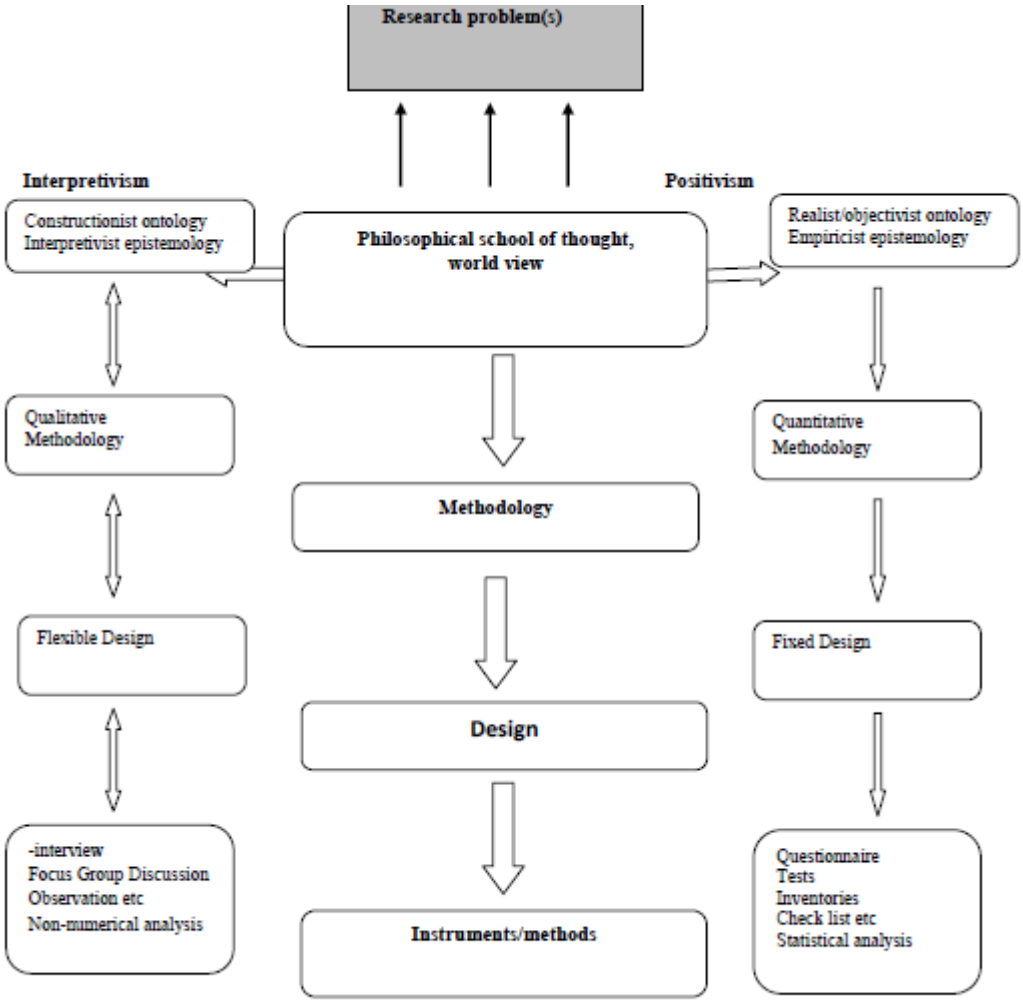


Figure: Foundation of Research

Source: Adapted from Tuli (2010:104)

The researcher was particularly conscious of ensuring utmost congruence between the purpose of the study and the methods employed to collect, analyse and interpret data so as to arrive at a valid conclusion. To this extent, it becomes necessary to restate the research questions guiding the study (see Table 5.1), and to demonstrate how the congruency referred to here was achieved.

Table 5.1: Research questions guiding the study

i) What are the salient features of the human capital formation discourse in selected national skills development agencies and labour organisations in Nigeria?
ii) What are the skills development strategies of the selected multinational companies?
iii) How do the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs intersect with the dominant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria?

The first question sought to unpack the dominant discourses on human capital formation in Nigeria in order to highlight the important features, attributes and characteristics of the human capital formation challenge in Nigeria, and how these intersect with the quest for socio-economic development. The answer to these contending issues in the discourse on human capital formation in Nigeria was sought through an investigation of the dominant discourses in four distinct 'discourse constituencies' namely:

a) The Nigerian state (through policy formulating agencies and think tanks),
b) The multinational corporate sector (as employers of labour),
c) Organised labour (as an important stakeholder within the industrial system), and
d) Organised private sector agencies.

The second research question sought to raise issues concerning the concept of skills development in the multinational corporate sector, with a view to examining the strategies and programmes put in place by MNCs to promote skills development within the context of their operations in Nigeria. In essence, the question is directly about the 'what' and the 'how' of skills development in MNCs, the objectives of skills development, the target population of skills development strategies, the basic 'requirements' for skills development, objectives to be achieved, the processes of skills development, and the opportunities and challenges of skills development strategies and programmes in the MNC sector. These strategies are established with information obtained from the three different MNCs selected as case studies, including labour unions that are active in the selected companies.

In examining the third question, the researcher attempted to evaluate the extent to which the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs and their operationalisation draw on or feed into the dominant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria. The researcher's interest was in the extent to which the skills development strategies of the MNCs were informed by the salient features of the human capital formation discourse in Nigeria; that is, the extent to which the companies' skills strategies were aligned with extant national policies on human capital formation and skills development in Nigeria.

5.4 Research instruments and sampling decisions

The researcher made use of the following instruments of data collection: key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, observation and a mini-survey. In addition, documentary sources were reviewed and these included various publications obtained from the selected MNCs. Table 5.2: demonstrates how the researcher sought to achieve congruency between the three research questions and the data collection techniques employed.

Table 5.2: Research methods linked to research questions

Research question	Research method and source of empirical data	Justification
Research Question 1 What are the salient features of the human capital formation discourse in selected national skills development agencies and labour organisations in Nigeria?	**Key-informant interview** with relevant officials of organisations representing specific 'discourse constituencies', namely: the Ministry of Labour & Productivity; Trade & Investment; Ministry of Interior; Nigerian Institute for Training and Development (Nitad); Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA); National Manpower Board (NMB); National Association of Chambers of Commerce Industries Mines and Agriculture (NCCIMA), Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Industrial Skills Centre and Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment.. n = 9 **In-depth interview** with officials of the two labour federations (NLC and TUC), shop stewards in two of the companies (Lafarge and Unilever. For the	Key-informants are deemed to be knowledgeable about the subject matter, and about their organisation's positions on specific issues that are of interest to the researcher. **In-depth interviews** will yield rich data on what the two labour federations believe should be the country's human capital formation trajectory, and what MNCs should or should not do in the context of that trajectory. It will also yield rich data on the MNC's position on these issues.

	purposes of the study, the three selected MNCs also represent a "discourse constituency". n = 5 **Review** of relevant policy and strategy documents issued by the above organisations.	The beliefs and dispositions of organisations representing specific "discourse constituencies" are often enshrined in policy documents or made public in position papers. These documents offer insights that might not be readily elicited in interviews.
Research Question 2 What are the skills development strategies of the selected multinational companies?	**In-depth interview** with relevant officials as well as supervisors and shop stewards in two of the three selected MNCs n = 11 **Mini (questionnaire) survey** of a random sample of shop floor workers. Respondents (100 from each company) will be drawn from the employee database of the three MNCs; n = 300 **Review** of official documents and annual reports of each multi-national corporation, and official documents of the labour federations.	Relevant senior officials of the companies are believed to be knowledgeable about the subject matter. Also, the researcher's assumption is that supervisors and shop stewards play important roles in the implementation of specific skills development programmes and strategies in the selected organisations. Survey allows the researcher to gauge the perceptions of a cross-section of employees on how skills development programmes are deployed in practice at the three MNCs. Official documents (policies, reports) could offer useful insight into the skills-discourse nexus - insight that might not be readily elicited in interviews or surveys.
Research Question 3 How do the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs intersect with the	**In-depth interview** with relevant officials of the three selected MNCs n =9 **Mini (questionnaire) survey** of a random sample of shop floor workers. Respondents (100 from each company) will be drawn from the employee database of the three MNCs; n = 300 **Key-informant interview** with relevant officials of the Federal Ministry of Employment Labour and Productivity, Federal Ministry of Trade and	The selected officials are deemed to be knowledgeable about the subject matter, and about their organisation's positions on the skills-discourse nexus. Survey allows the researcher to gauge the perceptions of a cross-section of employees on how skills development programmes intersect with specific national discourses. The views and sentiments of key informants in the Nigerian policy establishment are deemed important for

	Investments, Nitad, NECA and National Manpower Board (NMB) and with officials of the two labour federations and shop stewards . n = 10 **Review** of policy documents and position papers of the various organisations.	interrogating the skills-discourse nexus in the country. Official documents (policies, reports) could offer useful insight into the skills-discourse nexus - insight that might not be readily elicited in interviews or surveys.

5.4.1 Key informant interviews

The key informants for this study were specifically chosen because they occupy strategic positions in their organisations: they are highly knowledgeable on the issue of skills development and have relevant information on the subject at their fingertips. Moreover, the issues are part of their work schedule and the routine assignments which they carry out on a regular basis. For the government skills policy establishments, the key informants were from the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity, where an Acting Director was interviewed. At the Ministry of Trade and Investment, an Assistant Director was interviewed. Other personnel interviewed were the Training Manager, Industrial Skills Training Centre; a Senior Research Fellow transferred to NISER following the merger of NMB with NISER; and a Deputy Director at the CMD. In addition, key informant interviews were also conducted to obtain information from the organised private sector. Those interviewed were the Director General of NACCIMA, the Registrar of NITAD and the Deputy Director of NECA. The total key informant sample size from these organisations was ten.

5.4.2 In-depth interviews

In-depth Interviews were conducted at the offices of the three MNCs. At the local head-office of Lafarge Cement Wapco, the People Development Manager was interviewed and at the factory, the Mechanical Manager and the Training Officer in charge of the training school were interviewed. Union officials interviewed at this company were the Branch Chairperson of the National Union of Chemical, Footwear, Leather and Non-Metalic Products Employees (NUCFLANMPE) and the Chairperson of Council of Branches, Lafarge Cement Nigeria.

At Unilever, the Project Manager, Employer Brand, was interviewed. Also interviewed were the Manager, Management Information Systems; Assistant Manager, Customer Marketing and Branch Chairperson of NUCFLANMPE. All were at the local head-office which also serves as the Lagos factory complex.

At MTN's local head-office in Ikoyi, the Learning Solution Manager was interviewed while a Supervisor in the Customer Care Relations Unit at the Apapa Lagos Office was also interviewed. Table 5.3 below provides details of the number of respondents involved in the qualitative aspect of the data collection.

Table 5.3: Sample sizes for Key informant and In-depth Interviews

Organisations/'discourse constituencies'	Key informant interviews	In-depth interviews
Government establishments	7	-
Multinational corporations	-	8
Organised private sector organisations	3	-
Organised labour organisations	-	6
Total	10	14

In all, a total of 10 key informants were interviewed for this study. Seven of the key informants were from the various government ministries, agencies and commissions that are concerned with skills development, representing one of the four discourse constituencies, while the remaining three represent the organised private sector agencies, another discourse constituency in this study. A total of 14 in-depth interviews were also conducted: five interviewees in Lafarge, four interviewees in Unilever, and two in MTN. These numbers represent the MNCs as the third 'discourse constituency'. The last constituency is organised labour, where three officials were interviewed at the labour federation headquarters.

The key informant interview and in-depth interview are similar in that they are both a qualitative method of data collection. Qualitative study involve methods of eliciting the 'insider perspectives' of people involved in a given social action, because they are in position to know the issues under study, or the particular aspects that a researcher might be interested in. They could be professional people who work with the group one wants more information about, or a member of the study audience (USAID, 1996). According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:289), qualitative data collection exemplified by key informant interviews and in-depth interview is an interaction between an interviewer (researcher) and

respondent. These scholars describe it as a conversation through which the interviewer provides the direction of conversation towards the objectives of the study. In essence, the researcher is deeply involved as the 'instrument' of research.

It is on the basis of this background that the respondents were selected from four different constituencies in order to have detailed information. The respondents are individuals deeply involved in skills development and utilisation within the Nigerian industrial system. Key informant interviews and in-depth interviews are like conversations among acquaintances, they allow for a free flow of ideas and information. While an interview guide is often used, interviewers can, at short notice, expand the guide by framing questions spontaneously so as to probe for information. Notes are taken and transcribed after the interview.

Among the advantages of key informant interviews and in-depth interviews are: they provide information directly from respondents who are knowledgeable about the subject of study; they allow for flexibility to enable the researcher to explore new ideas that are unanticipated but might emerge in the course of interview, they are relatively inexpensive to conduct, and they give room for the researcher to establish rapport and trust with the respondent. On the other hand, the qualitative method also has shortcomings: they are not appropriate if quantitative data are needed; they could be biased if informants are not carefully selected; the method is susceptible to interviewer biases, and it may be difficult to prove the validity of its findings (Blanche et al., 2006).

With these facts in mind, the researcher was able to observe during the course of field research activities that labour, which is one of the study ‘constituencies’, was open and receptive at the first meeting. The government skills institutions, on the other hand, remained enmeshed in bureaucratic procedures to grant interviews as one superior or another was required to give approval for an interview. The MNCs, perhaps because of competitive nature of this sector, scrutinised all documents from the researcher’s university and details of the researcher’s background before approval to hold interviews was granted. However, MTN, a South African company, remained sceptical and did not approve the audio-recording of discussions. This might be due to very stiff competition within the telecommunications sector and the schemes to outwit competitors.

5.4.3 Survey

In line with the tenets of methodological triangulation, a survey was also conducted, to provide a quantitative angle to the subject of study. The aim of the survey was to gauge the opinion of employees at the shop floor level. The three research questions that guide this study necessitated the use of a survey in this research (see congruency Table 5.2).

Surveys are an old method of quantitative data collection that involves the studying of a large population by randomly selecting and studying a representative sample from the target population: analysis of the information obtained helps to discover distribution and interrelationships among specific variables (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:230; Fawole et al., 2006:12). A survey can provide a quick, inexpensive and accurate means of obtaining information from a large group of people. It provides information about the opinions, attitudes and perceptions of respondents in numeric form. The term 'sample survey' is often used because a sample which is representative of the target population is used. The survey method is widely used and acceptable in the social sciences as a credible method of research. For this study, the survey sought to gauge the opinions of shopfloor employees on issues of skills development and operationalisation in the factories of these MNCs, and specifically, whether they thought skills protectionism was occurring in any form. The survey questions focused on, among other things, individual factory employees' perceptions of their training vis-à-vis national-level human capital formation discourse in Nigeria.

Table 5.4: Number of questionnaires distributed and returned

Companies	**Number of questionnaires administered to companies**	**Number of questionnaires completed and returned by companies**	**Number of Questionnaires used for Analysis**
Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria	100	100	100
Unilever Nigeria Plc	100	95	95
MTN Nigeria	100	95	95
Total	300	290	290
Confidence level = 95%, Confidence interval= ± 5%, n = 290			

The table above shows the number of questionnaires distributed and returned by shopfloor employees at the three selected MNCs. A sample size of 300 shopfloor employees from the

three MNCs (that is, 100 from each company) was selected. At Lafarge, 100 questionnaires were returned while at Unilever and MTN, 95 questionnaires were returned. It should be noted that not all the questions were answered in the three companies. The survey utilised a confidence level of 95% and a margin of sampling error (confidence interval) of ±5%. A total of 290 questionnaires returned were used for the data presentation and analysis.

The size of the target population (shopfloor employees) was indeterminable at the time of the study. As such, the estimation of sample as stated above was based on an 'infinite universe' of employees. A simple random sampling method was used to achieve randomisation. The questionnaires were administered indiscriminately and all shopfloor employees at work (except those who were on leave) at the time of the study, had equal opportunity of participating in the survey.

The researcher was assisted by the Branch Chairperson of the Labour Union in Unilever, while the Chairperson of Council of Unions in Lafarge distributed the questionnaire on the researcher's behalf. The involvement of these labour officials facilitated a high rate of return of the questionnaire. In MTN, a Supervisor in the Marketing Department was the facilitator in distributing the questionnaire. The supportive role of Wapco’s Branch Chairperson of Labour and that of the Chairperson council of Lafarge shop stewards for the tremendous success of the fieldwork in Lafarge will be expatiated in due course. Nevertheless, Mathiyazhagan and Nandan (2010) have cautioned that although many surveys are good, cheap and help to gauge the views of a large population, the resulting data may be superficial and lack the dynamism that is a vital feature of human society. The concerns of Mathiyazhagan and Nandan (2010) were overcome through triangulation, as noted earlier.

5.4.4 Documentary sources

Apart from the data gathering methods discussed above, the study also made use of documents and publications of various institutions, departments and companies involved in this study. In doing this, the researcher was well aware that documents are produced by individuals and groups in the course of their daily practices and are intended for their own immediate use, besides having been written with a purpose and based on particular assumptions. Scott (1990) cautions researchers to be fully aware of the origin and purpose of a document as well as its original intended audience, for it to be used in a meaningful

way. There are two types of documents: primary and secondary documents. Primary documents are eyewitness accounts by people who experienced the phenomenon, while secondary documents are produced by people who were not present but who received an eyewitness account (Bailey, 1994). The documents sourced for this study were mostly Annual reports and other official publications such as newsletters, magazines and policy briefs of the study organisations and MNCs. They conform to the established characterisation of documents as sources of indirect access and visible indicators of what happened in the past, and consisting of public, private and personal documents. Public documents include government publications, policy statements, and reports from ministries and departments. Private documents often emanate from civil society organisations, such as private sector businesses, trade unions, non-governmental organisations, training manuals, annual reports and others. Mogalakwe (2006:224) observes that, although documentary sources may not be popular in mainstream social research, documentary research is not new. This scholar noted that one of the founding fathers of sociology, Emile Durkheim, utilised official statistics of suicide rates for his 1897 study of suicide.

Scott (1990) however cautions that the use of documents should be guided by four principles: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. Mogalakwe (2006:226) explained the four principles as follows: Authenticity implies making sure that the document is genuine and reliable and the source is dependable. Credibility implies that the document is free from sentiments, errors or distortions. As such documents were produced independently of the research purpose for which it may be applied subsequently by a third party. Representativeness implies that opinions expressed in the document are taken as representing organisations as the individuals concerned have done so in their capacity as representatives of the organisation. On the meaning, documents only have literal meanings, while the interpretive or underlining meaning is deduced by the researcher in relation to the context in which the document is to be used.

The researcher ensured that all these principles were observed in making use of the documents and publications from selected organisations. For instance, the Annual Reports of the selected MNCs contained vital information about the company's activities in the previous years and projections for the future, and these were authenticated by audit firms. On the other hand, the newsletters, policy briefs and official magazines were produced and edited to ensure accuracy of information.

5.5 Data analysis

Data obtained through qualitative methods - in-depth interviews and key informant interviews - were transcribed by the researcher and used alongside the field notes taken by the researcher. The data were analysed in line with the themes that emerged from the transcribed responses, paying close attention to the research questions. Reflecting on the demand of each research question, verbatim quotes from respondents (mostly senior officials from the sampled organisations) were cross-validated by responses of shopfloor employees (mainly junior employees). Information obtained from documentary sources was also used to support the analysis. Data obtained through the survey were analysed using simple percentages.

5.6 Data trustworthiness

As earlier noted, this study is based on a multi-method design: it adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches in data collection towards ensuring trustworthiness. The quantitative approach in the social sciences is a very popular method of inquiry; however, this does not imply that other methods are less credible (Mogalakwe, 2006:222). The quantitative method makes use of numeric values that are discrete, finite, standardised and precise. Good as it may be in helping to ensure precision, human social life is dynamic and the reactions of two individuals will not be the same in terms of their deeper meanings. The quantitative used in the study was the survey.

On the other hand, qualitative method makes use of qualitative instruments such as the ones used in this study: key informant interviews, in-depth interviews and observation. These allowed the researcher to get close to the respondents, establish rapport, observe and interact with them on a one-on-one basis. The closeness afforded by the qualitative method, affords a researcher the opportunity to have deep and natural information (‘insider perspective’) from the respondents that is undiluted (Mouton, 2001:271). A deeper understanding of their emotions is experienced and this helps greatly in the interpretation of the entire life of the respondent. Rather than looking at degree of association, the qualitative researcher describes the underlying factor of this association from the direct interactions. Triangulation helped immensely in ensuring the trustworthiness of this study.

Information obtained from officials was also cross-checked with interview responses on the shopfloor. Besides triangulation, the researcher also made extensive use of peer validation and review with the research supervisor and senior colleagues who have successfully passed through the process within the University of Fort Hare Sociology Department. In addition, the rapport established in the course of the fieldwork was maintained through phone calls during which issues related to the study were clarified. The researcher was also conscious of the negative implications which getting enmeshed with the respondents could have on the quality of data; therefore, caution was exercised to avoid being engrossed with the respondents. Shared sentiments were minimal and directed toward the research.

The adoption of mixed method helps in mitigating the challenges posed by reliability and validity. The quantitative survey helped to gauge the opinion of many employees at the shopfloor level of the companies, while the qualitative in-depth interviews and key informant interviews provided authoritative views of respondents.

5.7 Delimitations and limitations of the study

Nigeria's industrial landscape is dominated by MNCs and their activities range from banking and insurance through pharmaceuticals to construction, publishing and food. This study involved three MNCs: Lafarge Cement Wapco, Unilever Nigeria and MTN Nigeria. MTN is a communication company in the services sector. While the employees of other two MNCs belong to NUCFLANMPE, employees of MTN do not affiliate with the telecommunications union. In essence, out of the numerous MNCs and sectors, only two sectors were covered.

This is because there was insufficient time and resources to cover all sectors of the Nigerian economy. That is not to say that the outcome of the study will be limited to only the two sectors: indeed it will be relevant to other sectors and applicable to the developing host countries of MNCs desirous of skills development. The three MNCs more or less represent different time spaces in Nigeria's economic history – colonial, independence, and post-independence epochs. The findings will yield insights into happenings within the multinational corporate sector at different times. The MNCs surveyed were also concentrated within the South-West geopolitical zone; hence, a similar study should be conducted focusing on MNCs operating in other geopolitical zones and other sectors of the Nigerian economy.

5.8 Ethical statement

The study seeks to unravel the skills development programmes and strategies within the Nigerian multinational corporate sector with the aim of understanding how skills protectionism occurs in the sector, if it does occur at all. To this extent, data were collected within four skills discourse 'constituencies'. In the course of the fieldwork, the researcher respected all basic ethical rules of social research, including free and voluntary participation of respondents, anonymity of respondents and confidentiality of information, and assurance that this was an academic exercise that had no adversarial consequences for the security of participants' jobs. The researcher had an introductory letter from the University, permission was obtained for all interviews and some participants endorsed the consent forms. The opinions of respondents who objected to audio-recording were respected, with only notes taken. Prior to the interviews, formal letters were written as advised by contact persons in the organisations, most of whom offered tremendous assistance to the researcher. During the fieldwork, the researcher conducted himself professionally in line with the University of Fort Hare ethical guidelines on the conduct of research (See appendices F, G, H and I for letter of credence from the university, correspondence with the selected organisations and university ethical clearance certificate).

5.9 Researcher's personal anecdotes

Field experience afforded the researcher a closer relationship with the respondents, who were of various orientations. The experience at Wapco was particularly memorable. The Chairperson of Council of Lafarge shop stewards took it upon himself to be the research assistant. He was the "key" to all areas of the company, as he was well known and highly respected by his colleagues. The informal discussions with other employees revealed that he was at the forefront of struggles that led to the abolition of senior and junior staff canteen dichotomy within Lafarge. He not only assisted the researcher at the factory but also invited him to one of their meetings at the headquarters with the Country Manager, Industrial Relations. While some union members questioned the presence of a stranger among them, he explained the researcher's mission, and the researcher was allowed to stay on as an observer. It should be mentioned that the Chairperson of Union Branch and the "Chairperson of Chairpersons", as the Chairperson, Council of Lafarge shop stewards was fondly called, ensured that the researcher enjoyed the facilities at the staff canteens on every visit to their company. The researcher was informed few months after the fieldwork

that the Chairperson of Council of Lafarge shop stewards had been promoted to a senior position, thus excluding him from unionism!

The researcher also had a fruitful experience in Unilever. The official at NUCFLANMPE headquarters (under which the Unilever union branch falls) who introduced the researcher to the Branch Chairperson and also assisted with the data collection amongst the labour officials, was the researcher's former student!

The various government departments were also helpful except for the rigid and time-consuming bureaucratic procedure of obtaining approval. Finally, MTN was the most difficult to access, perhaps due to stiff competition within the telecommunications sector. Accessing the offices of the organisation involves electronic screening similar to someone embarking on an international flight. Several personal contacts had to be made and family links explored. There was no free access like the other constituencies and audio-recording of interviews was not allowed. Organised labour was the most accessible, willing and ready to discuss without bureaucratic constraints (See appendix H for correspondence with the organisations selected for study).

5.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presented the methodological decisions guiding the data collection process. The data were obtained from four different ‘discourse constituencies’: government policy institutions; the MNCs; organised labour and the organised private sector. The research approach was both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative methods involved key informant interviews and in-depth interviews, while a survey was also employed as a means of gauging the opinions of employees at the shopfloor level in the selected MNCs. The qualitative instruments were a semi-structured interview guide that allowed for flexibility and gave the researcher the opportunity to ask further probing questions. The survey utilised a structured questionnaire with open and close-ended questions. The research findings are presented in chapters six and seven with the presentations in those chapters mirroring the three research questions.

CHAPTER 6

HUMAN CAPITAL FORMATION DISCOURSE IN NIGERIA: FINDINGS FROM FOUR 'DISCOURSE CONSTITUENCIES'

6.1 Introduction

The three questions guiding this study were articulated in Chapter One and restated in other relevant sections of this thesis. They are:

1. What are the salient features of the human capital formation discourse in selected national skills development agencies and labour organisations in Nigeria?

2. What are the skills development strategies of the three selected multinational corporations?

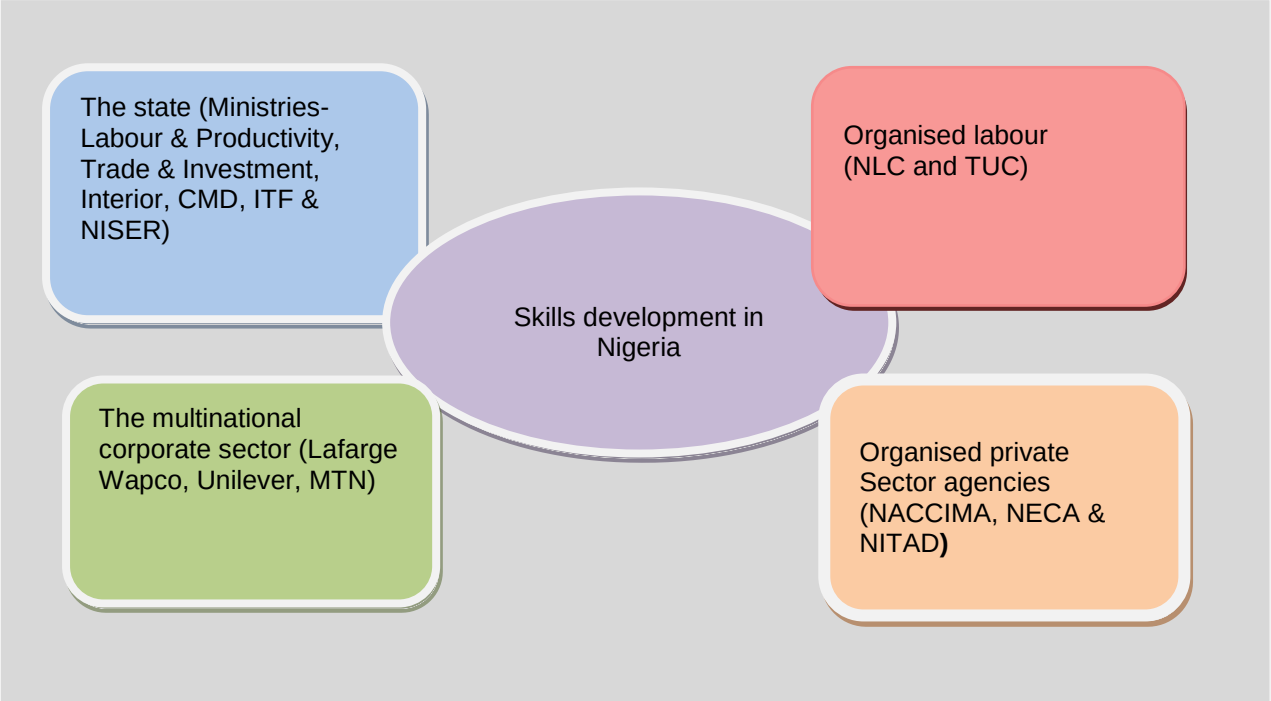
3. How do the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs intersect with the dominant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria?

For purposes of making the empirical section of this thesis easy to navigate, but more importantly, to make it easier for the reader to apprehend how the skills development strategies and practices in the three selected multinational corporations connect (or fail to connect) to the 'national' discourses on skills development and human capital formation, the researcher has devoted two chapters to the analysis and presentation of findings pertaining to the three research questions. The present chapter, the first of the two, takes the reader through findings on the major human capital formation discourses in Nigeria as at the time of the study. Chapter Seven takes care of MNC skills development practices and the connections between these strategies and the discourses presented in the present chapter.

While the complex terrain of discourses can be difficult to navigate, the researcher has attempted to make things a little easier by: (a) delineating four skills development 'discourse constituencies'; (b) identifying some of the most important 'proxies' in these constituencies (see previous chapter); (c) listening carefully to how they framed the country's skills development predicaments and imperatives, and (d) identifying the main themes around which the different constituencies' skills development *idealisations* and *prescriptions*

cohere. The 'discourse constituencies' are: (a) the state, (b) the multinational corporate sector, (c) organised private sector agencies, and (d) organised labour (see figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Skills development discourse constituencies



In the next chapter, data will be presented on how the skills development practices in the three selected multinational companies 'talk to' those predicaments and imperatives – if at all they do. Indeed, it should be evident by the end of two findings chapters what the skills development practices in the companies are, but more importantly, what 'discourses' underpin them and to what consequences. This study therefore investigates the dynamics behind the disparities in skills that are accessible to, and acquirable by, the different demographics within a given organisation in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector. Principally, the thesis looks at how such disparities intersect with "prescriptions" and "idealisations" about skills development and human capital formation as articulated by specific skills development "discourse constituencies" in the country.

As elaborated in the Research Methods chapter, in order to access the discourses in the different 'discourse constituencies' with a view to answering the first research question, in-depth interviews were conducted with purposively selected samples of respondents in key organisations within each 'constituency'. In-depth interviews were conducted with senior officials of Ministry of Labour and Productivity, Ministry of Trade and Investment, Ministry of

Interior, Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), Centre for Management Development; Industrial Skills Centre of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), representing the state. From the MNC sector, relevant managerial staff of: Lafarge Cement Wapco; Unilever; and MTN were interviewed. Within organised private sector, senior officials of the NACCIMA, NECA and NITAD were interviewed. The organised labour federations selected for the study were the Nigeria Labour Congress and Trade Union Congress. The officials interviewed were: the Lagos Organising Secretary of the NLC, an official in the office of the Secretary General in Abuja, and the President of TUC at the time of the study. It must be mentioned that the unions that were active in the three MNCs selected for the study were all aligned with the NLC. However, in order to gain a broader perspective on human capital formation discourse in Nigeria, the researcher deemed it imperative to include the country's second labour federation, TUC, in the study. In addition to the in-depth interviews, insights into the extant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria were gleaned from official documents and publications from the different organisations that formed part of the study.

The data in this chapter include the responses to relevant survey questions posed to shop-floor employees in the three selected MNCs. The data are now presented based on the themes that emerged during the data analysis vis-à-vis the salient features of the skills development discourse in Nigeria.

Finally, the data are presented using the thematic scheme that emerged from the interactions with respondents in the various 'discourse constituencies'. As stated earlier, the themes are those around which the national skills development and national human formation "prescriptions" and "idealisations" cohere.

6.2 Skills development and technology transfer

The age of enlightenment which covered the mid-18th and 19thcenturies was characterised by the development of technological knowhow for the production of goods and services. Over the years, technology has advanced and developed, from mechanisation to automation and the present day computerisation. In this 21st century, survival, well-being and prosperity are greatly influenced by the level of technological attainment (Akpomuvie, 2011), as the modern society has become knowledge and skills-driven. Thus most

countries of the world strive to keep pace with the technology transformation, and Nigeria is no exception as the government is taking measures to ensure that it meets the needs of the modern economy with regard to skills development of its citizens.

The first main 'constituency' concerned with skills development is the state, through its policy establishments. As a sovereign entity, government of Nigeria has established various institutions and apparatus for ensuring the aggregation of collective interests. The study revealed that the government has institutional frameworks for the training and development of competent workforce skills that is guaranteed for incumbent employees and for potential workers. This is to ensure that the relevant knowledge and skills demand of the modern complex knowledge-driven economy are constantly available. In addition to its role in the development of workforce skills, there are various measures for ensuring competitiveness, controlling social externalities possible from education and training, overcoming persistent structural unemployment among some segments of the population, and alleviating poverty. Through its skills policy, the state also ensures equity for all to have opportunities to develop their skills and potential and to acquire the knowledge necessary for the jobs in which they are interested and for which they are qualified.

The state sets the platform upon which other constituencies operate through the enactment of relevant laws. Thus, while the state represents a constituency identified in this study, its activities also touch all the other constituencies as it plays a regulatory role over the other three constituencies. All these were revealed by the key informants in the various government ministries, department and agencies. Part of the strategy of Nigerian government to foster skills development is the partnering with and encouraging MNCs to come into the country and establish industrial ventures with the hope that these companies will come with their advanced technologies into the country. It is believed that technology transfer will occur through MNCs as the employees in this sector will be trained and retrained and as they work with expatriates, they would acquire relevant skills. This is the idea embedded in the concept of "technology transfer". A senior official of the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment in Abuja said:

> What the Ministry is concerned about is trying to get Foreign Direct Investment as well as create the domestic industries. So, we are trying to create conducive environment for that. So, when these investors come in, what we focus on basically is to get started because there are some

> incentives in place for them, first of all to make them even agree to come and set up in Nigeria and not Ghana and when you do that, what we are interested in is okay, you set up, try create jobs for our people. It's not only that you create jobs, you transfer skills to these people. Don't just bring your own people and evacuate the money out back there and leave us the way you met us. The thing is, after a while let our own people be able to do these things for themselves. (13/03/2013)

To further highlight government's effort in the area of skills development, the official added:

> A committee called Digital exist and it is responsible for switch over from analogue to digital. The cut off date has been fixed for June 2015 by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).The government has inaugurated the committee to oversee this process of transition and I am a member of that committee. Like, we will have to manufacture, set up boxes and when we were looking at it, we thought that, we might not have the capacity for a Nigerian company to do that, so we are going to get people (foreign investors) to come into Nigeria; set up companies here in Nigeria to manufacture these boxes; they will now train our people on how to produce these set-up boxes, not just produce them, and also how to probably repair them. So, you can see. I have just given you a practical example of this skills, technology transfer and skills development because there is going to be a whole market by the time we move to that stage of production of set of boxes. So, by the time we move from analogue to digital, it is a different thing. We will have people who can fix the digital boxes, people who can install those devices, the set-up boxes; people who can repair them because we don't have those skills now but we are looking at the fact that we would need to have them before 2015. (13/03/2013)

The above response by a senior government official clearly depicts the hopes and aspirations of government towards ensuring that there is technology transfer to the country through MNCs that are encouraged with generous business incentives into Nigeria. Another view on transfer of technology to the locals was expressed by a senior official of the ITF, which is one of the government agencies concerned with the process of ensuring technology transfer, an important issue of serious desire in human capital formation in Nigeria:

> The staff of ITF, most especially those that are involved in training, they are trained in developed and developing countries worldwide so that the skills that are being practised outside there can be brought home. Those that are trained, when they come back, they make sure that whatever they learnt, they replicate it and ensure that it suits our own work here. And that's the reason why most of our centres of the Industrial Training Fund are equipped. Some of

> them are equipped as what you have outside the country so that the technology that is being practised in developed and other developing countries are also available within Nigeria. (17/03/2013)

The two interview responses revealed the strong desire of government to ensure that the country makes advancements in technological acquisition. With the establishment of MNC ventures, it is hoped that technical and skills transfer to the country will be generated. However, despite the number of MNCs operating in Nigeria and the existence of different government and private establishments promoting skills development, the reality on ground is that the skills challenge is persistent. Could something be missing between the programmes of skills development institutions and MNCs skills development strategies in Nigeria? The researcher probed this issue during an interview with a Manager at Lafarge. This was the Manager's response:

> There are two processes through which technology transfer could happen in Lafarge. In the first instance, Lafarge has two highly developed technical centres in Paris, France, the headquarters of Lafarge, and Cairo, in Egypt. Officials are sent to those technical centres to acquire knowledge about latest developments within the industry. When they return, they are expected to train others about such innovations. Secondly, a "Coach" could be requested or sent down to an area of operation to train the people on ground. With these the newest knowledge is imparted in an area of operation. (22/05/2013)

The response of the Lafarge official was in agreement with that of a manager in Unilever Nigeria Plc:

> Whenever a new machine is to be brought into the company for production, the core staff that will be working with the machine are usually sent to the manufacturer of the equipment who will train them on how to use the equipment before it is brought into the factory. This affords them opportunity of interacting with manufacturers acquiring knowledge about the equipment. (16/05/2013)

A manager from MTN which is a mobile communication company, underscored the same points. He stated that:

> In the company, the engineering section is the core of the telecommunication activities and it is under a consortium of experts with Nigerian professionals and technicians. The indigenous professionals and technicians are being exposed to the technology. (08/05/2013)

The three MNCs' claims about being concerned with developing skills for technology transfer in some ways reflect Becker's human capital theory's position on skills development as a human capital formation imperative (see chapter two, sub-section 2.3.1). However, organised labour had a contrary view on this subject. According to a senior official of the NLC:

> Multinational companies are business organisations who are out to make money and so they are not out to develop skills. They will only develop skills to the extent that it will facilitate the realisation of their business objective. Any skill development programme is for their business purpose. (01/03/2013)

This position was also maintained by a senior official of the TUC who stated that:

> The idea of transferring technology is a deceit because multinational corporations only come with the technology needed for production in an area of operation to execute a business for which they teach the indigenous people just a minute part. Would they be interested in you knowing it to compete with them? So they train you only to the extent that they want you to know. (06/03/2013)

From the responses of the two labour federation officials, it appeared that labour did not have confidence in the MNCs vis-à-vis the development of skills of the Nigerian employees to facilitate technology transfer.

For the organised private sector, skills development and technology transfer were two sides of the same coin in development discourses. A senior official of NECA noted sarcastically:

> Can you really transfer technology? That is my question; my personal opinion now. You know, if you are talking of technology transfer, what you are saying is that, for me as the country that has technological advantage over you, I should give up that advantage by allowing you to level up with me in a competitive world economy. In other words, you know it is deception when you believe China, for instance, will transfer technology and they will become irrelevant to your economy. In other words, you will acquire that knowledge, then, you don't need their services again because you can now do it. So, even if they agree with you, yes, we believe in technology transfer, let's do this, let's do that, it does not really work in the real sense of it. (14/05/2013)

The view expressed by the NECA official that no country will transfer its technology to another was also underscored in the response of a senior official from the NITAD, who remarked:

> Well, I don't know whether any technology is being transferred. Really, I don't know because when you see some of our industries, they are still in stone- age, very old machines and the reason is this, the basics are not there. Why did Dunlop leave Nigeria to go to Ghana? You see, when I was in May and Baker, we had a plant to bottle water; that plant was bought from Germany, today's technology, digital control. Power outage, about two occasions nearly packed the machine up and on each occasion, we bring somebody from Germany to come and fix it. You see, nobody wants to transfer technology, my brother nobody ever does that. (25/05/2013)

The same argument is reflected in the view of a top NACCIMA official who stated that:

> The British system of administration is different from that of the French. However, one thing stands that with colonialism and but for the struggle for independence in Africa we were to be made perpetual slaves; our situation has not changed. How then can we expect the masters of colonial domination to transfer technology? (08/03/2013)

The three views from the organised private sector indicated that the MNC sector did not believe in developing skills to aid technology transfer. For the interviewees, technology would never be transferred because of the need to protect western ingenuity and sustain the domination of developing countries. Skills should rather be developed for technology take-off. These varied opinions of organised labour and organised private sector agencies reflect the ideas of Labour process theory (see chapter two, sub-section 2.3.4) that in the capitalist economic system, the employers would device various means to manipulate work organisations for the realisation of corporate objectives. Therefore, the views of labour and organised private sector agencies represent the counter balancing institution against systemic exploitation by capitalist employers under the guise of developing skills of employee which ultimately is designed for perpetuation of corporate objectives.

A cross section of shopfloor employees in the three selected companies also expressed their views on the issue of technology transfer in their respective companies. Their views are presented in the table below.

Table 6.1: Shopfloor employees' responses showing whether technology transfer was occurring in these companies

Response category	Frequency					
Company	**Lafarge**		**Unilever**		**MTN**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nil	-	-	17	17.9	3	3.2
Yes	83	83.0	66	69.5	44	46.3
No	8	8.3	5	5.3	21	22.1
Don't know	9	9.0	7	7.4	27	28.4
Total	100	100%	95	1 00%	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n= 100 (Lafarge), n=95 (Unilever and MTN)						

Table 6.1 shows shopfloor respondents' views on the issue of technology transfer, one of the salient issues in human capital formation in Nigeria. In Lafarge, 83% of the shop-floor employees agreed that the parent company was facilitating the acquisition of technology by the Nigerian subsidiary, and only a very small percentage (8%) indicated a contrary opinion. In Unilever, a similarly high proportion (69.5%) agreed with the position of employees in Lafarge that the parent body was helping to facilitate the acquisition of technology by the Nigerian subsidiaries. These positive views might be attributable to the large number of Nigerians working in the two companies – Lafarge and Unilever - and maintaining the equipment. In MTN, however, only 46.3% indicated that their parent company was facilitating acquisition of technology. This might be due to the fact that expatriates were in-charge of the maintenance facilities of MTN. The employees perhaps viewed the expatriates as not facilitating acquisition by the Nigerian subsidiaries, unlike the other two companies where Nigerians were very much available.

Contrary to what obtained in MTN, at Lafarge and Unilever, a substantial number of employees worked with expatriates for the maintenance of the companies' equipment. As such, a smaller number of respondents at Lafarge (8%), Unilever (5.3%) and MTN (22.1%) felt that these companies were not facilitating the acquisition of technology by Nigerian employees. However, 9% of Lafarge respondents, 7.4% of Unilever respondents and 28.4% of MTN indicated they did not know. Finally 17.9% of Unilever respondents and 3.2% of MTN respondents did not answer the question.

The responses of the shopfloor employees were supported by different reasons. In Lafarge, where 83% of the employees responded that the parent company was helping the Nigerian subsidiary to acquire technology, the reasons provided were that: Lafarge had expanded its

operations with new projects and technology; the company operates a high level of automation of production that was facilitated by the parent company, and it provided employees with overseas training for them to have the newest knowledge, exposure to modern equipment of production; provision of equipment and training were central decisions of Lafarge, and a technical agreement existed with the parent company; Finally, the parent company facilitated the technology currently in use. However, the few employees who did not believe that the parent company was helping the Nigerian subsidiary to acquire technology noted in their responses that Lafarge was based in France, which was where most of the vital decisions were made. The Managing Director and Plant Manager were both foreigners and they set the standards and ensure compliance at the factory and head office.

At Unilever, the majority of the employees who gave a positive response provided the following reasons: there was modern equipment and machinery which the parent company had facilitated for the Nigerian subsidiaries; overseas training was opened to senior employees within the Unilever conglomerate and the foreign assignments were intended to expose the employees to wider knowledge of the company's operations. For those who objected to the facilitation of autonomy by the parent company, they supported their views with the fact that Unilever were a foreign owned company and as such, decisions were not taken in Nigeria but in Britain. Having autonomy was not therefore likely to be an issue of concern to the subsidiary.

At MTN, while 46.3% were in support that the parent company was helping in facilitating autonomy to the local subsidiaries, 53.7%of employees indicated "no", "I don't know", or did not answer the question. The reasons given by those who believed that the parent company facilitates autonomy included that: many Nigerians were employed by the company who had been trained in different aspects of the company's operations both locally and outside the country; Nigerians were working with their foreign counterparts in the company; more Nigerians had occupied higher positions including the Managing Director of the company, and finally, that there was uniformity of equipment and training in MTN globally. However, those who differed based their view on the many expatriates in the company; that the real knowledge of the operation was not yet revealed to the local employees; and that the Nigerian subsidiary provides regular feedback to the parent company in Johannesburg.

6.3 Expatriate Quota and local skills development

Another salient issue in Nigerian human capital formation discourse is the use of Expatriate Quota as a human capital formation mechanism. The country requires that only where Nigerians are not qualified should expatriates be brought in to fill a given vacant position in an organisation. An expatriate may work for five years, after which he/she has to apply for renewal of the expatriate permit for another five years. At the expiration of the second term of the contract, the expatriate is expected to return to his/her country. It is stipulated that two Nigerians should be attached to each expatriate to enable them understudy the expatriate such that they will have proficiency in the work, acquire the skills and be able to do the job subsequently (see Appendix J - Handbook on Expatriate Quota Administration, 2004). According to an official publication of the Ministry of Interior, having fulfilled all the requirements, employers must apply for and be granted an Expatriate Quota. The Expatriate Quota scheme is designed by government to prevent the indiscriminate employment of expatriates where there are qualified and suitable Nigerians to fill those positions within organisations. According to an official of the Ministry of Interior in Abuja:

> Expatriate Quota scheme is designed for development of the country, and it is not just granted. Among the requirements are: A minimum of share capital of ₦15 Million for two automatic expatriate quota positions or a minimum share capital of ₦30 Million for four automatic expatriate quota positions; evidence of capital importation for wholly owned foreign company; approval from appropriate professional bodies in Nigeria; management and technical services agreement; evidence that the personnel required are not likely to be found in Nigeria; names, addresses, qualifications and positions to be occupied by the expatriate(s); training programme for Nigerians in addition to a management succession schedule among others. With these measures, the country will tap from investment technology and skills through mandatory training programmes. Expatriate quota scheme is meant to boost Nigeria's skills development programme where there is deficiency or inadequacy. (13/03/2013)

With this arrangement, Nigeria's human capital formation will be boosted as skills that were not available will be developed. The involvement of professional bodies in the issue of Expatriate Quota scheme is to ensure that truly, qualified Nigerians are not available (see appendix J for details on Expatriate Quota requirements). The statement is underscored in the view of an official of the Citizenship and Business Department of the Federal Ministry of Interior who alluded to the fact that:

> The importance which the government attached to the issue of Expatriate Quota scheme has led to the review of the scheme as employers now have to apply online. This will ensure that the issue is handled professionally in line with the rules without sentiments as there is no direct contact with the applicants. (13/03/2013)

The two responses from the government interviewees indicated the seriousness that government attached to the issue of the expatriate quota as a strategy of tapping from the knowledge and expertise of foreign professionals through the mentoring of Nigerian employees.

For organised labour however, the issue of Expatriate Quota as a strategy of human capital formation was different. According to a senior official of the NLC:

> The issue of Expatriate Quota as an avenue of developing skills is a good idea but in reality in Nigeria, it exists only in the books. There is no serious back-up by the government and so, the various companies are simply implementing it as it sooths them. The monitoring to ensure compliance is weak, so, the Nigerian workers and the country, is not deriving maximum advantage. In short, Nigeria is 'short-changed' due to weak institutions monitoring. (01/03/2013)

The position of the NLC was similar to that of the TUC as indicated by a senior official of the Congress:

> All these things are in our books, but what do you find at the end of the day, you get to know that there is abuse of this Expatriate Quota, but all of these happen because institutions are weak and also because of certain practices that are also not proper. You know. Expatriate Quota could be abused. If you go to some companies and you see a foreigner as a Human Resource Manager, how can you take that in Nigeria – Have a foreigner as a Human Resource Manager? It's time we fought all of them out and we don't tell them we are out to fight them. But what that means is that you can get somebody else and create one analogous office and bring the Human Resources Manager under that person. So, the Trade Union itself will say the struggle continues; we keep talking about it. And we still believe that things will change. We always say nobody outlives the union. Any government will not outlive the governed. The union will continue. Specifically, it's because the institutions are not working that many of these guidelines are not followed. The institutions that try to work are too weak to make any impact beneficial to Nigeria. (06/03/2013)

Labour was of the view that a fundamental change in various regulatory establishments needed to happen for the country's quota system to have a meaningful impact on skills development.

On the side of the organised private sector, the view expressed was that the issue of the Expatriate Quota was dicey because Nigeria wanted foreign direct investment but at the same time government wanted a quota regime. An official of NECA called for caution and flexibility:

> We are working with government to institute reforms. But the point I want to make is that government, in as much as it is interested in indigenisation that is, putting Nigerians in very vital places, which is essential, the important thing is that it should not be done at the expense of merit. That is number one. In other words, round pegs must be in round holes; otherwise, it would have adverse effects on business and on the economy. It should not just be because: 'let a black man be there'. Is the black man or the Nigerian competent and capable to move the company from this level to another level? The second aspect of it is, now, government has been chasing after FDI – Foreign Direct Investment. It is part of the economic thrust of successive government for about three governments now. You cannot be chasing after FDI and you ask investors from foreign countries to bring in their funds; they invest it; in the same vein, you won't allow them to bring in people that will look after their interests. So, in other words, there should be flexibility. If you want my money, you must also allow me to bring some of my men to oversee my investments, people I can trust, people I can rely on. That's the second leg of it. (14/05/2013)

Emphasising his point about caution and flexibility, the official identified the benefits which Nigerians derive from multinational investments:

> The third leg of it is: we have Nigerians that are also going abroad because your project deals with multinationals, they are also benefiting from staff exchanges, going to other countries as experts; we have several of them in member companies. In many of our member companies, some of our colleagues are all there, in Western Europe, in US, on exchange programme. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. Definitely, in the same way, you must be able to open your door for people from other countries to also come to Nigeria as experts. And we are talking of the world being a global village now. So, in the spirit of globalisation, free market, if we are benefiting from it, others must be able to benefit also. However, NECA has always preached to its members that it must ensure compliance with the laws of the land and best practices. It must be seen to be approaching the table with a clean hand. In other words, they should not abuse the provisions of the

> expatriate quota. And that has always been the position of NECA. (14/05/2013)

Still on the expatriate quota issue, a senior official of NITAD said:

> Even the government is directly guilty of this, you see things that you think Nigerians can do; but, we don't trust ourselves. We believe in expatriates and many of these companies abuse the Expatriate Quota. Look, go to MTN, all the things they do are from South Africa; all their trainers; even security company; they bring security companies from South Africa to service them. Why should the government allow that? I worked before with Niger Dock, a ship building company. Training that could be done here, they would say, bring somebody from South Africa, Spain or England or America. I mean, that's the business we had. So, maybe, somehow, with the Petroleum Industry Bill and Local Contents Commission now, some of those things would change. (25/05/2013)

The views of the different officials presented above were not different from that of a senior official from NACCIMA who responded sarcastically by raising questions to show that the Expatriate Quota is being abused because of weak institutional frameworks:

> Those who come from abroad under the experts quota system, do we know all of them? Take statistics! These are the people who manage the multinational corporations in Africa; it is now we are having more Indians and Lebanese. Who has ever assessed the certificates they use to manage these corporations? Who has ever asked for their CV? Who has ever asked the custom and immigration, especially the immigration, how they came? Who is following the quota? These are some of the questions we should ask ourselves? The situation is like this because we have a very weak regulatory system that is opened to abuse. (08/03/2013)

The interview responses obtained from the three establishments reveal that the OPS also did not believe that Expatriate Quota system would be of advantage in Nigerian human capital formation due to a weak regulatory environment, which allegedly opened the Expatriate Quota scheme to abuses by MNCs and other interests. However, the interview responses obtained from the three selected MNCs in relation to the issue of Expatriate Quota scheme revealed a somewhat different picture as respondents here maintained that their companies adhered strictly to all relevant regulations. The Manager in Lafarge Cement Wapco remarked thus:

> On the issue of expatriates, we have quota allocation -- the rule is that the expatriate would have to be here for five years. But in Lafarge basically, we try not to do more than three years. And of course as the expatriate comes in, he already has like three to four people who are going to work with him and understudying him on the job such that it is seamless. It is important to know that we only bring people – the expatriate in for what we really, really are deficient in. (22/05/2013)

Unilever, on the other hand, makes very limited use of expatriates, as explained by one of its managers:

> Unilever is a global company; we are into home care products. The scientist and technologist are very capable within the country. But because it is a global company, the parent company has representatives that are expatriates, very, very few. Our Managing Director presently (2013) is from South Africa and most members of the board are Nigerians because the organisation believes we can do it. (16/05/2013)

Contrary to the limited use of expatriates by Unilever, MTN makes extensive use of these professionals. This could be attributed to the relative newness of the company in Nigeria. One manager said:

> The communication sector is highly technical and so a consortium of experts handles the engineering and technical aspects of the organisation. The consortium comprises Nigerian professionals and technicians as well. (08/05/2013)

From the views expressed by the different constituencies on expatriate quota, two directions of analyses could be identified. While the state agencies and MNCs alluded to the importance of training and skills acquisition through the expatriate quota regime, a view strongly held by the human capital theory (see chapter two, sub-section 2.3.1), the organised labour and organised private sector agencies appear to be sceptical – more in line with the assumptions of labour process theory - because of what they saw as the capitalist's penchant for profit maximisation (see chapter two, sub-section 2.3.4).

In order to obtain more information on the Expatriate Quota scheme and on the availability of local skills, the views of the shopfloor employees were also sought through the survey. The outcome is presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6. 2: Responses of shopfloor employees' indicating whether work could go on in the company in the absence of expatriates

Response category	Frequency					
Company	**Lafarge**		**Unilever**		**MTN**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nil	-	-	11	11.6	01	1.1
Yes	85	85.0	65	68.4	42	44.2
No	14	14.0	19	20.0	21	22.1
Don't know	1	1.0	-	-	31	32.6
Total	100	100%	95	100%	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5, n = 100 (Lafarge), n = 95 (Unilever and MTN)						

The survey sought to find out employees' views about whether the factory could operate independently of expatriate officials. Majority of the employees at Lafarge, (85%) stated that work could go on, while 68.4% in Unilever agreed with this position. In MTN, only 44.2% believed that work could go on without expatriates. However, 14% of Lafarge respondents, 20% of Unilever respondents and 22.1% of MTN respondents felt that expatriate staff were essential and inevitable for work to go on. These responses reflect the level of expatriate professionals' involvement in the selected companies. While there were few expatriates in Lafarge and Unilever, the same could not be said of MTN since a large number of expatriates worked in the company. The relatively large number of expatriate employees at MTN was widely viewed by employees as signifying excessive 'expatriate control of MTN operations in Nigeria'. However, they viewed this as essential for effective service delivery.

A number of factors were provided by the survey respondents to support their positions and these are summarised in Table 6.3.

Table 6. 3: Respondents' reasons for thinking local MNC subsidiaries could do without expatriate employees

Lafarge Cement Wapco (85% of respondents)	Unilever Nigeria (68.4% of respondents)	MTN Nigeria (44.2% of respondents)
1. Trained locals could put expertise to use	1. With only a few expatriate staff, the company was meeting targets. As such, this same position would be maintained without the expatriate staff.	1. Nigerian employees who have been trained over the years should be able to run the organisation
2. A high level of camaraderie and team spirit among employees helped the company to function successfully.	2. There was a quality assurance department and procedure for verification to ensure standardisation of products.	2. There are skilled local employees, who if given the opportunity would perform well.
3. Many employees had observed the way the establishment is run as it has existed for several years	3. The share ownership which employees enjoyed assisted in the successful operation of the company.	3. Working with expatriates, Nigerian employees have been exposed to the company operations and should be able to run the company

However, those employees who felt that Lafarge could not function without expatriates alleged that it is not owned by Nigerians. More than 75% of Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria is owned by Lafarge which is based in France, so Lafarge takes major decisions. In addition, this group of employees reasoned that workers in the organisation know as much as they are taught, and as much as they are exposed to. In other words, those who taught the Nigerians know more about the company's operations than the Nigerians.

For Unilever, the employees who expressed the opinion that local MNC subsidiaries could not function without expatriates adduced their opinions to corruption and greed on the part of Nigerians which would manifest in poor equipment maintenance and result in substandard products. They agreed that Nigerians possess the technical capability, but need to be supervised due to their negative attitudes.

MTN presented what would appeared to be a fluid response. A total of 54.7% ticked either "No" or "I don't know" as their responses. A summation of the 'no' and 'I don't know' responses revealed that the majority of the employees (54.1%) could be said to have negative views about the company functioning without expatriates. They attributed this to: management's belief that it is the expatriates that have the technical know-how to make the company function; that the details of the technical aspects of operations are not known to Nigerians; and that some departments are basically controlled by expatriates. The above views about expatriate employees echo Pirozek and Komarkova's (2015) argument, in their study of the Czech Republic that expatriates made enormous contributions for the financial performance of a number of multinationals involved in their survey.

6.4 Skills development and technology domiciliation

There is an argument that economic growth can only be sustainable if the productive skills and technology are within the country (Siyanbola, 2015; ILO, 2011b). In a sense, this argument underpins the Nigerian government's efforts, through policy measures, to ensure that the relevant technology and skills are sourced from within the country Akpomuvie, 2011; Siyanbola et al, 2012). This was the point emphasised by an interviewee at the Ministry of Trade and Investment:

> We will invite prospective foreign manufacturers with the competency, to manufacture digital exchange boxes as Nigerian companies may not have the competency to produce the digital exchange boxes. Part of the agreement will be to set up companies here in Nigeria to manufacture these boxes; they will also be required to train our people on how to produce these set-up boxes; not just to produce them, but also to train technicians who will be able to repair them in future as the country migrates from analogue communication device to the digital technology. This is a practical way to approach the issue of skills and technology development. (13/03/2013)

This response was in line with the view expressed by a senior management official at the ITF:

> Trainers at the Fund's Industrial Skills Training Centres are sent to world class skills development and training institutions. They are expected to come back and customise the skills acquired for the benefit of ITF. Not only that, those who have been trained in world class institutes with advanced equipment and technology will be able to use such equipment in the skills centres, train others and maintain such machinery. (17/03/2013)

There were indications from the respondents' remarks that the desire of the Nigerian government was for the productive skills of the MNCs to be harnessed and domiciled in the country. As one senior official in the Federal Ministry of Employment and Productivity explained:

> Government has been encouraging the multinational corporations to set up training schools for their employees to acquire relevant skills for their organisations and allied industry. In order to achieve this objective, officials of the ministry go round such training centres run by multinational corporations for inculcation of specific soft skills relevant to their organisations, to ensure standardisation of their training programmes. (12/03/2013)

The views of participants from the national skills agencies revealed that development of skills to facilitate technology domiciliation in Nigeria was an objective that was being promoted, the idea being that only when skills were domiciled within the country would more Nigerians have the opportunity of acquiring them. In addition, it was only skills that were domiciled that could be further explored, adapted and customised to the particular needs of the country.

It was stated in a previous section of this thesis (see chapter 3 sections 3) that technology deployed for productive purposes can only be beneficial for a country on a sustainable level if the people of that country have the skills to manipulate the technologies (Siyanbola, 2012 ; ILO, 2011b). In essence, the possession of the requisite skills is a pre-requisite for having imported technology domiciled in a country (Akpomuvie, 2011). Interview responses obtained from the MNCs on this subject were in agreement with this position. For instance, at Lafarge Cement Wapco, one Manager said:

> We travel abroad for training; people also come to Nigeria to learn. That implies we have something they want to tap from us. But lately, with the support of our Plant Manager, even despite the fact that he is not a Nigerian, we are also looking for Nigerian industries that can offer technical assistance that we can partner with to give training, to do some job that ordinarily we do from abroad. (15/05/2013)

Similarly, a manager at Unilever Nigeria Plc said:

> Our equipment is maintained by our engineering department. Except for importation of machines, we have competent maintenance team to keep our factories working. (16/05/2013)

The manager in MTN stated that the company's equipment was maintained by a consortium of expatriate staff and this included indigenous Nigerian professionals and technicians, and that over time, it might be only Nigerians that would be managing the section. (08/05/2013)

It seemed that all three MNCs were involved in promoting the idea of domiciliation of technology. On the part of organised labour, the study found that the idea existed that developing skills through MNCs in order to have productive technology domiciled in Nigeria would be difficult due to the profit motive of the companies. One top NLC official was particularly sceptical:

> Before now, there was something like that from government-owned companies. That was when government was driving the economy. At that time, you know, government established the companies, and sometimes partnered with the expatriate in establishing companies. These expatriates come in, establish their factories, employ workers, train the workers and they

> exit while the indigenous workers take over based on agreed terms and condition. But that was before. You would be aware equally, that virtually all these corporations owned by the government have been privatised. So, they are all privatised. The ones that are not, some are in comatose. The other ones that were actually alive were sold and you discover that government does not have control any more. So, the supposed multinationals do things on their own, for their own benefits because there is no regulation. They see that there is the need to train these workers for the efficiency and the running of their own profit oriented companies. So, there are no specifications on say, train these people and hand over. How can skills for domiciliation of technology be realised when no such agreement exist? (01/03/2013)

A respondent at the TUC seemed convinced that MNCs were simply not working towards domiciling either skills or technology in Nigeria:

> If the multinational companies were helping to develop skills, the country would have been better off. But they are not doing that. Even the few ones that are here, once they are through with their businesses, or they are not making enough profit from the system, they move their technology and they are gone. This is contrary to what obtains in some other environments. If you have a multinational firm set up in America for example, after a while, it is going to domesticate in America. We barely have that in Africa. What they do here is different, that is why we call them 'briefcase companies'. They ensure that they are small, compact; they make so much money and they go back. And they would make billions of naira and when you say 'jack', they are gone. (06/03/2013)

In the view of the labour officials, the development of skills was being pursued only where these would facilitate MNC's profit motive; and because they were mobile, they did not have anything at stake and would move to a new location if they experienced dwindling fortunes in Nigeria. These views confirmed a well known line of argument that MNCs were masters of "regime shopping" (Almond et al, 2014:240). It described a strategy through which MNCs sought to avoid labour friendly policies of host countries and consequently engaged in social dumping for less regulated labour environment with fewer protections (Almond, et al, 2014:240).

For their part, respondents from the OPS believed that it was only when technology was domiciled could it be domesticated and remodelled for adaptive use. Therefore, to ensure economic progress that would be sustainable, it was imperative to have the technology within the country. A senior official of NECA lamented:

> Why can't we invest in our own scientists and technologists? How can you domicile what has not been transferred to you? Why can't we? For instance, we have several ingenious scientists in Nigeria; there are prototype automobiles, fabricated autos or whatever; but they have not been encouraged. Young scientists -- they call themselves Junior Engineers, Technicians and Scientists -- Just go to any of the exhibitions and see fantastic innovations and whatever. One of them designed a jet plane and it flew. Why can we not encourage them and invest and translate these into innovations? We wait until we lose these brains. Best brains in this world, when it comes to sciences and innovations, are from Nigeria but they are not working for Nigeria. They are all 'there'. We need to institute policies to encourage our own; invest heavily in them rather than economic profligacy where we squander our common wealth. Invest heavily in this area and allow researchers; allow them to actually make innovations and we become giants; we come up with our own technology rather than waiting for somebody to come and transfer or share for us to domesticate it. Nobody will do that except you want to call them fools. It will not happen. They will take your money; they will collaborate with you but it is not in sincerity. It is a competitive economy that we are running in the world. So, you want me to surrender my advantage? We say we want to become one of the twenty biggest economies; will the others be matching on the same spot and waiting for us to overtake them? No**!** (14/05/2013)

Another OPS representative, the senior official at NITAD, reasoned that it was naive of any country to expect another country or an MNC for that matter to be "handing out" its technology as, though this were a game of charity:

> Nobody transferred technology to the Indians, they found their own ways. Nobody transferred technology to the Chinese, they found their own ways. Nigerians must find their own way. There is no technology transfer anywhere for the other to domesticate. Whatever they promise or give you under whatever agreement, they hold it. You know as much as they want you to know, that's the truth. And the Nigerian government also is not helping situation; I mean giving support, that's the truth; government is not helping situations. (25/05/2013)

Respondents from the OPS did not seem convinced that skills development for technology domiciliation was feasible. They were more in favour of investment in indigenous technologists, technicians and scientists to trigger technological development than in the domiciliation of existing (imported) technologies.

Whilst the above responses were obtained from the senior officials in the various study organisations, the views of a cross section of shopfloor employees at the three selected MNCs, obtained through the survey conducted provided more information on the issue of skills development for technology domiciliation. Their views are summarised in the table below.

Table 6. 4: Shopfloor employees' responses on development of skills to facilitate domiciliation of technology

Response category	**Frequency**					
Company	**Lafarge**		**Unilever**		**MTN**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nil	-	-	13	13.7	01	1.1
Deeply exposed	78	78.0	59	62.1	42	44.2
Only superficially exposed	12	12.0	13	13.7	19	20.0
No exposure	4	4.0	6	6.3	16	16.8
Don't know	6	6.0	4	4.2	17	17.9
Total	100	100%	95	100%	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 100 (Lafarge) n = 95 (Unilever and MTN)						

Table 6.4 speaks to the discourse on domiciliation of technology which some believe, is strongly desired in Nigeria after many years of independence. The responses across the board indicated that the majority of the employees in the three selected companies expressed positive views about technology domiciliation based on the differential exposure to technical aspects of work in the organisations.

In Lafarge, 78% of the employees indicated that they were deeply exposed to the core technical aspects of the work while 12% said they were only superficially exposed. Only 4% felt that employees were not exposed to the technical aspects of the work, 6% indicated that they did not know.

For Unilever, 13.7% of the respondents did not answer the question but 62.1% expressed the view that they were deeply exposed to the technical aspects of the work. In addition, 13.7% of the respondents said they were only superficially exposed. However, 6.3% of the respondents of Unilever said that there was no exposure of the employees to the core technical aspects of the work while 4.2% indicated they did not know whether there was exposure or not.

The pattern of response as shown above was similar to the responses obtained from MTN as revealed in the data. While the majority of the respondents were positive about their exposure to the technical aspects of the work, there were few contrary opinions as 1.1% of the respondents did not respond to the questions; 44.2% affirmed that they were deeply exposed and 20% said the exposure was superficial. A total of 16.8%, said there was no exposure to the core technical aspects of the work and 17.9% indicated they did not know.

Overall, the deeper the level of employee's exposure to the 'technical aspects' of the work, the more favourable the views of surveyed respondents to the idea of technology domiciliation desired.

6.5 Skills development and employment mobility (Portability of skills)

Among the discourses in human capital formation in Nigeria is the issue of skills development for employment mobility. It is a vital discourse that has attracted the attention of the global body concerned with labour issues - the International labour Organisation (ILO). Developing skills that have wider applicability and employment choices, greatly has the potential for the amelioration of unfavourable labour conditions (Brewer, 2013; ILO, 2007). This issue is of high relevance for the economic and social transformation of any nation. The quest for skills development for employment mobility has been necessitated not only by rapid changes in the application of productive technologies in organisations, global market trends and high levels of unemployment especially among youths, but a rising trend of migration as well. Workers who possess relevant skills have better access to gainful employment opportunities and more easily adjust to changing labour market demands. In essence, it means that skills need to be transferable between jobs and such skills are recognised by employers (ILO, 2007). Portability of skills gives access to employment for skilled employees who can be deployed productively in different jobs, occupations or industries. Such skills are recognised within national and global labour environments. Skills that are portable are of immense value as they contribute to human development, empower people, broaden individual employees' choices and capabilities, and empower employees to realise their potential (Simatele, 2015).

Considering the importance of skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills), a key informant of the Federal Ministry of Employment and productivity stated that:

> The various Industrial Skills Centres being operated by the parastatals under different ministries provide holistic training to the trainees. Besides specific vocational and technical skills that make them professionals, towards the end of their programmes they are usually exposed to management and entrepreneurial skills which will help facilitate adaptation of their technical skills. It will also facilitate self-employment. (12/03/2013)

This statement obtained from the ministry was corroborated by a senior official of the ITF, who said:

> A person trained in auto-mechanics will be able to apply the knowledge in different organisations with mechanical equipments... Not only are they given entrepreneurial skills to be able to manage businesses, they are also encouraged to form cooperative societies as avenues of sourcing credit facilities for individuals' establishment of businesses. (12/03/2013)

Respondents from organised labour were of the view that employers should impart skills that would be amenable to change, especially in the global environment which was characterised by rapid technological innovations. Such skills could then be put to other uses in the event of economic change. Below is how a senior official of NLC articulated his views:

> When an employee is skilled, he has a lot of potential in him and it becomes part of him. What he decides to do with the skill is a different ball game. Everything is up to him; he could decide to get a new job where he knows his skills are required. Sure he knows that he will not be lowly priced because you know, he is now been looked at as an expert. Developed skill creates ample opportunities for an employee especially in this age of high labour mobility. (01/03/2013)

At TUC, a respondent said:

> There's this saying that "knowledge is power". If someone does not have adequate knowledge about what he is going to do, there is no way he can do it well. We cannot have development without people being masters, having skills that they know have relevance beyond an industry. So, the country is the way it is right now because of lack of policies, lack of competencies, capacity to do what it would have wanted to do. But one would have expected that if multinationals come here, they will be able to uplift people by imparting skills to them. I am not against multinationals making profit, but I also expect

> that when you make your profit, you have to leave something behind by impacting on the lives of the people. What will have a long lasting impact is if the companies impact on skills. That's one of the major challenges that we are facing. But because the government is not very serious, the companies take advantage and do just what they feel like doing. (06/03/2013)

It is possible to glean from the assertions of officials from the two labour federations that labour officials desired that in the course of working for MNCs, the workers would acquire skills that would give them value and better opportunities well into the future.

Subsequently, the organised private sector alluded to the need for the development of skills relevant to employment opportunities beyond specific industry 'gates'. This was revealed by a senior official of NECA:

> With adequate training in our institutions, people employed will have avenues of acquiring more proficiency on the job. Secondly, there will be opportunities to learn other related things and be multi-skilled. But there is skill gap due to neglect in our educational system. However, some corporate organisations have training schools for bridging the gap. In addition, in-house training, workshops and seminars are being organised for employees and these give them edge within the employment market and facilitate job opportunities. (14/05/2013)

This position of NECA was echoed by the senior official of NITAD, who said:

> A trained person who has truly acquired the skills is mobile and employable anywhere with the skills that he has acquired; but government has not been forthcoming in terms of adequately funding of institutions to produce high class manpower. Incessant strikes and closures have negative consequences on the quality of education. This informed the idea of training schools by multinational corporations and partnership with existing institutions. (25/05/2013)

The view of the NECA official was similar to that expressed at by a NACCIMA official:

> Such issue as this has become pronounced because of the decay and institutional failure within the system. In fact, when I hear that Nigerian graduates are unemployable, they are this, they are that, I feel bad. For a woman to tell people that her daughter is not fit to be the wife of a man, is not acceptable. And with all the 'nonsense' people are saying, no university professor, or lecturer, or V.C. has come out and say this is not the situation.

> Nobody looked at the colour of our degrees when we graduated; nobody looked at the class of the degrees. We were seen as the leaders of tomorrow because even with a pass, the belief was that it is a foundation you can build on. University was more or less a theoretical approach to life. As soon as you leave, it's not what you actually read in the university that matters but where you were going to. It's like a classical condition, the environment determines the character. What makes a man? The gene of the father and mother, the education received and the environment. Within some years of employment by multinationals, you were posted to different parts of the country for international assignments. Our skills were applicable and relevant anywhere in the world. It is the destruction of the economy and institutions that are not functioning that brought about these ideas. (08/03/2013)

The responses from three OPS participants showed that for the sector, skills were important but that skills should be relevant and applicable in any environment. A key issue raised by the respondents from the OPS was the role played by the multinational companies, in training and skills development of their employees. They were essentially responding to the question: How do multinationals promote the development of that are relevant for job mobility - skills that are portable?

This study, in chapter three emphasised that the global economic climate has made it expedient for skills to be mobile and amenable to different productive activities (Simatele, 2015). This is an important human capital formation discourse and it aligns with the orientation of the multinational corporate sector as revealed by different managerial officials of the companies selected for this study. The MNCs claim that their training and skills development programmes facilitate job mobility. A manager with the Lafarge Cement Wapco said:

> We are in a dynamic world and you cannot tie people down from moving, especially to where they feel they will have fulfilment. It is healthy within the economy. It's only really normal that we still maintain a healthy attrition rate. What we have going for us is the fact that we are a multinational, the other company is not. So, we are really not competing that much, they rather look for trained employees from us. Some of our staff do go to Cadbury as well; they are going to Nestlé, you know, and they are taking people in. We have people going to Chevron, we have people going to Shell, and we are taking people from everywhere relevant to us as well. That's why I said, it's healthy. (16/05/2013)

Another view was expressed by a manager at Unilever Nigeria Plc:

> Unilever has a long history of success in Nigeria. So many new companies in the home care sector have employees who have worked here. In fact, they know that these employees are competent with the work. Hardly will you find an employee of Unilever who is not doing anything outside. In the Nigerian home care product environment, Unilever is actually called a training school. (16/05/2013)

At MTN, one manager said:

> The telecommunication sector is a very big market with so many competitors and MTN is the pioneer. The effect of it is that many of the competitors try to get some of our employees. These employees already know the job and would not need further training to perform. Because of the movement here and there, we recruit regularly and conduct training for them, especially at the customer care level. (08/05/2013)

The views obtained from the multinational corporate sector organisations showed that their skills programmes were amenable and applicable to other sectors. Some of the employees moved from one job to the other easily, especially within the telecommunications sector. Interestingly, the survey conducted for shopfloor employees in the three multinational companies further provided more data concerning the issue of discourse. Respondents were asked whether the skills imparted through their companies' training and skills programmes could be relevant to employment elsewhere? Table 6.5 shows that the majority of the respondents attested to the fact that the skills they had acquired in the organisation were very relevant to employment elsewhere.

Table 6. 5: Shopfloor employees' responses on the issue of skills for employment mobility (Portability of skills)

Response category	**Frequency**					
Company	**Lafarge**		**Unilever**		**MTN**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nil	-	-	14	4.7	1	1.1
Yes	89	89.0	72	75.8	81	85.3
No	9	9.0	2	2.1	8	8.4
Don't know	2	2.0	7	7.4	5	5.3
Total	100	100%	95	100%	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5, n = 100 (Lafarge), n = 95 (Unilever and MTN)						

Table 6.5 shows that all the respondents in Lafarge answered this question but 14.7% of the respondents in Unilever and 1.1% of the respondents in MTN did not respond. The data revealed that 89% of Lafarge respondents, 75.8% of Unilever respondents and 85.3% of MTN respondents reported that the skills acquired from these companies were relevant to

employment beyond their respective companies. Only 9% of Lafarge employees, 2.1% of Unilever employees and 8.4% of MTN employees felt otherwise, while 2% of Lafarge employees, 7.4% of Unilever employees and 5.3% of MTN employees did not know.

These statistics echoed the qualitative responses of the different managerial officials at the MNCs. For instance, at MTN, a manager noted that the telecommunications industry operated a highly competitive business environment such that training went on just as new employees were recruited and other employees were redeployed to facilitate the company's operations. In Unilever, the relevance of their training and skills development programmes as attested to by the shopfloor employees, aligned with the assertions made by a manager during the interview that: "Unilever asked an employee who had left the company to start his own business to produce certain products on behalf of the company to enable the company (Unilever) meet with the market demand at a particular time" (16/05/2013).

At Lafarge, a training officer pointed out that the chairperson of a sister cement company (Dangote) said he was aware that by the time his company commenced production of cement, Lafarge would have trained many people who could be employed in his organisation. This statement was similar to a view obtained from organised labour. A shop steward said that: "an employee could be asked to return the company's materials in his possession when disengaged, but the knowledge and skills which the employee has acquired cannot be taken away from employees". In essence, the employees could put the knowledge and skills to use beyond where they were employed. The responses obtained from the shopfloor employees are useful in the discourse of skills portability.

6.6 Local Content and skills development

The Local Content Initiative is currently a key issue in Nigeria's socio-economic development efforts. It has two strands: on the one hand, it involves the use of local materials as input for production of goods, and on the other, it involves the use of local skills in the production process as well as developing local skills (Nigerian Content Act, 2010; Gbegi and Adebisi, 2013).

In Nigeria, the emphasis is more on joint venture operations especially in the oil and gas sector which is the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. It is expected that in the course of

executing projects, joint venture operators and other companies will implement training and skills development programmes for employees recruited for the contract and people within the operating environment will benefit equally from the training programmes (Nigerian Content Act, 2010).

Local content in skills development aims at developing the knowledge, abilities and capabilities of employees so as to increase the skills base in the operating environment. This is also extended to sub-contractors on a project as well as employees. With this strategy, employees of the main contractor and the sub-contractors will acquire the relevant skills. This will strengthen the skills and human capital base by offering informal and workplace training to employees on the project being executed. In essence, local content in the human capital formation discourse performs dual roles of contributing to the host country's economic and social development aspirations as well as enriching the desire to create an employable labour force for the sustainable development of the host country (Ayonmike and Okeke, 2015). Conscious of the vital role local content could play in skills development in Nigeria, the government established the Local Contents Commission to ensure that the country derives maximum benefits from projects executed by contractors. According to a senior official of the Federal Ministry of Employment and Productivity:

> The ministry plays a supervisory role. While contractors are mandated to recruit employees with preference for area of operation and to train those recruited, the ministry ensures standardisation of the training and skills acquisition programmes provided from such projects. After the completion of the project, the trained employees are encouraged to come to the ministry for practical examination to enable them acquire Trade Test Certificate with which they can access employment within the economy and/or make career progression through subsequent higher certifications. (12/03/2013)

Local content in human capital formation has multiplier effects such as: increasing the skills base of a country especially in the area of contract execution, and empowerment of trained people (Mireftekhari, 2013; Gbegi and Adebisi, 2013) for higher certification as well as for economic benefits). According to a senior official of the Ministry of Trade and Investment, local content was particularly important in the area of digital broadcasting:

> Competent foreign investors will be invited to set up firms for the manufacturing of the communication digital boxes and part of the contract will also be to train Nigerians on installation and repair of these communication boxes. This will create a whole market of opportunities for skills in this area. It

> will empower the people and boost the economy through technical skills which the trainees might acquire. (13/03/2013)

It could be deduced from this assertion that local content in human capital formation in Nigeria could add value not only to the individual but also to the economy. The Responses from the other 'discourse constituencies' were much in line with those of respondents from government establishments.

For organised labour, local content was a good human capital formation strategy. However, the labour officials interviewed alleged that the institutional framework for ensuring compliance was weak and that this robbed the country of the full benefits of local content. A senior official of the NLC said:

> Well, I have not seen if there is any legislation on high-level manpower. Not exactly, I'm not aware of any, if it does exist in reality. The truth is, I know that there is the local content provision for companies in contracts execution, in production, but these things are there in the books. In practice, nobody enforces them. These companies will bring in all kinds of people from their home country to the detriment of our people residing where the contract is being carried out. It is a funny thing – local content. In production, most of multinational companies bring in their additives. It is only water they will get from here; they colour it, brand it and sell in any names they like. So, nobody cares when these things come up. You see pineapple juice and no pineapple was even taken from the country, so, it is additives they add and flavour (01/03/2013).

The senior labour official further emphasised the advantages derivable from the local content within the agricultural sector if sincerely given the due attention by government. The official said:

> Even the agricultural sector is having problems. Let's look at that industry. Like now, you discover in some seasons, a particular farm produce will be in high abundance; some will be wasted. And at a point in time it becomes scarce, it becomes expensive. I think the problem generally, is that government does not have a sense of direction. That is where the problem is, because if you have a sense of direction and you discover you cannot achieve these goals all alone then you will involve these multinational companies to be part of it. If the juice company knows that at a point in time, oranges will be much more and at a point in time pineapple are in surplus, and okay, government has given money to farmers to go and farm surplus, provide fertilisers so that they can produce and they produce, at the end of the day nobody buys it from them. If you cannot provide for the use of preservations, why don't these companies provide. Two, there must be a kind of synergy if the government can't do it alone but with these multinationals so that we will

> all live a better life. But the government does not have a focus, so, therefore, they don't know what they should tell the multinationals to do. So, local content, nobody monitors those things to ensure compliance. (01/03/2013)

The thinking at the TUC was not different, seen from the following remarks by an official of this labour federation:

> Local content is implemented in different countries simply by insisting on adherence to the rule. For instance, somebody went to study in Britain and completed his studies before the expiration of his study permit and started working for a company he once worked for in Nigeria. But at the expiration of his study permit he could not secure work permit because the appropriate department for renewal insisted that this would be done only when a local person cannot be found. If a European cannot be found then an African will be considered. He had to come back. These people are simply securing jobs for their locals. In addition, the local content law says 30%; if not, a contract is not supposed to be awarded. But is it so? That is when you have strong institutions which ensure that the locals are protected. But the contrary is what is obtains here; the institutions are just too weak to ensure compliance with provisions. (06/03/2013).

One point which could be gleaned from the assertions of respondents from the labour federation was that the benefits of local content eluded Nigeria and its citizens as a result of weak and ineffective institutional frameworks for implementation. While the government had good objectives, the commitment to implementation remained a serious challenge.

For its part, the organised private sector viewed the local content initiative as a multidimensional approach to skills development. It involved both professionals and technicians, and had the objective of fostering development in a well monitored and supervised setting. The OPS did not object to the local content initiative: they saw it as a good means for human capital formation. However, just like organised labour, they decried the "weakness of state institutions" in ensuring compliance with relevant legislation. According to a senior official of NECA:

> Developing the country and manpower through local contents is good, there is legal provision for it, and I think it should be enforced. Presently, it is not religiously adhered to. So, there is need for enforcement to enable the provision have a meaningful impact. With the numerous companies, if it is enforced, there will definitely be improvement in the country. (14/05/2013)

The view at NITAD, according to one senior official, was that:

> Local content is a good policy of government but where is the willpower to make it real? It might remain a paper idea like others before it. The other day I saw the guy (man) building trucks at Nnewi on television. He said in five years, he is going to take his local content to about 45%. Look, if we can really do the local content thing, I tell you, Nigeria will blossom within a very short time. It is for government to follow with action. (25/05/2013)

A senior official of NACCIMA held a similar view:

> Well, local content is good but we put a policy in place and look the other way. If you look at it, we are the number one producer of beans, number one producer of cassava, sorghum, I can tell you about ten different items, yet we still import starch. I lament, we still import starch. These things can be verified at the supermarket. Where then is the local content in practice? We are giant of Africa; giant in what? Are we saying we do not have skills to make starch? (08/03/2013)

Local content discourse in the organised private sector was revealed in the responses of the research participants: the OPS believes in the local content initiative, but because of "weak institutional framework", compliance was not always observed. As a result, the expected benefits of local content in skills development were lost. In this sense, the OPS shared the view of organised labour. This, for the researcher, raises questions about the commitment of MNCs to the objective of employee skills development.

For the Nigerian multinational corporate sector, the local content initiative is desirable, or at least the MNCs claim to adhere to the local content initiative. This is what a manager in Lafarge Cement Wapco said in this regard:

> All our 'stuffs' are already here. Limestone is the main thing required. We don't have anything to import (Laugh). Everything we need, the minerals are here. The bulk of our staff are here, well trained and technically sound. We make use of gypsum but it's all sourced from within the factory; we have it in abundance. Although I know that there was a period when we had to import clinker. Clinker is one of the things we use, but it's usually when there is scarcity here. It's even not cost effective for us to import clinker. Emphasis now is on the recruitment of trainees from our host communities for the training school as technicians. (22/05/2013)

The narrative at Unilever Nigeria Plc on MNCs' adherence to the local contents initiative sounds quite similar to that of Lafarge:

> We are very much involved in the local contents initiative. At least we are 90% compliant in our operations. In terms of materials, most of the chemicals are within the country; we have a quality assurance department and laboratory. Only very few things are imported except the machines. In the aspect of manpower, majority of the employees are Nigerians with few expatriates. So, local content is no problem. (16/05/2013)

For MTN Nigeria, the findings showed that local content, in terms of human capital, is high because most of the employees are Nigerians. However, the engineering and technical aspects of the company were dominated by a consortium comprising engineers and professionals, most of whom are foreigners. The views from the different MNCs speak to the approach and involvement of the multinational corporate sector with the local content initiative as reflected in the use of materials and human capital.

6.7 Skills development and empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment Generation

Another discourse encountered in the field, but which also forms part of scholarly and policy contestations in Nigeria, was how skills development drives or is linked with individual empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation. There is increasing recognition that citizen empowerment has implications on economic development and poverty alleviation which are issues of serious concern to the Nigerian government, organisations and individuals (Anyadike et al., 2012). With high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth, it has become an issue of serious concern for government for people to have skills that not only empowers them economically, but also for entrepreneurship development and employment generation such that the people with skills can create jobs and become employers rather than job seekers (Anyadike et al., 2012; see also Siyanbola, et al 2012). This aspiration to develop skills for empowerment and employment generation informed the introduction of a “6:3:3:4” system of education in 1982. This was a system in which a learner received six years of schooling at the primary level, three at junior secondary, three at senior secondary, and four at university level. However, the educational policy failed to achieve the desired objective before it was scrapped in 2010 due to inadequate funding, shortage of technical teachers, inadequate infrastructure among others (Paul-Sewa, 2012). Nevertheless, the government has not relented in pursuit of empowerment and employment generation programmes. A senior

official of the Federal Ministry of Employment and Productivity underscored the same point during the interview:

> The idea of establishing the various industrial skills centres in different parts of the country is to create wider avenues for many Nigerians to acquire vocational skills, craft or trades to empower themselves and make them productive. Gone are the days when government has to provide jobs. A person trained in carpentry, autotronics, auto-mechanics, automobile repairs or plumbing is competent to set up his own business and even employ others. The craft centres are also into training hair dresser and tie and dye making which last for about three months after which the trainees get into business. Abeokuta is known for tie and dye business, if you quantify how much they are making from the business in a year, if we can get the statistics, you will be shocked to find out that most of them over there doing tie and dye are not poor. (12/03/2013)

A similar line of thinking was picked up at the ITF during an interview with a senior official:

> Through the training at the industrial skills centres, the trainees are empowered. Not only that, the Centre in collaboration with the Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) has a programme known as 'Start Your Own Business Plan'. Under this programme, the trainees will be required to write their own business plans. These plans will be scrutinised and the trainees with the business plans that are considered viable are supported with the basic requirements to start their own businesses. In this way, it is not only imparting skills for empowerment but also assisting the trainees to be self-employed and even generating employment for others, possibly. (01/03/2013)

The theme of empowerment, entrepreneurship and employability was also evident in the response of an official of Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment who earlier spoke about digital set-up boxes: "Part of the contract for the digitalisation of communication would be to manufacture the digital boxes locally and train Nigerians on installation and repair of these digital boxes". (13/03/2013)

The approach of the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment, as the senior official informed the researcher, would undoubtedly lead to empowerment, income generation and employment generation within the country with multiplier effects on the wider society. The officials from the government establishments were essentially highlighting government's interest in ensuring that Nigerians are trained and empowered.

For organised labour, skills development for empowerment and employment generation was equally a salient issue in the human capital formation discourse in Nigeria. According to interviewees in this 'discourse constituency', in the phase of high population, it was becoming increasingly clear that government alone could not provide jobs for the teeming population, hence there was an urgent need to coordinate the efforts of all institutions concerned with developing skills, to empower Nigerians so that they could generate wealth rather than remain job seekers. The labour movements viewed the MNCs as harbingers of skills whose potential could be garnered for the realisation of this objective, in an enabling environment and within a functional institutional framework. A senior official of the NLC further elaborated:

> Well, developing skills of employees has many benefits to all – the company, the employees and most especially the Nigerian state. The problem is the right political, legal and economic environment to get things done. So many opportunities are open for a skilled person – he has the enablement to get a new and better job; he can negotiate employment terms and conditions better because of his skills and acquired expertise; he values himself more and he is respected and highly prized in the labour market. Then, if the skill is something he could utilise on his own, he can decide to be an entrepreneur by setting up his own business venture. If you are conversant with paint production in this country, paint is the cheapest thing people produce even in their homes today. Do you know why? In those days, we used to hear of Berger Paints, President Paints; but the situation has changed paints are everywhere with different names that you can ever imagine today. What happened? In the Sango Ota axis, where you have many companies like Gin Distilleries Company, we had many of them then; during the economic crunch, most of these companies closed down and all of them went into their various rooms and started producing. So what you just need is to get the chemicals, you know the processing formula with which to mix them together and you start producing. Today, in the Sango-Ota axis, there is no street where they don't produce paints. People are painters; they produce paints; they come and paint your house. They are painters; they are producers of the paints. So, what it then means is that you are well off even if the company collapses. You get a better job; you tell them that you can do it; and if you are tested and you can actually do it, you become an entrepreneur and even employ others. (01/03/2013).

A senior official of the TUC suggested that MNCs could develop the skills of the local employees even as these companies were concerned primarily with profit making:

> I am not against multinationals making profit, but I also expect that as they make their profits, they also have the moral and legal responsibility to impact on the lives of the people most especially those who help them to generate

> their profits. Something that will make their lives permanently better, for instance, good skills. Well, that is under a normal setting where the institutions are strong. This is a major challenge that is faced by the labour organisations but we are engaging all the stakeholders so that the companies don't just use our people, dump them and relocate to another place. I know some multinationals have been able to train people and that has also enabled them to move out of poverty level. I know people who are technicians, and artisans as a result of the skills they were able to acquire through working for multinational companies and this has changed their live-styles. You know, ordinarily, they may not be paid like the expatriates, but of course, their salaries are better than they used to be and of course they could as well move to some other companies. And so, that has helped their lives. But what I am talking about is: how many? What is the percentage of the multinationals that are doing this? There are some that are doing that. I will also say I am a beneficiary of some of those skills while I also worked with them (multinationals companies). You know, that has also changed my life and the lives of those around. It has also affected my family, because we live well. In Nigeria now, 'Abc' family, we live well. (06/03/2013)

An interviewee at NECA, one of the organised private sector organisations included in the study, remarked that as a major employer of labour in Nigeria, this sector was already ahead in terms of promoting a skills development agenda that spurred entrepreneurship, employability and empowerment:

> We have been partnering with companies; we also decided to partner with major technical schools – Federal Government Technical School Wuse, in Abuja, and Federal Technical School, Yaba, Lagos here. We partnered with them and we equipped their workshops as training ground for many of our youths. So, that is what NECA is doing and like I said, it has been very helpful. Graduates of this partnership training programme are absorbed into most of the companies that are our partners. Those that cannot be absorbed are financially empowered and given equipment to start their own businesses so that they don't have to be in the labour market. This is the way we feel the society should go. (14/05/2013)

At NITAD, another of the OPS organisations in the study, an interviewee emphasised a point similar to the one quoted above:

> By strengthening our institutions and funding them adequately, people, the youth, will acquire skills. Once you have the skills you are automatically empowered. If government jobs are not available, you can put your skills into practice at an individual level, for private ventures, and be self-employed. This venture could expand to the level that you will need to employ others. But government needs to get its priorities right. There is a need for infrastructure – power. There is a need to fight corruption. (25/05/2013)

Key issues which could be gleaned from the responses of the various interviewees on the issue of skills development vis-à-vis empowerment, entrepreneurship development, and employment generation revolve around the need for various government and private institutions concerned with skills development to be strengthened to achieve this purpose, the need for effective coordination of programmes on skills development, the role of MNCs in developing skills, and the need to harness the skills development potential of MNCs through appropriate institutional and policy frameworks. For the researcher, it was important to also listen to the views of respondents in the MNC sector, as it represented a distinct 'discourse constituency'.

For the MNCs, skills development and training of employees was an important objective and critical to the functioning of the companies. It was a significant part of corporate citizenship. The MNCs claimed enormous involvement and credit for developing skills of their employees. A manager in Lafarge Cement Wapco pointed out:

> Here in Lafarge, our workers are multi-skilled as they work in different sections of the factory and that is how uninterrupted production is ensured. And beyond the company, some of these skills could be put into practice at micro level. An electrical technician can still work in small scale organisations as consultants or set up his own technical services. Many are also encouraged to join the organisation in marketing our products which they have been doing. Indeed knowledge acquired from the training school is very relevant beyond Lafarge. (15/05/2013)

Lafarge's idea of empowerment echoed that of Unilever, which, according to one Manager, went thus:

> In the Nigerian environment, Unilever is called a training school because of the high number of people that have passed through the company to other companies. For example, I know of a man that worked here before and he had to leave; but I don't know the circumstance of him leaving the company; he started his own small manufacturing company and he produces some of our products for us. So, we contracted part of our own arm of production to him; he produces some of our own products. So, for example, if we can't meet market demand, we contract him to supplement. Apart from that, the skills acquired in Unilever, as I have given you an example, if put together by an individual, you can actually stand on your own and become an entrepreneur. You work in the factory and you know the process of soap making and all, you can work on your own. You can be a small scale manufacturer, which is what many are. (16/05/2013)

The managerial official of MTN indicated the type of empowerment which the company had engendered in Nigeria. He stated that:

> Quite a number of people who have worked in the company, having obtained knowledge and skills about the workings of the company have left to start their own businesses of becoming service providers to end users. They operate as individual outlets of MTN especially in the marketing of MTN products and services. That is why we have the slogan “everywhere you go”. We have empowered people directly and indirectly throughout the nook and crannies of Nigeria, generating income and providing jobs. (08/05/2013)

The discourse among the MNCs painted the picture of an MNC sector that places a high premium on training and skills development agenda that encouraged entrepreneurship and employment generation in Nigeria. The responses of shopfloor employees in the survey conducted in the selected MNCs reveal further findings on this subject.

Table 6. 6: Shopfloor employees’ indicating whether or not the companies’ skills programmes facilitate empowerment of Nigerians and contribute to the Nigerian economy

Response category	**Frequency**					
Company	**Lafarge**		**Unilever**		**MTN**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nil	-	-	23	24.2	03	3.2
Yes	93	93.0	65	68.4	66	69.5
No	2	2.0	1	1.1	6	6.3
Don’t know	5	5.0	06	6.3	20	21.1
Total	100	100%	95	100%	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 100 (Lafarge), n = 95 (Unilever and MTN)						

The statistics presented in Table 6.6 represent the views of shopfloor employees showing whether or not the training and skills development programmes of the selected MNCs were empowering Nigerian employees, and as such, helping the Nigerian economy.

In the three companies, the opinions were very high on the positive contributions of the programmes to the Nigerian economy. While 24.2% of the respondents in Unilever and 3.2% of the respondents in MTN did not respond to this question, 93% of the respondents in Lafarge and 64.8% of the respondents in Unilever believed that the company’s training and skills development activities were contributing significantly to the Nigerian economy. In MTN, 69.5% of the respondents felt the skills development programmes of the organisation were empowering and making a positive contribution to the economy. These positive responses could be attributed to the (potential) opportunities opened up to employees

through the training programmes. The positive responses aligned with the views of managerial officials who were interviewed in these companies that: employees have been empowered through training and skills development programmes that create opportunities for other employment opportunities and entrepreneurships.

A limited number of respondents -- 2% of Lafarge employees, 1.1% of Unilever respondents and 6.3% from MTN -- believed that the companies' training and skills development programmes did not make a positive contribution to the Nigerian economy, while 5% of the respondents in Lafarge, 6.3% of the respondents in Unilever and 21.1% of the respondents in MTN indicated they did not know.

6.8 Technical vocational education and training for skills development

Technical vocational educating and training (TVET) was another important theme that emerged as data from the study's four 'discourse constituencies' were analysed. The dominant sentiments in each constituency were captured and, like all the themes examined before and after the present one, they reflected the sectoral biases of the organisation in question. On the whole there were areas of agreement as well as contestation on the subject of TVET.

As a background, it should be stated that while vocational education continues to play a vital role in socio-economic development, in Nigeria TVET has had a chequered history due to misconceptions about the concept. Generally, TVET was considered to be relevant to those individuals who were not very sound to undertake academic programmes (Oranu, 2010:18). That notion is now changing Vocational education is a skill-based programme designed for sub-professional levels based on a specific vocation, while technical education facilitates the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge (Oranu, (2010). The distinction is that vocational education is for a specific vocation, while technical education is not targeted at a vocation (Oluwale, 2013; Subran, 2013).

It is important to note that the introduction of the 6:3:3:4 system alluded to above was aimed at developing technical vocational skills. However, the educational system failed to develop TVET due to lack of commitment on the part of the government, inadequate funding, shortage of technical teachers and infrastructure to run the educational policy

before it was eventually jettisoned (Paul-Sewa, 2012). Despite this shortcoming, harnessing this type of education to improve the human capital base has remained a major preoccupation of the Nigerian government, as revealed by a senior official of the Federal Ministry of Employment and Productivity:

> The government is seriously concerned with development of skills through vocational and technical education, and this informed the establishment of eight skills acquisition centres in: Ibadan, Oyo State, and Kaduna, Kaduna State, Calabar, Lafia, Nasarawa State, Enugu, Bauchi Warri, Delta State and one in Lagos. All these centres have workshops for training in different vocations and there we train those who already have the basic skill and certify them. We also train those without prior basic skills in a particular vocation and also certify them. After the training, the trainees can come out as experts in different vocations and go out to real life to start their businesses in the technical skills they have been trained such as carpentry, plumbing, bricklaying and others. The curriculum is being expanded to incorporate other trades and crafts. The government is very much concerned about enhancing human capital formation through the vocational and technical education and training programmes. (12/03/2013)

The response of this official indicating the concern and involvement of the state in facilitating vocational and technical skills acquisition was echoed by a senior official of the ITF, Lagos who said that:

> This Industrial Skills Centre, in Ikeja was formerly known as Vocational Training Centre before it was changed to Industrial Skills Centre. Here, the mandate is to train Nigerian youth in vocational and technical aspects of the industrial sector. We have workshops in place and these are for mechanical crafts, mechanical machinery and maintenance, welding and fabrication, motor vehicle maintenance, refrigeration and air conditioning, electrical installation, instrument and process control. These departments provide trainees with trade or crafts skills and make them employable for industrial services based on the vocational technical skills acquired. (01/03/2013)

Another view on the state's involvement in vocational and technical education for improving the human capital base was presented by a senior official of the defunct NMB whose services were transferred to NISER:

> The National Manpower Board worked closely with the National Board for Technical Education when it was established. The NMB advises the technical board that oversees the activities of Polytechnics that were to provide technologists and Technical schools that were concerned with the provision of vocational education. The idea of working together was to ensure that skills

> mismatch and skills shortages were avoided in skill development at the vocational and technical levels. (10/06/2013)

The views from government establishments underscored the interest of the state in providing vocational and technical education and the importance attached to this form of education. It is a strategy for addressing problems such as the skills gap, unemployment and poverty, and promoting socio-economic transformation and development in Nigeria. Beyond the institutions established by government to provide vocational and technical education, government has also encouraged different MNCs to establish business ventures in Nigeria as a strategy for benefiting from their skills advantage.

From interview data obtained in the three MNCs, the researcher found that within the multinational corporate sector, technical vocational skills were highly priced**.** This, however, appeared more visible in Lafarge Cement Wapco than in the other companies studied. As the researcher was informed, Lafarge had a technical vocational training school within the factory and this contributed enormously to skills development in both the company and the industry. A manager in Lafarge stated that:

> Through the training school, a number of employees have been able to improve on their proficiency on the job and this has facilitated other job opportunities. The skills acquired are applicable beyond Lafarge. Like sometimes ago, our competitor, Dangote Cement, before he started production at Ibese mentioned that Lafarge was training people for him, you know, training people for his own company. He said that by the time he would start cement production, he was very sure that he will get trained people from Lafarge. (15/05/2013)

Whilst the MNCs typically take credit for facilitating the training and skills development of their employees, the fact remains that Nigeria is still riddled by skills shortages. It was thus important to examine the discourses of other constituencies vis-à-vis TVET.

The view within organised labour was that TVET was a strong avenue for human capital formation in Nigeria, and that while government strategies in promoting TVET were notable, effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation were lacking. According to a senior official of the NLC:

> Vocational and technical education is very necessary in skills development and it is not restricted to formal educational setting. Internal training and retraining while on the job by organisation is necessary. Even when training is excellent, as technology changes, employees also need to be retrained to be up-to-date. It does not necessarily have to be in school. But due to the neglect of the sector in human capital formation, the country loses as companies, especially from Asia, bring in technicians as engineers. Even the companies that engage in vocational education and training have been doing it in their own way, as the need arises. But if there were specifications on quotas of training; on the quality of training; the frequency of training, then there will be demand on the need for the multinational corporations to send the report of all the training they have been doing. So, they do it for their own purpose and nobody is really monitoring them; nobody will ask them for reports of the training they've been doing so far. So, they are not reporting to anybody and they are not expected to report. It's purely a personal thing, unregulated, which is not too good for our environment. (01/03/2013)

It has already been noted in this study that MNCs are among the companies that are engaged in training and skills development in Nigeria. However, a senior TUC official questioned the extent to which the MNCs' skills development strategy aligned with the country's human capital formation needs. With specific regard to TVET, this respondent said:

> In Nigeria, we do not really invest as much in skills development through vocational and technical education. The effect of it is that the multinationals come in, bring in their own technicians and use that as an avenue to mop up money resulting in capital flight. This would have been avoided with good vocational and technical educational programmes. Many of those usually brought in are technicians who claim they are professionals and they are able to have their way because of weak institutional frameworks that ought to check such irregularities. (06/03/2013)

One could deduce from the responses of officials from the two labour federations that inadequate investment in vocational and technical education jeopardises job creation in Nigeria. So does a weak regulatory and monitoring environment, as money that could have been retained within the economy is lost through capital flight in order to hire foreign technicians and professionals. The view of the OPS was emphatic on the need to enhance vocational and technical education in Nigeria. The senior official of NECA lamented that:

> Despite the large number of graduates churned out yearly from the tertiary educational sector, there is unemployment as a result of skills gaps. NECA, through its advocacy programmes had impressed it on government that the way to go in tackling unemployment and skills gap is to embark on massive

> skills development in technical or vocational education in the country. A situation where there will be adequate skilled manpower for organisations to use; where they cannot be absorbed, these youth can be empowered to set up their own ventures based on acquired skills. But it was like NECA was really not encouraged by government's disposition to it. Government showed interest but action was not forthcoming. So, NECA decided to take the bull by the horn by starting a TSDP; a project that we call TSDP – Technical Skills Development Project. And what we did was, because of the skill gap in the economy, we said okay, we partner with established organisations, multinational companies, factories, industries; they are members of NECA, with existing training schools. What we do is equip these training schools to be able to train young people, even fresh graduates from the universities, from technical schools, from polytechnics, so that they can acquire necessary skills that would make them employable in the workplace. (14/05/2013)

Another view from the OPS on the need for more government support for vocational and technical education was that of the senior official of NITAD who said:

> The Chinese are here mainly because they have skills. We should revive our Trade Centres and technical schools. Government should battle corruption to a tolerable level and then grow infrastructure. Things will change; jobs will emerge with many small scale businesses. Nigerians are industrious people. There are many people out there that are not productive because electricity is not available. They know what to do. (25/05/2013)

The senior official from NACCIMA further stressed that:

> There is a need to look back and reflect on our past to have a better focus. More emphasis should be put on the development of technical and vocational training, to empower the youths especially. We need to have more bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers and all the technicians. In other parts of the world, if you go to China, South Korea and all that, you don't see universities the way you see universities here. What has been the direct impact? Before, when you hear of Sapele Trade Centre, Urhobo Trade Centre, Yaba Trade Centre, these were institutions for people who were trained as professionals and all that; with their City and Guilds. We celebrated them at that time. And now, with more and more higher institutions, why do we talk of collapsed building in the twenty first century? Is it not a matter of conscience? Even the person handling it knows what to do. Why can we not have these qualities? (08/03/2013)

The TVET discourse within OPS, as shown above, highlighted at least three things: the importance of vocational and technical education for Nigeria's socio-economic transformation and development; the need for more government funding for improved

performance; and the strengthening and monitoring of existing institutions promoting TVET to ensure that their programmes were in line with Nigeria's human capital needs.

While the MNCs, in some ways flaunted their credentials for promoting the training and skills development of their employees, the views of organised labour suggested that MNC activities should be effectively monitored by the state. In addition, the Nigerian government had to play a key role in developing the skills of its citizenry, as such a role could not be left entirely to the MNCs.

6.9 Developing Skills for life-long usage

Skills for life-long usage connotes the acquisition of knowledge and skills that are relevant throughout life and is of immense importance to every individual. It entails the acquisition of skills that are comprehensive, integrated and aimed at practical problem solving. Life-long skills are to equip workers better for change adaptation, health and safety promotion among others.[9] Such skills enable individuals to be fully active in economic life beyond the working age[10], be better informed, become more active citizens, and become more fulfilled (Omolewa, 2002). The skills discourses encountered in the study's 'discourse constituencies' emphasised these various dimensions. Among other benefits of skills for life-long usage are: enhancement of employment, a reduction of unemployment benefits given out, and a reduction in social welfare payments and retirement pensions payable among others (see Mende-Anonuevo, 2002).

A senior official of the CMD pointed out that the government was conscious of the need to promote and support the acquisition of vital skills across the population:

> When we consult at the Centre, the consulting can lead to identifying a need for training, when you find skill gaps, of course. And there is nowhere in the world where you don't find skill gaps, especially in a developing country. We have more gaps than whatever that is already there. That is that on training. The most unfortunate thing, as far as we know, is that as important as training is, we cannot think of any document that will stand for a National Training

[9] http://www.amchameu.eu – American Chambers of Commerce to the European Union (AMCHAM EU) - New skills and jobs - improving the quality of work & working conditions

[10] www.bradford.Gov.uk - strategy for delivering skills for the future 2010-2015.

> Policy Document as at today. Right now, we are trying to develop a National Training Policy for government to adopt and possibly send it to the National Assembly so that it now becomes law, so that all institutions must be guided by that. One of the challenges here, when you talk in terms of developing skills, is that you discover that people joined the state service 20 years ago; apart from the first degree or a diploma, they have not attended any other programme that will add anything to what they had from the university. That becomes a very big challenge. If you have to develop skills, you have to change people's attitudes to know that learning and development must become part and parcel of every day activity. When people graduate from the university, they have what we call the 'hard skills'. For them to function in society, they need what we call the 'soft skills'. You may be an engineer, but if you cannot use your soft skills to manage the people you are going to work with, you will fail as an engineer. (28/05/2013)

The assertions made by this official speak of government's commitment to ensuring skills for life-long usage even though the interviewee pointed out some challenges in achieving this objective. Another view on this subject was that expressed by a senior official of the ITF. His words:

> In this centre (Industrial Skills centre, Lagos) usually, the minimum requirement is Secondary School Certificate or it can be Certificate of National Board for Technical Education (NABTE). Even those that could not even make it but are willing to have a skill, we still train them. The important thing is for them to have the skill that will enable them earn a living. Sometimes, some industries contract us to train some of their employees. Some of those that the industries send to us to train are graduates; some of them have first degrees, HND, or Diploma. They come to us in order to upgrade their skills. Sometimes industries employ fresh graduates and they want to train them on a particular skill relevant to their production for which we have the competence. They send them to us. There are instances of individuals preparing for retirement or who are recently retired who come for training to acquire skills relevant to the business they want to venture into. (17/03/2013)

The study found that the organised labour also subscribed to the idea of skills for life-long usage. According to respondents in this 'discourse constituency', it was important to develop skills that would be relevant to an individual throughout his/her lifetime. This point was evident in the view expressed by a senior official of the NLC:

> By acquiring skills, a worker is made more relevant to the economy and has value addition to his life. He is in position to perform his job more efficiently and earn better income. In the event of economic downturn or retrenchment, a company can only collect their materials – helmet, apron, boot and related materials – but not the skills acquired. The person goes on with life using the

> skills acquired to make a living either by looking for another job or by or applying the knowledge and skills to other ventures (01/03/2013)

At the TUC, a senior official stated that:

> Through training and skills development a person's life and that of his family is positively affected. Artisans and technicians trained have had their lives transformed and have positively affected their families in providing for clothing, food, shelter, healthcare and education of the young ones. All these have positive relationship with how long a person's life time will be. A lot need to be done by government to make multinationals impact more on skills and reduce the burden on government. However, a good institutional framework is necessary for the realisation of this objective in Nigeria. We are not yet there. (06/03/2013)

For the organised private sector also, developing skills for life-long usage was an important issue in human capital formation discourse in Nigeria: A senior official of NECA, said:

> Even though thousands of graduates are churned out from Nigerian universities and other tertiary institutions of higher learning regularly, overall, there is skills gap between what is required in the organisation for effective production and what is available in the market. It is for this reason that several multinational companies operate their own training schools. Within their work environments, their training schools operate to bridge this skills gap. A person who acquires this additional training will be able to put the skills to use beyond his/her work environment. Knowledge is power. An educated and skilled individual enjoys a better life than an illiterate individual who has acquired no skills. (14/05/2013)

The NECA official raised an important issue on MNCs which was of interest to the researcher that: MNCs' training schools offered additional training and skills development programmes and that employees who acquired the skills could put these to use elsewhere, beyond the company. His view was similar to that of the senior official of NITAD who said that:

> At NITAD, we run scheduled training programmes as well as programmes determined by client organisations. For example, when the Federal Civil Service was about to lay-off people, NITAD was involved in part of the training. It was pre-retirement training: how the employees could manage their finances and health, what kind of businesses they could do in retirement and so on. The programme was a grand success because prior to that time, people were often just laid off in the federal service without any formal training. Many of them left without preparation for the path they were going. So, this type of training prepares the civil servants. (25/05/2013)

The interview responses of the officials indicated that the OPS subscribed to the idea of having skills that lasted beyond employment.

The interview responses obtained from the selected MNCs were equally quite revealing. A manager in Lafarge Cement Wapco shared anecdotes that illustrated MNC's perspective on the skills-for-life debate:

> As an official in the human resource management department of this company, anytime I have the opportunity of attending training programmes, may be to declare the training open or to close the training session, I tell the trainees that the worst thing the company can do when you are leaving the company is to say, leave the company's properties in your possession. We disengaged some people last week. Some of them will be bringing their helmets, the Employees Handbook and the rest of the company's property. These are the things that the company can take from you. But the knowledge you have acquired, nobody can say, when you are leaving the gate, drop the knowledge at the gate, no, it is not possible. So, whatever training an employee has the opportunity of acquiring here, he or she is going to be the first to benefit from it. (15/05/2013)

Another manager at Unilever said:

> Working in Unilever is an experience of a lifetime. Unilever employees cannot be outside without being engaged. Some employees that have left the company are contracted as consultants; others consult for small scale businesses while some start their own businesses. This stems from the fact that they know how some of Unilever's products are manufactured especially those that are less capital intensive. (16/05/2013)

A manager at MTN Nigeria remarked that the mobile telecommunications technology and industry had come to stay and that it would continue to impact society at large. The researcher learnt that many people who had worked for the company had established their own businesses, from where customers accessed MTN products and services within their localities.

6.10 Certification of training and skills competency

Modern society is characterised by rules and procedures established to ensure order and standards. One such rule and procedure is certification, which is highly priced and valued because of the rights, honour and privileges it bestows. By certification, an individual who

has undergone training, having fulfilled all the requirements for the training is awarded a certificate which attests to his/her competency. Certification means the certificate holder has demonstrated appropriate levels of knowledge. Among the advantages of certification are that expertise is recognised and professionalism acknowledged. It creates avenues for employment, provides opportunities for advancement, and gives personal satisfaction and fulfilment. The certificate holder becomes a beacon (Rooney and Ostenberg, 1999).

In Nigeria, the discourse on certification throws up questions not only in the field of training and skills development but also in the world of work. First, there are many public and private universities and institutions in Nigeria that award certificates, yet, the skills challenge is persistent; many graduates with their certificates remain unemployed while some are underemployed (Adegbami, 2013). Secondly, many university graduates have had to be retrained by their employers since they are found not to possess the skills relevant for the companies' production processes. Third, there have been abuses of university degrees, through collusions between 'certificate merchants' and some 'influential people' (See Punch Nov.8, 2015; National Mirror October 15, 2015).

Data from the study's four 'discourse constituencies' showed that the certification of skills and competencies was a contested issue, despite its importance in human capital formation.

A senior official of the Federal Ministry of Employment and Productivity said:

> The Skills Certification Department performs this function for the whole country. Actually, we have eight skills development centres within the country where we hold workshops to train those who want to acquire basic skills for Trade Testing Certificates or those who already have the basic skills and want to upgrade. After training them in various vocational skills in these centres, they will come out as experts. We have several skills and training programmes in those centres. We have auto-mechanics, bricklaying, plumbing, the train fitters; we train people for ICT. Lately, we have incorporated some new curricula like hair-dressing, tie and dye, and barbing. (12/03/2013)

A senior official of the ITF said concerning his organisation that:

> There are different types of training programmes. Some of the training programmes can be run for two years; some of them one year; some of them three months. On completion of their training programmes, trainees are awarded a competency certificate – Certificate of Competency. We also run modular programmes because of those that may not have sufficient time. Such people could come; they would be trained to a particular level; and then after some time they could come to complete the rest of the modules. (17/03/2013)

Regarding certification of training and certification of trainers to ensure standards, a senior official of the CMD, one of the policy think tanks of government, said:

> Unfortunately one of the challenges we have in terms of training, development, skills, capacity building, whatever you want to call it, is the fact that there appears to be no institutional framework for doing all these things. It was not until recently that Centre for Management Development was empowered to say look, training and development cannot be an all-comers' game. So, that sector will need to be regulated. Now, CMD is regulating. For you to be a trainer, we have two programmes that you must attend here. One is called Basic Manpower Development Workshop; that is Train-the-Trainer. Whether you are a medical doctor, an engineer, a teacher, whatever your profession, as long as you are involved in training you must attend that programme. The first lasts for two weeks; after that, you would come for the advanced one. The advanced programme too lasts for two weeks. After that, you apply to be accredited to train. That certificate is your licence to practise training. The certificate enables you to get government training contract or consultancy. (28/05/2013)

For organised labour, certification of training and skills competency was an important issue in human capital formation and skills development as it did confer benefits. However, labour was more concerned about employees acquiring skills which would remain with them beyond a particular work environment. A senior official of the NLC said:

> Well, as organised labour, we try as much as possible to ensure that Nigerians that are working for multinational companies and other establishments, both public and private, are trained by their employers. We are concerned that employers would train and retrain their workers for efficiency, for productivity and this is what we encourage. Most multinational companies take fresh graduates and train them on the job, because they already have the basic skills required. However, because of advancements in technology, we also encourage that there should be internal retraining from year to year to acquaint the employees with new approaches. Certification of organisations can only be relevant within an industry or allied industries. But an employee who has acquired the skills and is sure of himself or herself could approach the relevant agency of government for certification that has wider acceptance within the economy in both private and public sectors. But

> the most important thing is for people to acquire skills and competences in what they do. (01/03/2013)

At the TUC, an official expressed similar sentiments:

> The expectation is that employers of labour generally, but especially multinational companies, should also train Nigerians or give them the requisite skills to manage the economy; not just managing the economy but also to manage the companies. But, what you have is that the multinationals come into the country and bring in expatriates from their own country, and they don't really develop local manpower as one would have expected. Labour has been advocating for adequate training. Once an individual acquires a skill, it cannot be taken from him/her even if he/she decides to leave the job or is retrenched. The certificate of proficiency which some organisations issue to trainees could be converted to certificate of wider recognition, if an employee can prove himself at the Labour Department's Trade Test certification. (06/03/2013)

This view was shared by the OPS. The discourse within the OPS emphasised the need for individuals to have skills. Certification was deemed tangential to the imperative of skills acquisition. This is despite the fact that organisations such as NITAD issues certificates for successful completion of the training programmes that it runs.

At NECA, one senior official emphasised that its focus was on skills, not certification as such:

> Graduates are churned out in large numbers from institutions annually, but we have to retrain them because of the observed skills gap. We are more concerned with skills than certification. Most people employed already have certificate or diploma. Those who go for training in our member companies' training schools get certificates of proficiency of the companies. But those who are trained in government technical schools have opportunities of other technical and vocational certificates of government. It depends on the type of training acquired. (14/05/2013)

The sentiment at NITAD was similar, as a senior official here said:

> Tailor-made, client-focused training programmes of organisations do not necessarily lead to certification. But we run scheduled programmes where Postgraduate Diploma in Training and Development is awarded. It is a professional certificate. (25/05/2013).

The view of a senior NACCIMA official on certification was that the institution was concerned with standardisation and making the institutions to work. Certification was tangential to this imperative:

> In the days of the defunct Marketing Boards, whatever product was certified by the Board was respected anywhere. Is it like that today? Emphasis should be on quality that is respected and not mere certificates. (08/03/2013)

Bringing together the views of the government establishments, labour and OPS, they appeared to align with those expressed by officials of the three MNCs selected for this study. As shown earlier, the MNCs played important roles in training and skills development within their organisations. A manager in Lafarge Cement Wapco remarked as follows concerning certification:

> Skills development is an integral part of development and because Lafarge operates in over 100 countries of the world, there is a global plan for skills development in Lafarge worldwide. Nigeria is not an exception and we follow through the laid down procedure and regulations according to the group agreement. There are various types of programmes in place. One of it is a process of Certification. Certification is a process to develop young engineers, I mean young graduates leaving school, to attain high levels of proficiency and it covers almost all areas of our operations. This aligns with the training requirement in Nigeria. Our country manager has also made a commitment to ensure that by the end of the year 2014, all those that will operate in key arrears of cement production must obtain Lafarge certificate of proficiency. (15/05/2014)

The researcher was further informed that the certificate once obtained, enabled an official to work confidently in any Lafarge operation in the over 157 countries. In the case of Unilever, the company did not operate a formal training school and less emphasis was placed on the certification of employees. However, a certificate of attendance was usually given to employees who attended the company's training programmes. Unilever had management training schools in the United Kingdom and Singapore; those who attended them saw themselves as 'proud' members of the Unilever 'family'.

At MTN Nigeria, there were numerous training programmes because of the dynamics and innovations in the telecommunications industry. As new innovations emerged, employees had to be trained. A certificate of attendance was usually issued to the attendees of such training programmes.

6.11 Skills development and indigenous technology

Another discourse which the researcher encountered in the field but which also forms part of scholarly and policy contestations in Nigeria is that skills development is crucial for developing indigenous technology, taking into cognisance the challenges in the country. Indigenous technology refers to productive knowhow that emanates from technicians and scientist within the country (Siyanbola et al, 2012; Akpomuvie, 2011). In modern dispensation, technology is regarded as the bedrock and catalyst for national development because it supports change in other sectors of the economy. It should be home grown for sustainability (see, Onipide, 2010 Opara, 2015). Nigeria needs to invest adequately in developing its human capital in order to promote the development of local or technology which is required for its socio-economic transformation and development. Modern technologies emanated from innovative ideas from the Western part of the world (Akpomuvie, 2011) and are protected by patent rights.

This vital issue of skills development and indigenous technology echoed in the interview response of a senior official at one of the Nigerian government think tanks, NISER. This official said:

> Nobody transfers technology. Nigeria has to develop its own using indigenous knowledge. Technology was not transferred to the Asian Tigers; they developed using their own knowledge. Singapore is a very good example. Singapore has no oil, no gas, or natural resource, but it is number six in the world in terms of growth and development. In terms of Human Development Index, Singapore is high. In terms of GDP, Singapore is a wonderful country. It doesn't have anything but it has skills. I'm just telling you this because your work is on skills. A country can develop depending only on skills. Singapore had no money in the early stage to import and so made extensive use of the skills and knowledge it has and created its own technology, and it is paying off now. (10/06/2013)

The senior official at the CMD underscored the same point:

> Development is possible only when a country controls its destiny including productive knowhow. The United States' farmers, although negligible, with their technology can feed the whole world. This is because they have the technology. China is not complaining about feeding its two billon population because they have the skills and technology. In fact, in the early days of Chinese technology, the products were considered inferior but today, their technology has developed to a level that almost everything now is produced in

> China. We need to seriously look into the issue of having our own technology. (28/05/2013)

For organised labour, indigenous technology was a product of human ingenuity and creativity to harness the resources of the environment. A senior official of the NLC argued:

> No nation can truly develop by relying on ideas and technology from elsewhere. Any development attained under such arrangement cannot last, it cannot be sustainable. The government only needs to be alive to its responsibilities by training its people qualitatively and providing the suitable environment for those who are trained to exhibit their creative abilities while continuing to give them the necessary support. Nigeria has so many professionals migrating to other places and they are excelling and making impacts. An enabling environment with the necessary support will enhance the development of indigenous technology. Our institutions need to be adequately funded for serious research to take place in those institutions. (01/03/2013).

At TUC, the interviewee's remarks were also laced with pathos:

> It is sad that we are not getting it right in Nigeria so that things are abused because our institutions are weak. Technicians will come here and claim to be professionals. I have worked with Nigerian trained engineers and I have found them, in some cases, more qualified than some so-called expatriates. But the problem is they don't have tools to work with; supportive infrastructures are grossly inadequate. How can they be creative? If government gets it right and makes the necessary infrastructure available for indigenous technology to grow that is the only way forward; without that we will continue to chase shadows. (06/03/2013)

The discourse within labour highlighted specific convictions about the links amongst skills development, indigenous technology and national socio-economic development. Even so, it assigned a crucial role for the state, besides putting a heavy blame on the state for the way these links have functioned in Nigeria.

Respondents from the OPS organisations also advocated for the development of indigenous technology. For the senior official of NECA:

> We need to invest heavily in our own people, our indigenous technicians and scientists; fund our educational and research institutions properly. There are people who have developed a number of prototypes of equipment at their own levels. They need to be encouraged and funded. The government needs to create the enabling environment for all these to happen. (14/05/2013)

In similar vein, the senior official at NITAD remarked, though with a tinge of hyperbole:

> There are many Nigerians out there doing fantastic jobs. We have many brains; the government only needs to encourage them for the local technology to blossom. I think the best thing is for government to reduce the level of corruption and sincerely invest in infrastructure. This country can blossom in less than five years, because Nigerians everywhere are the best of humanity, extremely intelligent! (25/05/2013)

Still on the issue of skills development and indigenous technology, the senior official at NACCIMA felt that Nigeria's technological base would have advanced if the people had continued with what was in place in the early days of independence. In his view:

> The vocational and technical skills training centres that would have acted as springboard for the growth of local technology have been neglected for too long. Nigeria needs to go back and revive those skills centres for the development of local technology. (08/03/2013)

In addition, fieldwork data showed that the MNCs selected for this study were also involved in the process of skills development which could lead to indigenous technology take-off in Nigeria. Lafarge Cement Wapco's philosophy was articulated by a manager in the company thus:

> Cement manufacturing is capital intensive and the local technology is not yet available. Lately, however, with the support of our Plant Manager (even despite the fact that he is not a Nigerian), we are looking for Nigerian industries that can offer technical assistance that we can partner with to give training, to do some jobs which ordinarily, we do from abroad. An example is Nigerian Machine Tools in Oshogbo. In fact, I have just sent a note to them this morning asking that they do certain things for us; they are going to help us to repair our machines. So, we will move some of the machines to their factory for refurbishments. That is going to be at a lower cost. Then, we are going to send some of our key technicians to the place to learn some basic things that will also help us in Lafarge. Ordinarily, such things are done abroad. We have manpower in Nigeria now that can do it and Wapco is really yearning to utilise it. (15/05/2013)

At Unilever, the manager shared similar sentiments:

> In terms of equipment maintenance, our engineering and technical team takes care of that here in the factory. Some of our equipment is also fabricated locally in the country. But, the mechanical aspects of our operations for production are not available locally. (16/05/2013)

At MTN, the researcher learnt that because the company used modern technology that was not available in Nigeria, most of the equipment were sourced from outside the country.

The responses from the officials of the MNCs showed, partly, that their companies also shared the view that Nigeria had human resources which could be trained to facilitate the objective of developing indigenous technology for the country. These views were in consonance with the assertions made by organised labour and OPS that government's intervention had become imperative in addressing the skills gap in the country.

Further, it is instructive to note that organised labour and OPS had earlier in this chapter raised questions about the activities of the MNCs in the area of skills development (see, sections 6.5 and 6.7). They called for more government interventions in the area of funding of the education sector and other institutions concerned with training and skills development. Respondents from the two 'discourse constituencies' also advocated for a strengthening of government institutions concerned with monitoring the activities of MNCs to ensure that they comply with rules and standards governing business operations in the country. Generally, but in particular, those related to human capital formation.

6.12 National educational system and skills development

Education is regarded globally as the building block for the well-being of society (ILO, 2011). According to a DFID document (2010), education is the key tool that unlocks the potential of individuals and nations. As such, governments all over the world make conscious efforts towards providing quality education to their citizens. In Nigeria, education is viewed as critical for development and a tool for empowering the people, reducing inequalities and poverty (Omoniyi and Omoniyi, 2014)

The Nigerian educational policy since independence has been concerned more with developing human resource through the various schools for the country's development. From the Universal Primary Education (UPE) of the defunct Western and Eastern regions in the 1950s to the 1976 national proclamation of UPE and the current Universal Basic Education (UBE) programmes (Denga, 2000), education has been recognised as crucial to the citizens' personal development. However, despite the educational policies in place in Nigeria, the sector faces many challenges: inequalities in access to education, dwindling financial allocation (Babarinde, 2012), and a dearth of infrastructure (Olorunyomi, 2014).

These deficiencies continue to impede the effective performance of the educational system in the development of skills. Some of these issues were picked up during the fieldwork as forming part of the key skills development discourses within the study's four 'discourse constituencies'.

For instance, at NISER, a senior official stated as follows:

> A country's educational system plays a significant role in manpower development. Training as a means of developing skills or manpower actually starts from the school; from the primary school level certain level of skills competencies are imparted. The secondary school level builds upon this to improve the skills level. Even when you get to technical schools and even the Polytechnics, what the individual has is built upon and proficiency is increased in some trades or crafts: carpentry, plumbing, electrical installation, auto and automobile repairs, and others. Then, the trainee can become a professional in a particular area. It is at those different levels that some skills are imparted. When a trainee graduates from technical school or polytechnic, the person can fit in into the world of work; that's the most important thing because at the end of the day, training is for the world of work. It is not terminating; it is not the end; it is a means to an end. At a time in this country, a primary school certificate holder was skilled enough to be employed in government office. The school system is the foundation for skill development in any country. (10/06/2013)

A senior official of ITF pointed out that:

> For anybody to be admitted for training at the Industrial Skills Centre of the agency, the person must have gone through the secondary educational system and acquired some level of literacy. Some exposure to high school education is important even if the person did not complete it. (17/03/2013)

The interviewees did emphasise the importance of tertiary-level education but believed that success at the tertiary level depended on the foundation laid at the primary and secondary levels. These levels, they argued, provided the foundation for the development of skills even at the crafts centres. They also acknowledged the significance of Nigeria's compulsory Universal Basic Education (UBE) which makes it mandatory for citizens to have nine years of compulsory education.

Labour federation officials interviewed for the study felt concerned that the educational sector in Nigeria was not been performing to its full potential, especially with regard to the

development of appropriate and highly needed skills. According to a senior official of the NLC:

> The educational system of any country is very vital to its development as education has a lot of multiplier effects on the economy and society. Multinational companies and other employers make extensive use of the human capital available even if they will tailor the individuals' skills to their particular needs. The multinationals employ fresh graduates and train them in line with their own organisations' activities because they believe the education these young graduates have acquired has given them the foundation to perform different tasks. That is why the organised labour has been clamouring that education should be given the serious attention it deserves. The sector has been neglected for long and needs a lot of funds to revive it for the production of manpower required of the present age. (01/03/2013)

The TUC respondent expressed a similar view:

> A country cannot grow beyond its investment in education. Most countries that are developed invested heavily in education and training of their people. What is the level of budgetary allocation to education? The government needs to re-order its priorities and fund education so as to produce first-class manpower. Primary education is not there; secondary education is not properly funded and the tertiary level is struggling. What do we get out of such poorly funded educational system? (06/03/2013)

The study found that the OPS equally placed a high premium on education for human capital development. Respondents from this 'discourse constituency' also highlighted the challenges confronting Nigeria's educational sector. Said an official of NECA:

> Our educational system needs to be reformed so that its 'products' can be competitive in the labour market. The current skills gaps need to be closed through adequate training and funding of the system from the primary to the tertiary level. Emphasis should be shifted to technical and vocational education that enables people to acquire relevant skills. We are already demonstrating that by partnering with some existing technical schools. (14/05/2013)

Echoing this assertion, the senior official of NITAD stated that:

> For our educational system to make a significant impact on human capital formation, there is need for reform of the system and procurement of relevant equipment and facilities for effective teaching and learning. Also, remunerations should be improved to motivate the instructors and there should be interventions to fix decayed infrastructure. (25/05/2013)

At NACCIMA, an interviewee argued that Nigeria did have a 'glorious past' it could return to with regard to education and skills development:

> Nobody questioned our degrees in the past because the quality was there. There was adequate funding, strikes were rare. A situation where students spend five or six years for a four-year degree is unacceptable. The use of old facilities for training is also unacceptable in this age. Our vocational and technical centres must be revived. (08/03/2013)

As shown above, the discourses within organised labour and organised private sector embodied specific advocacies, appraisals and critiques of the educational system vis-à-vis skills development.

Among the MNCs, the dominant view was that education was essential for human capital formation in Nigeria, but that it was hobbled by inefficiencies. The manager in Lafarge Cement Wapco argued thus:

> Our educational programmes are good but due to policy inconsistencies, they have had negative effects resulting in skills gap. A lot of money is expended on training of employees to ensure their optimal performance which could have been saved if our educational system has remained consistent and functional. Our educational system needs complete overhaul. (22/05/2013)

At Unilever and MTN the researcher encountered a similar emphasis on the need to reform the educational system so as to catalyse social and economic transformation. The three MNCs claimed to be making modest contributions in support of such agenda. This was mainly through their corporate social responsibility programmes and educational scholarships offered to Nigerians.

The views expressed by the different "discourse constituencies" on the eleven profiled human capital formation "idealisations" and "prescriptions" could be summed up as follows: while the state agencies and MNCs alluded to the "multiple benefits" of training and skills development – more in line with the assumptions of Gary S Becker's human capital theory (chapter two, sub-section 2.3.1) - a contrary opinion was expressed by the organised labour and organised private sector agencies. These latter "discourse constituencies" appeared sceptical about the assumed societal importance of skills development, cautioning that, because of capitalists' orientation to control and dominate work relations for purposes of maximising profit, skills development within a capitalist context served a very narrow

purpose and might not necessarily benefit society. This scepticism echoes the insights provided by labour process theory (see chapter two, subsection 2.3.4).

6.13 Skills development "prescriptions" and "idealisations": Summary from the "discourse constituencies"

The foregoing findings show that discourses on skills development and national human capital formation in Nigeria - as gleaned from four sets of organisations - coalesced around 11 key "prescriptions" and "idealisations". Majorly, the views of the different agencies representing the state appeared to highlight government efforts in moving the country along this trajectory.

One finding that the researcher found crucial was that narratives from the MNC sector – as denoted by responses from (especially management staff of) the three MNCs selected for the study – showed that the sector "identified" with the state's "prescriptions" and "idealisations" and that these were what "guided" their everyday strategising around skills development. The MNCs overtly differed with the state only on two issues. The first was the issue of certification: the state held certification to be an important evidence of skills acquired by individuals, but the MNCs attached more importance to "performance" instead, insisting that some employees who possessed requisite certificates did not necessarily perform brilliantly on the job. The second was the question of what should be the dominant avenues for skills development in the country. The state's "prescription" was that the national educational system was the best avenue for human capital formation, maintaining that even the skills development programmes of private companies should be remodelled, rearticulated, aligned with national aspirations and delivered through the formal education system. The MNCs, for their part, argued that the national educational system was dysfunctional in its present form and that without radical reforms, it could not serve as a veritable channel for delivering skills needed by industry. In all other areas, the MNCs' views broadly converged with those of the state. With such convergence established, the researcher's main task was then that of examining the extent to which the skills development programmes of the selected MNCs reflected the "prescriptions" and "idealisations" referred to above (see Chapter Seven for findings on the connects and disconnects in this regard).

The study also revealed that the views of organised private sector agencies overlapped substantially with the views of organised labour, but were in opposition to the views of the state. Organised labour and organised private sector agencies did not believe in developing skills that would facilitate “technology transfer” and “technology domiciliation”. They advocated instead for the development of local technology as an alternative. Organised labour and organised private sector agencies also viewed expatriate quota and local content policies as avenues for developing skills, just as advocated by the state, but that due to weak and inefficient regulatory monitoring, the necessary skills were not being developed through these processes. Organised labour and organised private sector agencies concurred with the state agencies on the need for skills to be portable, for skills to be used as empowerment and entrepreneurship-boosting mechanisms, on the importance of technical vocational skills, skills for life-long usage, and on the need to develop indigenous technology.

Finally, echoing the views of the MNCs, both the organised labour and organised private sector agencies advocated for the reform of the Nigerian educational system, to bring it in line with global trends of linking formal education with the needs of industry and society as a whole. For these two “discourse constituencies”, only graduates of an educational system whose curriculum aligns with current global trends of incorporating the needs of industry would be “insulated” from the adverse effects of skills protectionism by employing organisations.

6.14 Conclusion

The narratives from Nigeria’s four main skills development “discourse constituencies” (MNC sector, official national skills agencies, organised private sector agencies, and organised labour) have many and varied elements, and only 11 have been delineated in this chapter as they are all pertinent to the study’s first research question.

An attempt has been made to show, through the qualitative and quantitative data, what the “idealisations”, “prescriptions”, “appraisals”, “advocacy” and “critique” are for the organisations representing the various “discourse constituencies” (with regard to Nigeria’s skills development “needs”, challenges and prospects), and to highlight where they agree and/or differ. In places, references have been made to published literature, to show that

many of the same issues are not just topical but are enduring areas of scholarly contestations. Throughout the data presentation, the researcher has attempted to lay a foundation for understanding the connects and disconnects of MNCs' skills development praxis vis-à-vis the discourses. Of course, this will be more explicitly done in the next chapter. It suffices to state at this juncture that a discussion of the study's findings is done in chapter eight. That is where the researcher shows how best to "make sense" of the findings.

CHAPTER 7

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN THE NIGERIAN MULTINATIONAL CORPORATE SECTOR: THREE CASES

7.1 Introduction

This chapter brings together findings from interviews with relevant managers in the three multinational corporations (Lafarge Cement Wapco, Unilever and MTN), analysis of data from the companies' annual reports, and a survey of shopfloor employees. This is with a view to answering the study's second research question, which is:

> What are the skills development strategies of the selected multinational companies?

While the empirical data are presented on a company-by-company basis in the subsequent sections of this chapter, it is important to highlight a few cross-cutting issues at the outset, for purposes of clarity. In all three companies, training programmes implemented directly on the job (that is, within the plant) and in corporate training centres and related platforms were categorised by respondents as 'On-the-job training' (OJT). Training organised through conventional vocational and educational institutions and through conferences, seminars and workshops were categorised as 'Formal Instruction Learning'. Staff exchanges and rotation assignments made up what was termed 'Mentoring and Coaching'.

Table 7.1: Shows that by far the most dominant form of training is OJT (70%). At Lafarge Wapco and MTN, this was followed by mentoring and coaching (20%), and formal instruction learning (10%). The reverse was the case at Unilever, where formal instruction was the second most dominant skills development strategy (20%), followed by mentoring and coaching (10%).

Table 7.1: Identified skills development programmes

	On-the-job training	Formal instruction learning	Mentoring and Coaching	Percentage
Lafarge Cement Wapco	70 %	10 %	20 %	100 %
Unilever Nigeria Plc	70 %	20 %	10 %	100 %
MTN Nigeria	70 %	10 %	20 %	100 %

More in-depth data pertaining to the research question are now presented on a company-by-company basis.

7.2 Case 1: Lafarge Cement Wapco, Nigeria

Lafarge is a French company with headquarters in Paris, France. The company has been in operation as a cement manufacturing company for over a hundred years, having started operation in 1833. Lafarge is a global player in cement manufacturing. With the acquisition of the British cement manufacturing giant Blue Circle in 2001, Lafarge assumed global leadership in cement manufacturing. Lafarge Cement Wapco, as it is popularly called in Nigeria, is the pioneer and leader in cement manufacturing in Nigeria. The company started off in 1959 as West African Portland Cement Company (WAPCO). From the latter part of year 2000, Lafarge has been expanding its operations in Nigeria, with the acquisition of other cement manufacturing companies in different parts of the country, and has also merged with the South African operations to form Lafarge Africa as a sub-regional conglomerate.

During the fieldwork at Lafarge, the researcher learnt that Lafarge Cement Wapco placed high priority on skills and human resource development. Through interviews with managers both at the Lafarge headquarters in Lagos and at the factory at Ewekoro, Ogun State, shop stewards at the factory at Ewekoro and a survey of shopfloor employees at the factory, this study has so far revealed that developing skills and human resource for the industry as well as the wider operating environment was a top priority of the company. Lafarge engaged in skills development, training and capacity building programmes for employees and youths in the operating environment through a number of approaches. These skills development programmes can be compressed, for the purpose of this presentation, into OJT, company training school, conventional schools' system, conferences and seminars, and staff exchanges and assignments. The findings in this chapter are presented under these various themes. According to a senior official at the training school, the training programmes of Lafarge could be classified into four broad categories these are:

Table 7.2: Lafarge training programmes

Type of training	Participants	Objectives	Training Location	Training duration
Technical	Technicians/ professional employees	Technical/ Professional efficiency	Factory/Training School	Several weeks for different types
Certification	Technical employees	Technical efficiency	Factory/Training School	Several weeks
Safety	All that will work in the factory	Safety of employees at work	Factory/Training School	40 Hours or one week
Managerial skills or Soft skills	Professionals at factory	Management of subordinates	In-plant or outside with managers or Consultants	Several hours or days depending on type
Other training are specific to the department	Department staff	Efficiency in tasks	In-plant or outside with managers and Consultants	Several hours or days depending on type

Table 7.2 gives a short description of the training programmes in Lafarge Cement Wapco. A cursory look at the table showed that most of the company's training programmes are done on-the-job, which further buttresses the finding that 70% of Lafarge's training is on-the-job. A training officer noted that, “even the 20% categorised as mentoring and coaching is also performed at work” (Fieldwork interview, 15/05/2013). In essence, the addition of the 20% of mentoring amounts to 90% of the Lafarge training being undertaken within the work setting as reflected in table above.

7.2.1 On-the-job training

On-the-job training (OJT) as the name implies, is a process of acquiring new skills and developing skills on the job. It is a process of skills development involving the use of skilled and experienced employees who pass on their skills to newly recruited or inexperienced employees (see Noe, 2010). It is a work-based learning setting during which new or inexperienced workers learn by observing peers, superiors or managers performing the job while they replicate the task being performed (Mondy and Noe, 2005). The study found that OJT was a vital skills development process in the company constituting 70% (table 7.2). On-the-job training, Noe (2010:265) notes, is one of the oldest and most used types of training system, dating back to the mediaeval apprenticeship system of the guild and craft associations.

On-the-job training is considered an informal form of skills acquisition because it is usually not structured: the procedure has no curriculum but occurs as the work progresses under the supervision of managers, peers or mentors and other superiors who act as trainers

(Mondy and Noe, 2005; Noe, 2010). Some of the advantages of OJT are that it can be customised to the experiences and abilities of trainees, knowledge acquired is immediately applicable to the job with the same materials and equipment, and employees are able to see that they are putting knowledge into practice. The presence of both trainees and trainers at the job site and continuation of work allows for immediate appraisal of the learners within the context of work. The company saves the costs that would have been incurred to transport trainees and trainers to a particular leaning location, paying for trainers and procuring accommodation for the training. This form of training can be offered at any time and trainers will be available because they are peers or managers. On-the-job training is a practical task and occurs at work and as a result, skills learned in this form of training are more easily transferred to the job. In addition, it serves as a good medium for training newly recruited employees. It is a good platform for aligning transferred or promoted employees with their new jobs. Finally, in a situation of new technology adoption, on-the-job training helps in upgrading of employees' knowledge and skills (Mondy and Noe, 2005; Noe, 2010).

According to Noe (2010:265), on-the-job training has some shortcomings:

> The unstructured approach to on-the-job training may affect the outcome as managers and peers may not use the same process to complete a task; trainers may pass on bad habits as useful skills, and they may not understand that demonstration, practice, and feedback are important conditions for effective on-the-job training. Unstructured on-the-job training can result in poorly trained employees or employees who will use ineffective or dangerous methods to produce a product or provide services that vary in quality.

The skills development programme of OJT in Lafarge includes: simulation; company training school; mentoring and individual online learning practice.

7.2.2 Simulation

Simulation is one of the methods of on-the-job training. Its objective is to improve business productivity and enhance employees' skills. According to Kincaid and Westerlund (2009), Simulation in training and development of skills is facilitated through repetitive practice with feedback; it affords opportunity for assessment of trainees, allows trainees to be exposed to uncommon events; and risks to employee and organisation's equipment is almost

eliminated in the course of training. Brown (1999) emphasised that training through simulation is useful because it affords trainees to explore new ideas and gain deep knowledge of the interactions between related complex working situations. The training method incorporates free play environment which enables a trainee thorough knowledge of how set of conditions at work interact to produce a particular product.

The study found that Simulation was one form of on-the-job training employed at Lafarge. The researcher learnt that in Lafarge, it is a form of practising with a replica of the actual work equipment by the employee. A plant cannot be stopped for employees to learn, thus through simulation, employees are able to practice with a model of the equipment with which they work. This helps in increasing the dexterity of the employee. According to a manager in Lafarge Headquarters:

> Professionals and technicians, highly skilled, who have worked for the organisation for several years and are about to disengage, are the ones involved in simulation training. They are expected to simply cascade knowledge before their disengagement from the company. That way, the company is able to tap from their wealth of experiences and get others set for their jobs as they prepare for retirement. (22/05/2013)

In essence, Lafarge attempted to tap from the wealth of experience of technicians who had worked in the company as a way of passing relevant skills to the younger employees. This depicted a form of skills transfer and succession planning within the company.

A senior official at the training school stated that:

> The training school is open to all employees to register for any aspects of their jobs they may personally want to improve on. They could access the computer to learn or practice with the equipment in the workshop of the training school. (15/05/2013)

Although it could be argued that simulation has the potential of facilitating technology transfer since all forms of simulation training are company-specific and industry- centred, this appears not to have happened at Lafarge, a company that has carried on operations in the country for over five decades. This raises questions about the long-term significance of specific skills development methods, and perhaps even the methods and biases underpinning the selection of staff to undertake a specific training.

7.2.3 Mentoring

Mentoring is another form of on-the-job training for skills development and capacity building of employees by organisations. It involves an experienced employee- mentor who helps a new or an inexperienced employee to properly and successfully integrate the employee's theoretical knowledge and practical skills for the realisation of the organisational goals. In the process, standard is ensured and the employee imbibes the culture and ethics of the organisation (DeSimone and Harris, 1998:145). According to Gray (2010), mentoring could be for a long period for the mentee to learn gradually and involves a wide range of issues at work. It is also meant for the future career and personal development of the employee.

In Lafarge Cement Wapco, this method of on-the-job training seemed well embraced. A mentor was either a supervisor or manager. The intention of mentoring as revealed by officials in the company was to support the employees and orient them to the job and work environment. In addition, the mentor helped to prepare the employee for a higher position of responsibility. In Lafarge, the mentoring process of skills development involved a large number of the employees. A manager in the factory explained:

> Lately, Lafarge has also moved forward to start what we call 'mentoring process'. For an upcoming person whose potential has been identified, irrespective of the levels, a mentor is appointed to guide him; to provide the right behavioural development and attitudinal approach to work. You can be a mentor and at the same time be a mentee. That is, as I am mentoring some people, I also have people who mentor me for my development in other areas. At our level, we are not focusing on absolutely technical areas; it is more focused on management development and leadership development. That is why you can be a mentor and still be a mentee. In summary, Wapco Bureau of Lafarge invests a lot of money and resources into training and technical development. (15/05/2013)

A manager at Lafarge headquarters also stated:

> As XYZ Development Manager, I have a superior within the administration to whom I report and he also reports to a higher official. The man that brought you here is the Country Manager Industrial Relations. He relates with other industrial relations managers in places of operations coordinating their activities. The headquarters has got someone who handles industrial relations matters for employees at the headquarters. We rely on the experiences and advice of our managers (22/05/2013).

As the researcher was informed, the mentoring process of Lafarge helped to pass on the skills of workers who had imbibed the company's principles and standards, for purposes of continuity. The mentoring network facilitated skills development within the organisation. It was job-specific and emphasised productivity.

7.2.4 Coaching

Coaching is another On-the-job skills development programme, a process whereby employees who already possess some level of knowledge, skills and competence on the job are able to improve their proficiency. The trainer takes the position of a coach to facilitate learning and guides learners to upgrade their skills rather than instructing or training them (Sullivan, 1998). According to Gary, (2010), coaching in skills development is usually for short periods, for specific skills training aimed at addressing a particular challenge that affects performance.

The data revealed that Lafarge operated this form of skills development programme for employees in specific departments or production units on an as-needed basis. The manager in Lafarge explained:

> We only bring expatriates in for what we really, really are deficient in. So, we rely more on coaching support. We could talk to the technical centre that we need an Automation Coach for six months or so. What he is going to be doing is supporting the automation team for that six months, then he leaves. So, Mechanical can come up again and say, we don't have a guide and then request from the technical centre to say we need a Mechanical Coach for six months. And why they do this is because the Mechanical Coaches are not sitting at the technical centres; they are in other countries, but by virtue of the fact that they are central and they know where different people are sitting, they go and say, Romania, can you give us your Mechanical Manager to go and support Nigeria for six months. So, it is not as if he is coming here to sit down because his job is waiting. (22/05/2013).

A senior official at the factory corroborated this assertion:

> There are times when we have foreigners working in specific departments as Coaches to help boost the skills and competencies of a particular department or production line. It is usually a stop-gap measure to get such a unit back on stream. (15/05/2015)

The statements made by the officials in Lafarge reflect the extent to which Lafarge makes use of coaches for the development of skills in the organisation. However, the continued deployment of personnel with specialised skills to areas of operation when the need arises over the years raises fundamental questions about the issues of skills transfer, technology transfer and domiciliation efforts of Lafarge in Nigeria. One obvious question would be: could such personnel not be trained and retained in the factory in Nigeria?

Upon further interaction within the company, the researcher found that the whole philosophy and practice of coaching suggested a conscious attempt to prevent Nigerians from accessing certain skills (the question of 'disguised skills protectionism' pondered in greater detail in chapter eight). For one thing, a majority of shopfloor employees reported that the company could function effectively without the need for expatriate "coaches" (see Table 7.3).

Table 7.3: Lafarge shop-floor employees' responses to the question: Can work go on in the factory without expatriate officials?

Response category	**Frequency**	
Company	**Lafarge**	
	No	%
Nil	-	-
Yes	85	85.0
No	14	14.0
Don't know	1	1.0
Total	100	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 100 respondents		

Strikingly, the interview responses presented above and the survey results in Table 7.3 indicated a subtle (but systematic) distinction between 'everyday', or even 'high level' skills, and 'strategic' skills (possessed by 'coaches'). The data suggested that 'strategic' skills were the preserve of expatriate employees, coaches included. To this end, therefore, it was not surprising that there were few expatriate employees in the company.

7.2.5 Company training school

The study found that the idea of a company training school for the development of skills emanated from disconnects between skills acquired in educational institutions in Nigeria and skills requirements of the industry. While the reasons for the skills gaps may be attributed to mergers, company goals, business models as well as adoption of new technology, employers generally allege that the skills gap is due mainly to inadequate

investments by successive Nigerian governments in the education sector. In order to close the skills gaps and correct skills mismatch, employers establish on-site training schools to align their employees' skills with the requirements of their organisations in order to sustain and/or expand their companies' productivity. In essence, company training schools help to customise employee's skills with the requirement of the employing organisation to ensure the realisation of corporate objectives (Cedefop, 2012).

The researcher was informed that Lafarge had over the years, keyed into this model by establishing an on-site training school, and that the training school, located in the factory complex provided training to employees on different aspects of the company's operations. The training centre operates all year round for different skills programmes. One of the managers at the Lafarge Headquarters in Lagos said:

> We use the training school extensively to support our graduate trainees – the young graduates that have been employed as professionals – to enable them perform well. Once they are employed, they stay in the training school for a year during which they are exposed to the workings of Lafarge, acquire knowledge and skills relevant to operations of the company; all of them – Geologists, Mechanical Engineers, Civil Engineers, Laboratory Experts. Their knowledge is customised to Lafarge operation. After the one year training, they will now move to the plants to start work. (22/05/2013)

A senior official at the factory corroborated this assertion:

> As part of corporate social responsibility, technicians are now employed from within the host communities of the company's operations and are trained at the company's training school. The company also trains indigenes of the communities and facilitates their employment by contracting firms of Lafarge. (15/05/2013)

The researcher learnt that Lafarge placed a high premium on on-site training of employees to ensure that they acquired the necessary know-how and specific knowledge that would acquaint them with the company's operational ethos before they actually started work in their respective departments.

A senior official in the training school explained the different types of training available as well as the trainee selection criteria for the different training programmes:

> Our training programme is divided into four aspects. We have technical training; certification programme; safety and soft skills or management training. How it works is that during the appraisal period, the Line Managers, or the HODs or Sectional Heads, in the course of the year would have noticed certain skills gaps. Does that staff need training or counselling? They will record that in the appraisal form - a section there called Training Need Page for junior staff and supervisory staff. But for management staff, we call it Individual Development Plan. They submit the form to HR, who then will submit the form to me as the Training Officer. I will extract the information from the Training Need Page and the Individual Development Plan. Later, I will print the information out, go to the HODs or Line Managers; discuss those training needs with HODs or Line Managers. So, in the course of the year, we will know how many technical training needs to be fulfilled. (15/05/2013)

The training school thus functioned as a means of aligning individual professional knowledge and skills to the operations of Lafarge. It also helped in bridging the gaps that might exist between theory and practice, as young graduates would already have extensive theoretical knowledge. At the factory, those already employed had their knowledge and skills upgraded based on identified gaps during the appraisal period.

7.2.6 Online learning Platforms

The researcher learnt during the fieldwork process that online learning platforms were another on-the-job skills development programme that was designed to eliminate spatial barriers to the acquisition of skills. Through online platforms, individuals could learn and interact with peers and through web-based programmes, new developments and ideas that could enhance their performance were learnt (Ellis and Kuznia, 2014; Chen, 2008).

Lafarge, the researcher was told, embraced this method to enhance employee' performance. The researcher was informed that while some modules might be recommended by a superior and made compulsory, others were voluntary and at the discretion of the employee. Individual online learning practice afforded employees the avenue of leaning what they were interested in but which were related to their jobs. The training officer explained:

> Staff members who are interested in knowing about certain aspects of their job that will aid their effective performance are free to register and at their free time access the system in the training school and learn the particular aspect that is of interest to them. It could be on a training programme they have attended and they want to refresh their knowledge on it. (15/05/2013)

7.2.7 Conventional educational institutions

The conventional educational system refers to all the educational institutions existing in a country for skills development and for the development of human resource. Formal education starts from the elementary school where the foundation of skills development is laid, to the tertiary institutions where specific skills and professions are developed (Omoniyi and Omoniyi, 2014; Kanayo, 2013; Isola and Alani, 2012).

Lafarge recruits individuals from the conventional institutions in the country and subsequently supports them by providing Lafarge-customised training and skills. The researcher was informed that as part of its skills development programmes, Lafarge allowed employees who were interested in acquiring higher qualifications to pursue their ambitions. One manager at the headquarters pointed out that they had partnered with some higher education institutions in furtherance of the company's training imperatives:

> We are into collaborative agreements with Yaba College of Technology and Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, for the training of our employees. Besides the technical aspects of the job that is emphasised, workers are free to pursue other related courses of their choice in these places or other institutions. The company supports this as part of developing capacity for the company and even the economy as a whole. (22/05/2013)

The position of this official supporting the use of conventional schools for skills development was corroborated by the Chairperson, Council of Lafarge shop stewards who cited himself as a beneficiary who had acquired higher qualifications with Lafarge's support:

> I entered into employment here with my School Certificate and Technical School Certificate. Last year, I finished my HND in Marketing. I did my OND Business Administration at Federal Polytechnic Ilaro before I went to Ojere State Polytechnic for my HND in marketing which I finished in 2011. I am still going to do professional exams. The company encourages us to further our education and they reimburse you once you present your academic certificate as proof of successful completion. Late last year, I collected my reimbursement. But they are not going to pay the total money. I did the two programmes on part-time bases. It is the policy of the company. (20/03/2013)

The responses of the two officials showed that Lafarge not only encourage the acquisition of skills by employees from conventional institutions but also demonstrate practical support with financial incentives a demonstration of recognition of such higher level of educational attainment by the employee.

7.2.8 Workshops, Conferences and Seminars

Workshops, conferences and seminars are organised by companies and institutions as part of strategies to train their employees and foster acquisition of skills. Such programmes could be facilitated by either experienced personnel within the company/institution or external resource persons who are known to be experts (Ekot, 2010). Among other benefits of this strategy include: access to updated information on vital issues of concern to organization; relieves delegates their heavy workload; and affords extensive learning within a short period from experts who share their wealth of knowledge and experience in relation to delegates' workplace environment.[11] Workshops, conferences and seminars are organised to achieve particular organisational goals; they could be organised to enable participants acquire specific or general skills. Learning is also facilitated on a wide range of topics and knowledge is shared by participants. In addition, it facilitates networking and cross fertilisation of ideas among delegates for improved performance (Brooker, 2010).

The researcher gathered that as part of the processes of human capital formation, Lafarge organised workshops, conferences and seminars and used consultants for employees to develop their capacities and improve their proficiencies. This information was revealed by different Lafarge officials. For instance, a manager at the headquarters said:

> At the headquarters, we organise different types of training programmes in the form of conferences and workshops for employees in relation to their departments. Some of these programmes are organised within while in some, we bring in external resource persons, especially from our collaborating institutions. (22/05/2013)

The response of a manager at the factory corroborated this position:

> We are into a number of collaborations with different agencies in the area of developing employees at the factory level. They organise training programmes that we send employees to attend. Such agencies include the Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON); the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity; the Employers' Federation. NECA – the Nigeria Employers Consultative Association also organises workshops and seminars. (15/05/2013)

[11] www.kr.co.za/Conferences/benefits-of-attending

The response was in line with the view expressed by the Chairperson, Council of Lafarge shop stewards at the Lafarge factory, who said:

> In relation to our union activities, the management of Lafarge organises a workshop for us annually. The union organises one as well, to enlighten members on their rights and limitations as well as procedures. It has always been a refreshing engagement and has really helped this company to ensure a good management-employee relationship. Unionism has gone beyond banging tables to negotiations and robust debates. The different training programmes have been very rewarding and Lafarge has been collecting prizes for the past three years because we have not recorded any fatality or accidents. (20/03/2013)

7.2.9 Staff exchanges and job rotation

During the interview held in Lafarge, the researcher gathered that the company did staff exchanges and job rotation as part of its on-the-job training programme. It is a training programme that involved movement of employees from one job or department to the other within an organisation. Staff exchanges and job rotation provided an avenue for an employee to have broad-based knowledge of the organisation. Such job experiences benefited both the employer and employee. Particularly, it increased an employee's capacity to add value to the organisation (Dorjkhuu, 2013; Tripathi and Chaurasia, 2014).

The researcher learnt that Lafarge engaged in staff exchanges in order to broaden staff orientation and knowledge. More so, employees who were not in technical areas were sometimes moved from the head office to the factory and vice versa. The manager at the head office stated that:

> Lafarge has a new plant in Pakistan which would be the model of subsequent operations. In order for employees within the technical area to begin to adapt to this technology, some of them will visit the plant on staff exchange to know how the plant works. Sometime ago, some workers were sent to South Africa to work there briefly and return to the country and it is an ongoing programme. Within the country, those that work in offices sometimes rotate between factories and headquarters. (22/05/2014)

The exchange programme and job rotation was further indicated at the factory where both the Chairperson of Council of Branches and the Branch Chairperson confirmed that they had been beneficiaries of the exchange programmes to the Lafarge operation in South

Africa. Both officials informed the researcher that in 2011, most of the employees went to South Africa in different batches to work briefly in the Lafarge operations there. Any employee who had worked in the company stood the chance of working in any Lafarge operation in the different countries. The researcher independently identified and had conversations with at least two employees who benefited from a work exchange to Lafarge plant in South Africa.

The diverse skills strategies stated revealed through qualitative narratives also featured in the opinions of a cross section of shopfloor employees surveyed. Table 7.4 presented their opinions on the strategies.

Table 7. 4: Lafarge shop-floor employees' responses to the question: Where did the training and skills development programme take place?

Response category	**Frequency**	
Company	**Lafarge**	
	No	%
Nil	-	-
Within the organisation	59	59
Outside the factory	24	24.0
Organisation's training school	17	17.0
Total	100	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 100 respondents		

Taken together, the interview responses presented above and the survey results in Table 7.4 it further confirms that on-the-job training that was expressed in the interview takes a high proportion of the company's training programme (see table 7.1). The survey further confirmed that many skills development strategies are operational in these companies.

7.3 Case 2: Unilever Nigeria Plc

Unilever is one of the foremost global players in consumer goods and one of the oldest multinational companies in the world with operations in over 150 countries. The company is composed of four divisions: Foods, Refreshments, Home Care and Personal Care. Nigeria's operation of the company is known as Unilever Nigeria Plc. It started as a soap manufacturing company in 1923 and is currently one of the oldest surviving organisations in Nigeria[12] (see also 2009 and 2012 Annual General Report and Accounts)

[12] http://www.unilevernigeria.com

Data obtained during the fieldwork in Unilever revealed that skills development and human capital development were high-priority issues for the company. There were training, skills development and capacity building programmes for employees. Unilever's skills development programmes can be compressed for purposes of this presentation, into on-the-job training, company training school, conventional schools' system, conferences and seminars, and staff exchanges, job rotations and assignments. The findings pertaining to the nature of these strategies and their operationalisation within the company are presented below:

7.3.1 On-the-job training

As reported earlier (see section 7.2.1), on-the-job training was a crucial skills development programme of Unilever Nigeria Plc. The researcher learnt that the acquisition of skills and technical know-how enabled the workers to innovate and create new product lines, besides ensuring that existing products maintained a competitive edge on the market. Unilever employees usually had a four-week induction course upon being employed, to enable them become familiar with the working environment and procedures before being assigned to various departments and tasks.

According to a manager at the head office, on-the-job training formed a large proportion of Unilever's training programme and was at the centre of the company's skills development strategy:

> OJT are tasks one learns in Unilever while working in different business units, working in different roles so that one acquires the necessary work experiences and handle various tasks. This is the fundamental aspect of Unilever training and skills development programme. (16/05/2013)

The manager also indicated that as part of the skills development programme, employees were often moved from one assignment to another. Job rotation enabled employees to acquire different knowledge and skills to enable them function effectively within any of the departments.

The on-the-job training approach to skills development as articulated by the manager was corroborated by the union chairperson of the company who stated that:

> The concept that Unilever makes use is internal in-house training because we believe the job is practical, you are producing goods. The managers and supervisors know what to do and so it is demonstrated for the employees to see and experiment practically. Sometimes, the training will require taking the workers to the workshop in the maintenance section to see particular equipment and for them to be trained on how the equipment work and how to use them. (19/03/2013)

7.3.2 Mentoring

The researcher found that, like Lafarge Cement Wapco, Unilever utilised mentoring as a skills development strategy. Here, new employees were paired with experienced employees, in certain cases the line manager, so that the mentee imbibed the company's ethos and culture. The mentorship relationship enabled the employee develop himself or herself over a long period of time (Bolden, 2005). A manager in the company further explained:

> An employee works under a line manager, who guides him or her to improve his/her proficiency and master the procedure. The line manager assesses the employee and recommends necessary training considered important for such employee to fit into the system. At the factory, these are the expected roles of the supervisors. (16/05/2013)

Another manager in Unilever added:

> We work under the supervision of different line managers who guide our work. Some employees have their line managers outside the country. But most of us have our line managers here and we work together learning new ideas from them. (16/05/2015)

The researcher was informed that mentoring as a form of on-the-job training was well embraced as a strategy to make employees very productive. In the data presentation focusing on the study's third research question, it will be shown how the attributes of mentoring connects to some of the skills development discourses presented in chapter six.

7.3.3 Coaching

The company also utilised Coaching as an in-house skills development programme. Respondents described it as a process whereby employees who already possessed some level of knowledge, skills and competencies on the job were able to improve their

proficiency Gray (2010). A supervisor in the factory or a line manager in the office assumed the position of a coach to facilitate learning and guided learners to upgrade their skills. The strategy was based upon the assumption that an employee already possessed skills that could be improved or sharpened (Stacevich, 2009). According to one manager:

> There are different supervisors at the factory. The supervisor and his unit carry out a task. The task leader or supervisor uses his knowledge and experience to ensure that members of the task group work to achieve the goal. Through repeated activities, the knowledge and skills of the task team is built. (16/05/2013)

Grant and Hartley, 2013 stated that coaching skills are a vital part of every leader's 'toolkit', and it is very necessary to work successfully as a team leader. The two authors stressed that organisations invest enormous resources in developing the coaching skills of their leaders and managers and it takes time as well for leaders to develop workplace coaching skills. Grant (2010) further stressed that coaching is becoming embedded in organisations globally as a strategy of carrying others along and imparting on their technical skills and efficiency for the realisation of corporate objectives.

Unilever is a multinational company with the parent company outside Nigeria. However, there are expatriates in the company who are deployed by the parent company to the subsidiary in Nigeria. The researcher therefore sought to know shopfloor employees' opinion on whether work could go on in the company without the expatriates or otherwise. The opinions of the shop floor employees on this important discourse are presented in table 7.5.

Table 7. 5: Unilever shop-floor employees' responses to the question: Can work go on in the factory without expatriate officials?

Response category	**Frequency**	
Company	**Unilever**	
	No	%
Nil	11	11.6
Yes	65	68.4
No	19	20.0
Don't know	-	-
Total	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 95 respondents		

Taken together, the interview responses presented above and the survey results in Table 7.5, foreign expatriates are few but they still exercise great influence on Unilever.

7.3.4 Company training school (formal instruction)

The researcher was informed that Unilever Nigeria Plc did not operate a training school in the conventional sense but that the factory had 'training rooms'. Besides induction training programmes for new employees, various non-scheduled training programmes were organised for employees within the factory complex and outside. However, as a global company, Unilever had two management training schools in Britain and in Singapore. A manager expatiated on the formal instruction model of Unilever:

> Training are organised periodically and they are being handled by one of our third party training agents who organises the training. Most times, it is done outside the work environment depending on the programme. It could be a-one day training; it may be a-three day training; and it could run for weeks depending on the training recommended by one's superior officer. (16/05/2013)

His remark was is in line with that of another manager, who stated that:

> Within the factory there are different training rooms for different brands. This room is called Omo Training Room and all training organised for workers in home care products is carried out here. We also have training rooms for food and personal care products. If the training is given by a consultant, it might be outside the factory. (16/05/2013)

The researcher deduced that the objectives of a formal on-site training school was pursued in Unilever through training given by managers and senior officials in-house using 'training rooms' in the company. These training were complemented by those provided by consultants.

7.3.5 Online learning platform

Like Lafarge Cement, Unilever employees were availed the opportunity of developing their skills by means of online learning platforms. The strategy formed part of formal instruction for skills development (see section 7.3.6). The company adopted this strategy as a way of exposing employees to learning opportunities made possible by the technological age. Unilever's online learning platform is a web- based learning platform for employees to improve on their proficiency, as one interviewee explained:

> The Online Learning Programme is a global tool within Unilever. So, it does not matter where you are, whether you are in Kenya, Nigeria, or America, it is a global tool that you can go into and learn more about Unilever, just to develop yourself in whatever skills you want that will facilitate your work. Our manager might also ask one to learn specific modules on the Online Learning Programme. (16/05/2013)

The importance of the online learning system was stressed by another respondent thus:

> Quite a number of training programmes go on for different categories of employees. But one gets to know of the ones related to one's department. The company also has an online learning programme where one can learn and acquire more skills and improve oneself. You can easily go and learn on your own. Sometimes, there are mandatory courses that are recommended for you. (16/05/2013)

The researcher further learnt that the online learning strategy afforded employees the opportunity to interact with others within Unilever conglomerate. The 'cross-fertilisation' of ideas facilitated through this avenue of learning allowed employees to keep abreast of innovations and developments in Unilever operations globally.

7.3.6 Conventional educational school system

The researcher was informed that while it was expected of any employee to have at least a secondary education before he would be employed, Unilever did not discourage employees from improving themselves. As a manager explained:

> Relevant training programmes are organised for our employees to make them proficient on their jobs. They are tailor-made programmes customised for the company. However, the company does not object to individuals that might want to take courses outside the company arrangement. It is for the individual but it can only be on a part-time basis. (16/05/2013)

Another manager stated thus on this subject:

> All of us here went through the public institutions before we were employed. It was after being employed that we began to acquire relevant skills in Unilever. The public educational institutions provide the basics for skills development. It is open to everybody, so long as attending one course or another will not affect the company's operations. In that respect part-time programme is the best option. (16/05/2013)

A part-time programme is usually undertaken at individual expense and so employer is not under obligation to pay for such training programme. It also does not lead to automatically promotion except there is vacancy for which the acquired skills and qualifications make the employee suitably qualified.

7.3.7 Conferences and Seminars

The researcher learnt that apart from hands-on training, the bulk of formal skills development training in Unilever fell under the category of conferences and seminars. The company had arrangements with third parties, such as consultants for the training of employees. These were actualised through seminars and workshops and usually took place off premises. The operationalisation and salient features of this skills development strategy are evident in the following remarks by one of the managers interviewed for this study:

> I have attended so many conferences and workshops, although the duration of these conferences and workshops varied - from a day, two days, a week and so on. The programme might appear simple but they are quite beneficial even to one's life beyond Unilever. (16/05/2013).

The branch chairperson of the workers' union in Unilever shed more light on the strategy:

> The Unilever method is to make use of internal in-House training and external training. Sometimes, a group of shop-floor workers will be sent out to consultants, to their workshops, where they will be trained sometimes for two weeks and sometimes, one month. Sometimes the training will also be organised internally whereby they will take them to task as a follow up to the workshop attended outside. (19/05/2013)

7.3.8 Staff exchanges, job rotation and assignments

Rotation of work and assignments within the Nigerian subsidiary, and staff exchanges with other subsidiaries within the company's global operations were found to be another means through which Unilever met its employee training and skills development needs. According to one manager:

> Unilever is a global company. We operate in over one hundred and fifty countries. Some employees have the opportunity of being sent to other countries to work within the Unilever conglomerate. They acquire experiences from other places and, of course, such experiences will add value to their work. A good example is our Managing Director. He is a South African and

> has been posted here to work for the past couple of years. His experiences here will be useful elsewhere. (16/05/2013)

This remark was corroborated by another manager:

> There are some employees within the organisation who have their line managers outside the country. Such people could be redeployed outside the country based on the recommendation of their line managers. (16/05/2013)

On the issue of staff rotation, this official added that it was a regular feature and targeted employees who had been on a function for two years. It served as a way of preparing the employee for additional responsibilities or a shift to a new set of functions. This model of training and skills development no doubt had benefits for both the employer and employees. In the section dealing with data for the study's third research question, an attempt has been made to map this skills development method to specific skills development and human capital formation discourses (See the matrix table 7.9).

The diverse skills strategies stated above for which the qualitative narratives were presented from the senior officials from different constituencies also featured in the opinions of a cross section of shopfloor employees surveyed (see table 7.6)

Table 7. 6: Unilever shop-floor employees' responses to the question: Where did the training and skills development programme take place?

Response category	**Frequency**	
Company	**Unilever**	
	No	%
Nil	19	20.0
Within the organisation	57	60.0
Outside the factory	14	14.7
Organisation's training school	05	5.3
Total	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 95 respondents		

Taken together, the interview responses presented above and the survey results in Table 7.6, while a number of strategies exist for skills development in this company as depicted in the table, the quantitative responses of shopfloor employees showed that most of their training are carried out On-the-job under different guise a confirmation of what the managers revealed (see table 7.1).

7.4 Case 3: MTN Communications Nigeria Limited

The third case, MTN (as indicated in chapter five) is a relatively new company that has grown rapidly into a giant, with a reach into every corner of Nigeria. MTN has become a household name as a result of its numerous services in the telecommunications sector, with a mobile customer base standing at about 62 million in Nigeria as of 2015[13] (MTN Quarterly Reports: March 2015; Sept. 2015).

Through interviews with a manager and a supervisor, and a survey, this study revealed that training, developing skills and human resource for the industry, and by extension the Nigerian economy, is a top priority at MTN. In addition, the highly competitive nature of the telecommunications business in Nigeria has made it imperative for employees to be trained regularly. MTN's training and skills development programmes are compressed, for the purposes of presentation, into on-the-job training, workshops and seminars, online learning platform and modules, coaching and 'budding', and staff rotation and exchange. These categories are the themes under which the findings in this section are presented.

7.4.1 On-the-job training

Information gathered during the fieldwork study revealed that the practical nature of the operations of MTN made on-the-job training a very important skills development strategy for MTN (see section 7.2.1 for details). Newly recruited employees of MTN usually undertook a four-week induction course to enable them become familiar with the working environment and procedures before being assigned to various departments and tasks. A manager at MTN pointed out that:

> Training is an ongoing activity in MTN. Any set of new employees goes for four weeks' induction. Others are constantly learning about new products and services depending on the technology being deployed for operations. However, such training depends on the department of the employee (04/06/2013).

[13] www.mtn.com

A supervisory staff member in the customer care section corroborated this assertion, adding that, besides the induction course, employees went through many training programmes to develop their skills and improve their proficiency. This official stated that:

> Anytime there is a new product or service, new software is developed for such product and employees have to learn about it to be able to use it. That the addition of Prefix 0806 (after 0803 got saturated) involved soft-ware; mobile internet involved software; Tru-Talk, Smooth Talk and other services rolled out, all required some knowledge, manipulations and software that needed to be learnt. (03/06/2013).

A very senior manager confirmed that besides the induction training, a number of training programmes were ongoing, as the company's services were "at the cutting edge of modern technology". He emphasised that some of the training programmes, especially for senior staff members, might just be for some hours on how to use a package that would facilitate work. He stressed that while employees in administration had their own relevant training, those in the engineering and technical departments were constantly upgrading their knowledge.

7.4.2 Workshops and Seminars

The researcher learnt that skills development at MTN was also facilitated through workshops and seminars. Workshops and seminars were usually facilitated by external resource persons and consultants to acquaint the employees with specific information and developments in the telecommunications sector. With this, the employees were kept in tune with the latest technology. Said one manager:

> Conferences and workshops are organised for staff to be exposed to some specific aspects of the telecommunication business. It could be for some sectional heads: they in turn would enlighten those under them. Usually, such workshops are targeted at particular products, services or newly developed software about to be deployed. (04/06/2013).

The supervisor at the Customer Care division underscored the same point:

> Many of the supervisors attend workshops regularly to facilitate their work. Before a new product or service is rolled out, supervisors are usually trained at workshops to enable them put the employees that they supervise through, because operations of the customer care services cannot be shut down for all employees to attend. Supervisors also attend conferences,

> workshops and seminars in batches because we are many and from different parts of the country. (03/06/2013)

7.4.3 Online learning platform

The utilisation of Online self-tutored platforms and modules represented another skills development strategy in MTN, as the researcher was informed. This provided further avenues for employees to acquire skills and knowledge to improve their proficiency. A manager explained how the strategy was deployed in practice:

> During induction, employees would be introduced to the online learning platform of the company, where they can log on with their PIN and learn. Online platform is not only for communication, it is also for learning. During induction, there are modules which employees are expected to cover. The different products and services have their own modules for employees to access and familiarise themselves with the relevant ones. Some of the modules are mandatory depending on nature of work. (04/06/2013)

The response of the supervisor in the Customer Care Department (quoted earlier) confirmed the importance of the online learning platform for employee training and skills development:

> The online platform is accessible to all staff of the company. Through the platform, mails and information are disseminated to everybody. Individuals can log on to it and read the module that relates to any product of the company. From when you are employed, you begin to access it. The modules explain in detail what one might have learnt at the induction or other training programmes. (03/06/2013)

7.4.4 'Budding' and Coaching

These twin concepts represented another skills development programme of MTN Nigeria, as revealed during the fieldwork. The researcher was informed that after the induction programme, a newly recruited employee went to his/her unit of assignment to commence work. This early stage of the commencement of his job and the assignment of tasks is called 'budding'. The employee would work as an apprentice under a supervisor to enable him to fully understand the work (Ordonez de Pablos and Aung, 2015). For four weeks at the 'budding' stage, the employee and the supervisor would do specific tasks together. Thereafter, bit by bit, the supervisor would assign more tasks to the new employee. A point

would be reached when the employee would be able to perform all the tasks alone. In essence, in the early stages of an employee's skills development, the supervisor and the new recruit jointly performed tasks. The method involved strict supervision, but this was designed to enable the new employee to become acquainted with the job. After the budding stage, the employee is now able to work with less supervision because he has gained some level of proficiency on the job.

While working at this stage, the employee remained under 'coaching'; he/she now had tasks to carry out under the supervision of a coach without having anybody by his side to work with. The responsibility for tasks would thus rest solely on the employee. Coaching involved a superior or an experienced person guiding the subordinate at work to enable the subordinate master the job. This was extensively carried out by MTN, especially for employees in Customer Care after the induction and the budding stage when they would have gained some level of proficiency. The manager in MTN explained the timelines for the different stages thus:

> After a month of induction, the employee moves to another stage we call Budding training. It involves the employee working as an attaché of an old employee where he is to work, to begin practical learning on the job that he has been taught during the one month induction. Within a month, the new employee is expected to master the job since it is a one-on-one activity. After this, he moves to the coaching stage for another month working with less supervision, and in another month he should be fully integrated into the system to work with less supervision. (04/06/2013)

The information given by the manager was reaffirmed at the customer care unit where the supervisor indicated that their training took place in stages and followed specific timelines.

What the researcher gleaned from these interview responses was that MTN undertook a gradual process of integrating new employees into the organisation to avoid errors that could have serious negative consequences on the services of the company and, obviously, its reputation.

MTN is a multinational company with parent company outside Nigeria, however, there are expatriate in the company who are deployed by the parent company to the subsidiary in Nigeria. The researcher therefore sought to know shopfloor employees' opinion on whether

work could go on in the company without the expatriates. The views of the shopfloor employees on this subject matter are presented in table 7.7.

Table 7. 7: MTN shop-floor employees' responses to the question: Can work go on in the factory without expatriate officials?

Response category	**Frequency**	
Company	**MTN**	
	No.	%
Nil	01	1.1
Yes	42	44.2
No	21	22.1
Don't know	31	32.6
Total	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 95		

Taken together, the interview responses presented above and the survey results in Table 7.7, the employees significantly believed work could go on without expatriates. However, a manager had hinted that the engineering section considered to be livewire of communication is under a consortium of expatriates. He said, "the engineering department is the backbone of the communication company and it is under the control of a consortium expatriates which include Nigerians" (see also Punch Newspaper, 2nd April, 2014)

7.4.5 Staff rotation and exchanges

The researcher was informed that MTN also adopted staff rotation and exchanges for developing the skills of employees and improving their proficiency on the job. Staff rotation and exchanges were done both within the country and outside (that is, within MTN operations in over 20 countries in Africa and Asia). Within the country, MTN employees were usually redeployed to new areas of operations irrespective of the unit in which an employee operated. Beyond this, newly recruited employees created room for transfers as the new employees had to be trained before they could be posted out. The manager in MTN stated that:

> MTN is a big company that is expanding its coverage of Nigeria so we need to get more employees. As we expand the facilities and coverage, more manpower is needed but a new set of employees cannot be posted to new operations. We have 117 switch stations across Nigeria and we are still expanding, recruiting new graduates, and redeploying some staff to new areas of operation. In addition as a conglomerate, employees come from the other countries while some employees from here go to other countries to work. (04/06/2013)

The supervisor at the Customer Care Unit confirmed that transfers and rotation were normal within the company. Sharing a personal anecdote, the supervisor said:

> I worked before in the Apapa office and was later transferred to the Victoria Island office of the company. Now, I have been redeployed back to Apapa. A number of factors influence redeployment. These include: resignation of staff, transfers, expansion of operations and recruitment. The company always wants to ensure that important areas are not left vacant. (03/06/2013)

A senior official of the company also remarked that transfers and redeployments were normal in the company. He added that a person could be redeployed to relieve someone who had an assignment elsewhere for a short period. The source emphasised that he had worked for many years in the Ibadan office before being transferred to Lagos office and that any employee should expect that, as long as he or she remained with the company.

Staff rotation and exchanges enabled employees to increase their skills in diverse units and in different environments. Exchange of ideas could also lead to skills transfer and skills development for technology transfer within the company.

The diverse skills strategies stated above for which the qualitative narratives were presented also feature in the opinions of a cross section of shopfloor employees as revealed by the survey (see table 7.8).

Table 7. 8: MTN shop-floor employees' responses to the question: Where did the training and skills development programme take place?

Response category	**Frequency**	
Company	**MTN**	
	No	%
Nil	-	-
Within the organisation	89	93.7
Outside the factory	2	2.1
Organisation's training school	4	4.2
Total	95	100%
Confidence level 95%, Confidence interval ± 5%, n = 100 respondents		

Taken together, the interview responses presented above and the survey results in Table 7.8, it further confirms that a high proportion of the training programme is done on-the- job (see table, 7.1)

7.5 Three Cases, Cross-cutting issues

What the foregoing findings demonstrate is that the three MNCs - Lafarge Cement Wapco, Unilever Nigeria, and MTN Nigeria – operated a vast canvas of skills development strategies. The data also showed that while the companies adopted different training and skills development strategies – principally on-the-job training, formal instruction learning, and mentoring and coaching – and did this using predefined ratios (70:20:10), there were slight variations in the operationalisation of the strategies. However, while observed variations seemed slight in many cases, in certain other cases, such as in Lafarge Cement Wapco's "coaching" strategies, the implications seemed crucial within the context of the study's problematique. This will be taken up in some detail in the discussion chapter, as will other significant cross-cutting issues that shed light on the study's key concerns – because they are central to the central argument of this study.

In the next section, where data for the third research question are presented, an attempt is made to produce a matrix that links the various training and skills development strategies to the discourses presented in Chapter Six. The idea is to show how the MNC's skills development strategies could be said to align to what, in Chapter Six, was referred to as the "idealisations" and "prescriptions" vis-a-vis human capital formation trajectories as gleaned from the dominant discourses.

7.6 MNCs' skills development strategies: Linkages with national discourses

As stated earlier, the data presentation in this section is aimed at answering the study's third research question:

> How do the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs intersect with the dominant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria?

In this section, the researcher attempts to construct a discourse matrix that links the training and skills development strategies presented in the previous section to the discourses presented in Chapter Six. To do this, each of the strategies is first stripped to its salient attributes. Thereafter, based on the salient attributes, each strategy is mapped to a discourse, depending on whether its key attributes support, or are in line with the 'preferred' and 'prescribed' human capital formation trajectory advocated within that discourse.

Since the skills development strategies of the MNCs could be said to be driven by the discourses of the MNC 'discourse constituency', the analytical attempt in this section is to find linkages, if any, to the discourses of the other three 'discourse constituencies' (the state, organised labour and the organised private sector agencies) – but especially the state and organised labour, since MNCs are in any event part of the organised private sector in Nigeria.

Table 7. 9: MNCs' skills development strategies: Linkages with national discourses

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY/ATTRIBUTES	MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION			LINKAGE TO NATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE ('IDEALISED/PRESCRIBED' TRAJECTORY)
	LAFARGE	UNILEVER	MTN	
1. Coaching - Specific technical skills - short period - Coach participates in practical training	- Coaching Team exclusively expatriate staff - Team stationed outside country - Brought in as needed	Coaches are mostly senior officials	Coaches are mostly senior officials	- skills development for technical vocational development, - Skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills), - Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation
2. On-the-job training Company specific skills and general skills - product centred - performance oriented - Professionalism	Involves all employees	Involves all employees	Involves all employees	- Skill development for technical vocational skills development, - Skills development for technology transfer, - Skills development for indigenous technology, - Skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills), - Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation.
3. Simulation - Specific skills - Training school - Instructors are Skilled technicians about to retire	Applicable in Lafarge	Not applicable	Not Applicable	- Skills development for technology transfer, - Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation.
4. Mentoring - Company specific and general skills - Inculcation of company ideals and culture - orientation towards higher responsibilities	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	- Skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills), - Local content for skills development, - Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation.
5. <u>Company Training School</u> - Targeted company technical skills - Company designed	Functional training school exist	No training school (uses training rooms and Consultants)	No training school (uses Consultants)	- Skills development for technology transfer, - Skills development for domiciliation of technology, - Skills development for indigenous technology,

programmes - Trainees join factory upon graduation - Professionalism				- Skills development for indigenous technology, - Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, - Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), - Local content for skills Development
6. Online Learning Platform - Company-specific modules - Company-directed and company-regulated	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	- Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, - Skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills).
7. Conventional Educational System/Institution - Specific skills - General skills - Technical skills	Supported with financial incentives	Supported, no financial incentives	Supported, no financial incentives	- Technology Vocational Education and Training (TVET), - Skills development for technology transfer, - Skills development for domiciliation of technology, - Skills development for indigenous technology, - Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, - Skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills).
8. Workshops, Conferences and Seminars - Specific and general skills - company and industry focus - Peer learning and experience sharing	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	- Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, - Skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills).
9. Staff Exchanges and Job Rotation - New company skills - Adapt to new technology - Camping of such employees - Peer learning and experience sharing	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	- Skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, - Skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills).

Table 7.9 shows connects (disconnects) of the training and skills development strategies of the MNCs vis-a-vis the salient human capital formation discourses in Nigeria which were examined in Chapter Six. The data in the matrix are elaborated on below. It should be noted that the matrix is an inferential structure in which the researcher attempts to show

how the skills development programmes of the companies links to the various discourses and “idealisations” on skills development. In this inferential matrix, the researcher’s starting point was that the various skills development programmes profiled in the study were company programmes meant for the achievement of corporate objectives, and so may or may not directly connect to the “prescriptions” and “idealisations” gleaned from the national skills development agencies or even those of the organised labour (in Chapter Six). The elaborations below shed more light on the inferred connects and disconnects, as well as on the contextual issues associated with the skills development programmes highlighted.

7.6.1 Coaching

Coaching was one of the strategies utilised for skills development in the three multinational companies, however, the pattern of its utilisation for human resource development varied in the companies. In Lafarge, coaching was considered a very important process of skills development. The coaches were exclusively expatriates with specialised skills who were sent from the company’s headquarters to work with the personnel on-site to address a specific problem for which the coach had expertise. In addition, the coach had a maximum of six months within which to work before returning to his or her base of primary assignment. Coaching in Unilever involved a senior official in a particular department who guided employees to attain some proficiency on the job in the production unit. In MTN, ‘coaching and budding’ represented another stage of training for employees in the customer care unit before such employees could work independently.

The importance of coaching in skills development is identified in Gray’s (2010) book, *Business Coaching for Managers and Organisations* among other scholarly material (see also Stacevich, 2009). As shown in the matrix table 7.9, coaching strategy as being implemented was for specific technical skills; the strategy was implemented as a short time measure to tackle technical emergencies; the coaches were active participants in the training scheme. In Lafarge, Coaches were exclusively expatriate, stationed outside the country but controlled from the headquarters of the organisation; they were usually deployed for technical emergencies; and coaches had a maximum of 6 months to stay in an area of operation. In Unilever, coaches were mostly senior official; they guided the subordinates in their department to improve on their efficiency. Finally, at MTN, coaching and budding, represented a stage in the training process that involved an old, experienced

employee working together with a new and inexperienced employee for proper integration into MTN activities.

This strategy, as shown in the table 7.9, aligned with the 'preferred' national aspirations on - skills for technical vocational development; skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills); as well as skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation as promoted by the discourses of the MNC and the state (see chapter 6). However, the researcher found that coaching strategy was being implemented, especially at Lafarge, in a rather interesting way. Coaches operated like a 'strike force', with their technical skills neither imparted to the locals nor planned to be domiciled in the country. Against this backdrop, realising these 'preferred' national skills development trajectory with which coaching ostensibly aligned (as seen in the matrix table 7.9) might be limited. Indeed, the coaches' skills had no applicability beyond the 'industry gate' – besides, not being transferred to local employees. Moreover, the researcher found that the local MNC subsidiary had no control over the coach that worked with them despite possessing specialist skills desired for successful functioning of the subsidiaries at all times. The 'core' technical skills may not be divulged to trainees, thereby ensuring the dependence of the MNC subsidiary on expatriate coaches. The implication here is that this strategy may limit realisation of the 'preferred' national skills development aspirations beyond the corporate environment.

7.6.2 On-the-job training

The benefits and disadvantages of on-the-job training are well articulated in the literature (see Mondy and Noe, 2005; Noe, 2010; Ekot, 2010; Dorjkhuu, 2013). Both the organisation and the employees benefited from on-the-job training. The study found that OJT was the most important, common and least expensive skills development strategy usually adopted by organisations. This finding is echoed in Tripthi and Chaurasia's (2014) *Analysis and Evaluation of Training Methods*. On-the-job training was adopted by the three MNCs as it comprised of 70% of their training strategies. All employees were exposed to one form of on-the-job training or another.

On-the-job training has the potential of improving the skills of individuals for increased productivity, facilitating skills development and empowering the employees. It facilitates

knowledge sharing without interrupting productivity. In addition, OJT could increase job opportunities and increase employment mobility, among others (see Tripathi and Chaurasia, 2014; Noe, 2010).

However, OJT, as practiced in the three MNCs, had several weaknesses (see section 7.2.1) and might not support the 'idealised' and 'prescribed' human capital formation trajectory for technology transfer, domiciliation of technology, local content for skills development, and skills for indigenous technology development. For instance, trainers could use wrong methods to impart knowledge. In addition, experienced employees might be reluctant to share their knowledge, thereby subverting the goals for which on-the-job training has been adopted. As gleaned from the responses of organised labour and organised private sector participants in this study (see chapter 6, section 6), adequate monitoring of the training and skills development programmes of the selected MNCs was essential for the realisation of national skills development aspirations.

The researcher found, as shown in the matrix (Table 7.9) that OJT skills development strategy was being implemented in the three companies, and had the potential for: technical vocational skills development; skills development for technology transfer; skills development for indigenous technology; skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills); and skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation among other 'preferred' national aspirations as gleaned from the discourses of the state and MNC constituencies (see chapter 6).

However, as depicted in the matrix table 7.9, OJT implementation in the three companies was strictly for imparting each company's specific and general skills; the strategy was product-centred and performance-oriented, and, finally, to ensure professionalism within their corporate establishments. Although OJT strategy as shown in the matrix appeared to aligned with national 'prescriptions' and 'idealisations', however, merging the salient attributes of OJT as illustrated in the matrix showed that attainment of the 'prescribed' and 'idealised' national skills development trajectory beyond an MNC's corporate domain might be limited.

7.6.3 Simulation

The study found that simulation was employed for training in Lafarge Cement Wapco for employees' technical skills development. The targeted employees were those who worked in the technical areas of production. The approach was that such employees could practise with models of their work equipment in the company training school. This strategy benefits both the organisation and the trainees (see, Tripathi and Chaurasia, 2014). The instructors for simulation in Lafarge were old and experienced employees who were about to retire. These employees, as one manager puts it, "are expected to cascade knowledge". They were expected to guide the young employees who still had a considerable number of years to work before retiring (see, section 7.2.2). In essence, simulation was a strategy of ensuring that retiring employees prepared replacements among the technical workers before their final disengagement.

Simulation is a strategy by which organisations solve problems at reduced cost while improving employee's efficiency. In addition, it eliminates the risk of damage to costly equipment by trainees (see Tripathi and Chaurasia, 2014). If implemented effectively, that is, if the experienced instructors are willing to impart 'all' the technical skills to the young employees, simulation could empower employees, facilitate skills development for technology transfer and enable employees to acquire skills which would increase job opportunities available to them. The researcher found that while the key attributes of simulation were in line with the 'preferred' and 'prescribed' human capital formation trajectory advocated for national economic growth and socio-economic development, skills development through the simulation strategy would not just happen, especially if it did not involve all the employees in the organisation.

As shown in the matrix (Table 7.9), simulation strategy in skills development aligned with the discourses on skills development for technology transfer; skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, at least as promoted by the state and MNC 'discourse constituencies'. Only Lafarge Cement Wapco had simulation as a skills development strategy. However, stripping simulation down to its core attributes revealed that this strategy was for imparting specific skills to identified technicians desired by the company to succeed those who were about to retire.

With this, even though simulation aligned with the above listed national skills development trajectories as shown in the matrix table 7.9, realising such national aspirations (as advocated by the state and MNC discourse constituencies) might be limited primarily due to the company-centred character of simulation (see chapter 6). Notwithstanding this, simulation strategy seemed also to point to a skills succession strategy subtly designed by Lafarge for, and in the sole interest of, the company.

7.6.4 Mentoring

Mentoring strategy was found to be a relatively long process of imparting company-specific skills and general code of ethics to an employee. The employee is expected to imbibe the ideals and culture of the organisation and see himself or herself as part of the 'family' being prepared to assume greater responsibilities (Starcevich, 2009; Wong and Premkumar, 2007; see also DeSimone and Harris, 1998). In mentoring, the mentor focuses on the mentee and is concerned about his/her career development and as such, offers support for the mentee's growth and maturity. Mentoring has long-term benefits (Starcevich, 2009). The attributes of mentoring make it an important medium for human capital formation through skills development of local employees. Mentoring promotes the local content strategy for skills development. It could support skills development for technology transfer, domiciliation and development of indigenous technology. It should empower the mentee and open wider employment opportunities for him/her.

It is important to note, however, that achieving the "prescribed" and "idealised" levels of national skills development through mentoring would be difficult if the mentor does not 'open up' in a way that allows the mentee to acquire relevant skills. Where the mentor is not willing to share knowledge, give adequate advice, explain the reasons for his/her actions and inactions to the mentee, and is not genuinely concerned about the mentee's personal and professional welfare (Wong and Premkumar, 2007; see also, Starcevic, 2009), the impact of this strategy would be seriously constrained.

The study revealed that the three companies implemented mentoring to varying degrees. The strategy as depicted in the matrix table 7.9, mentoring aligned with the realisation of the national discourses on: skills development for technology transfer; skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation; and enhancing local

contents for skills development as gleaned from at least two ‘discourse constituencies’ (the state and MNCs - see chapter 6).

However when stripped down to its core attributes (as shown in Table 7.9), mentoring in the three selected MNCs was essentially about developing specific and general company skills; inculcation of company ideals and culture; and orientating company mentees towards higher responsibilities. To this end, therefore, this strategy promoted goals that were clearly narrow and not necessarily related to the overt ‘national’ skills development and human capital formation “idealisations” and “prescriptions” advocated by at least two discourse constituencies, namely: the state and organised labour (see Chapter 6).

7.6.5 Company training school

The goal of the company training school is to bridge the gap between training received in conventional institutions and the requirements of specific industry. Company training schools develop skills programmes targeted at company technical skills; the training programmes are designed by the company (see Dorjkhuu, 2013). The study found that graduates of the training programmes left their company training schools to commence work in the factories. Lafarge Cement Wapco had on-site training school for the employees. Unilever had no formal on-site training school but reserved training rooms within the company for the training of its employees. In some situations, external resource persons, such as consultants, were brought in for such training programmes. On the other hand, MTN had no reserved training room but simply made use of external consultants for all training needs.

As revealed by the study and illustrated in matrix table 7.9, on-site training school in Lafarge, training room in Unilever and the use of Consultants for training aligned with the ‘idealised’ national trajectory relating to the importance of skills development in achieving technology transfer; domiciliation of technology; indigenous technology development, empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, and so on.

However, stripping this strategy to its core attributes as shown in the matrix table 7.9, the training school strategy seemed to be focused on the industry and thereby limits the realisation of the “idealised” national skills development and human capital formation goals

in Nigeria (see chapter 6). This is the key point conveyed in the matrix in table 7.9. Trainees, upon graduation from the training school, proceeded to the factory so as to make real the corporate objective for which the training school had laid the foundation. This raises questions about the extent to which MNC skills development, using training schools, supported the long-term national skills development and human capital formation "ideals" as gleaned from research participants from organised labour and state 'discourse constituencies' (see Chapter 6).

7.6.6 Online learning platform

As shown in the findings, there were online platforms in the three MNCs for employee' training and skills development. The online learning platform is a self-tutoring and self-instructing training and skills development strategy. It emphasises independent learning (Ekot, 2010). Individual employees were responsible for their learning. The learner decides the topic, module and sequence and pace of learning (Tripathi and Chaurasia, 2014:94). This strategy provided opportunity for individuals to repeatedly carry out the learning and refresh his/her knowledge and understanding of the modules (Ekot, 2010). Through the online strategy, the company as well as the employee benefit. The organisation promotes customised training for the employee to become integrated in the company at less cost. The topics covered and immediate feedback received assisted in improving employee performance on the job. The employee, on the other hand, learns more about the company operations and improves his proficiency on the job.

Notwithstanding the usefulness of online learning platforms, the researcher found that the strategy was company-designed and company-regulated and the modules uploaded for employees to study were company- and industry-specific. As such, the online learning platforms would only increase employees' knowledge about the company as against acquiring broad-based knowledge which would empower employees, promote entrepreneurship and employment generation, foster employment mobility, among others. Tripathi and Chaurasia (2014) have noted that the benefits of this strategy would be limited unless employers make learning opportunities available and promote employees' interest in the learning opportunities provided. This strategy is also useful for companies that do train only a few people at a time (Tripathi and Chaurasia, 2014).

The matrix (table 7.9) show that the online learning skills development strategy was linked to national “prescriptions” and “idealisations” pertaining to skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, and skills development for employment mobility, as gleaned from the discourses of the state, MNC and labour (see chapter 6). However, underlying this strategy was an overbearing focus on what benefits the company. As a result, the researcher found, although this strategy ostensibly aligned with specific facets of national ‘aspirations’ as gleaned from relevant discourse constituencies’ (see chapter 6), its contribution to the full realisations of such ‘aspirations’ was limited. The strategy had limited applicability beyond the companies’ environment.

7.6.7 Conventional educational institutions

It has been noted in the literature that the conventional educational institutions in any country remain the foundation for skills development and human capital formation (WEF, 2013; Jagannathan, 2013). Employees can acquire higher learning through this process. They can acquire scientific and technical knowledge to make decisions and solve problems (Dorjkhnu, 2013). MNCs recruit graduates from the conventional educational institutions and offer supplementary training for the proper functioning of their companies.

The study found that the three MNCs affirmed that the conventional educational institutions were veritable avenues for specific professional and technical skills development. While Lafarge supported employees to acquire skills through the conventional education institutions, it also offered financial incentives to employees who successfully completed their programmes. On the other hand, at Unilever and MTN, no financial incentives were given to employees, although the two companies did not discourage employees from pursuing further education and training in the conventional institutions in the country. However, such training would have to be undertaken on a part-time basis.

Table 7.9 shows that the goals of conventional educational institutions were in line with the “prescribed” human capital formation trajectory advocated for skills development that would assist technology transfer, domiciliation and development of indigenous technology; skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, local content and skills development, skills development for employment mobility, among others. More so, the support of MNCs for employees to undertake higher education further

promotes national aspirations. However, the fact that MNCs provided customised training that were company-specific and product-centred did limit the benefits (in form of diverse knowledge and skills that would be acquired by employees) if the curricula were the same in both conventional institutions and the MNCs. This important disconnect could have adverse consequences for the realisation of national human capital formation and skills development which is crucial for Nigeria's socio-economic development and transformation – as shown in table 7.9.

The study revealed, as depicted in the matrix (table 7.9), that the conventional educational system provided broad-based knowledge for general skills, specific skills, and technical skills - all of which were relevant for the realisation of all the different national skills development and national human capital aspirations profiled in chapter 6. However, the study found that the MNCs were adept at selecting skills that enabled them to achieve their own, and not necessarily the "national" objectives emphasised by some of the other "discourse constituencies".

7.6.8 Workshops, Conferences and Seminars

The three MNCs organised workshops, conferences and seminars as part of their employees' skills development strategies. As Ekot (2010) asserts, at conferences, employees develop skills on a number of issues. The same benefit is obtained from seminars but with less flexibility because of their tightly focused contents. In addition, learning is facilitated through lectures and presentations made by experts at workshops, conferences and seminars. In addition, these programmes facilitate peer learning, knowledge sharing and experience sharing (see Dorjkhuu, 2013). The broad knowledge and experience acquired by participant employees are relevant for specific and general skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation; employment mobility; skills-for-life-long usage and technical and vocational education and training.

The matrix (table 7.9) shows that workshops, conferences and seminars were linked to such national "prescriptions" and "idealisations" as: skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, and skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills). The researcher found, however, that workshops, conferences

and seminars were organised by companies to realise corporate objectives as shown in the matrix. In other words, the core attributes of these strategies showed that they were for specific and general skills, besides being entirely company- and industry-focused. Corporate objectives took precedence over everything else.

7.6.9 Staff exchanges and Job rotation

The study revealed that the strategy of staff exchanges and job rotation adopted in the three MNCs studied was to enable employees acquire relevant new skills and adapt to new technologies which they would be required to work with (see section 7.2.9). Exchanges and rotation are usually for short period before the employee returns to his/her working base (Dorjkhuu, 2013:9). Staff exchanges and job rotation are viewed as a viable medium for skills development as employees who are involved are exposed to new assignments and responsibilities (Tripathi and Chaurasia, 2014:94-95). The employee would learn new work techniques from different environments and settings and get more conversant with organisational communication among the different units in the organisation (Dorjkhuu, 2013:9). This strategy also promotes peer learning, knowledge sharing and experience sharing

As shown in the matrix table 7.9, staff exchanges and job rotation were aligned with at least two of the identified 11 national "prescriptions", namely: skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation; and skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills), as revealed by research participants representing the state and MNC "discourse constituencies" (see chapter 6). Furthermore stripping the strategy of its attributes as depicted in the matrix, the findings show that this strategy was employed to inculcate new company skills and adapt employees to new technology. It was implemented especially in Lafarge under a rigid procedure such as camping of employees in the place of work and regimented monitoring of their activities. Moreover, the skills development strategy was company-focused and company-specific. Staff exchanges and rotation occurred within the MNC conglomerate. Hence, the strategy takes cognisance of the primary corporate objective. Thus, although it had linkages to certain national "prescriptions", it had limited potential to support the full realisation of such 'aspirations'.

7.7 Conclusion

Three very popular multinational companies that are household names in Nigeria because of the widespread network of their activities have served as proxies in the researcher's attempt to understand, firstly, the skills development strategies in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector, and more importantly, how those strategies intersect with the dominant national discourses on, and "prescribed" and "idealised" trajectories of, human capital formation in Nigeria. The task of this chapter has been to profile those strategies based on interview and survey data, and to construct a matrix showing which strategies connect to which discourses. (In the discussion section in the next chapter, it will be shown why this matters).

The chapter was based on the researcher's attempt to find a credible empirical basis to answer two of the study's research questions, the data for the first research question having been extensively analysed and presented in Chapter Six. What has begun to emerge, in the light of the findings presented in this and the previous chapter is that skills development strategies do not just happen. They are not simply about equipping and positioning employees to help a company to achieve its productivity calculations. In ways that are not always obvious, they at once project and disguise certain biases, which, if carefully probed, could reveal why a country could remain mired in a skills (and even technological) crisis even though there are large corporate organisations which annually spend huge budgets in what they (genuinely) regard as skills development.

In the final chapter of this thesis, under the section on 'Discussion of Findings', the researcher will endeavour to make sense of the findings of the thesis, and in the process elucidate the connects, disconnects and contradictions alluded to here.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

Utilising the theoretical lenses of Human Capital, Labour Market Segmentation and Labour Process theories as well as the narrative of protectionism, this thesis sought to understand how the skills development strategies in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector aligned with extant national discourses on, and "prescribed" trajectories of, human capital formation in the country. Selected as representatives of the MNC sector were three companies whose products and services in Nigeria were among the most well-known and they have operated for a relatively long period. The companies were: Lafarge Cement Wapco, Unilever, and MTN. Following relevant debates in scholarly literature (Khilji, et al, 2012; Ogunade, 2011; Ejere, 2011; Chase, 2004 and others), the study proceeded from the assumption that MNCs' skills development strategies in Nigeria might be so inwardly focused on company's productivity and profit calculations that specific dynamics might be deliberately or inadvertently promoted that undermined the country's broader human capital formation aspirations. The following three questions conveyed the empirical thrust of the study:

(i) What are the salient features of the human capital formation discourses in selected national skills development agencies and labour organisations in Nigeria?

(ii) What are the skills development strategies of the selected multinational companies?

(iii) How do the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs intersect with the dominant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria?

These questions were articulated in chapter one. Chapters two and three were devoted to theoretical and empirical literature review respectively, while chapter four provided a background to, and a brief appraisal of, the evolution of skills development institutions in Nigeria. Empirical data were collected using a triangulation of qualitative methods (key informant interview and in-depth interview) and a quantitative method (questionnaire

survey). An exposition of the methodological decisions is contained in Chapter Five. Because of anticipated diversity and possible cleavages in the human capital formation discourse in Nigeria, as indeed everywhere else (Kanayo, 2013; Isola, and Alani, 2012; Siyanbola, 2012), the researcher pictured the country as having four main "discourse constituencies" vis-à-vis skills development and human capital formation. These were: the state, organised labour, organised private sector agencies, and the MNC sector. Relevant organisations were then purposively selected to represent these '"constituencies" as follows:

i. State: Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity; Ministry of Trade and Investment; Ministry of Interior; Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER); Centre for Management Development (CMD); and Industrial Training Fund (ITF).

ii. Organised labour: Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress TUC) – the country's two labour federations;

iii. Organised Private Sector (OPS) agencies: Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce Industries Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA); Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA); and Nigerian Institute of Training and Development (NITAD).

iv. Multinational corporate sector: Lafarge Cement Wapco, Nigeria; Unilever Nigeria Plc; and MTN Nigeria Communications limited.

The study's detailed findings were presented in Chapters Six and Seven.

In this chapter, a summary of the study's key findings will first be presented. Thereafter, the researcher attempts to "make sense" of the findings (vis-à-vis the three research questions) in the Discussion of Findings. Deductions are then made from the findings, whereupon the study's original contribution to knowledge is highlighted. Recommendations, conclusions and pointers to future research will end the chapter.

8.2 Summary of key findings

As stated above, three questions guided the study. The summary of findings presented in this section is done on a research question-by research question basis, starting with the first research question (RQ 1).

Research Question 1: What are the salient features of the human capital formation discourses in selected national skills development agencies and labour organisations in Nigeria?

The key findings were the following:

i) National skills development discourse in Nigeria was informed by a number of issues, among them: the need for development of skills that would facilitate technology transfer; domiciliation; emergence of indigenous technology; life-long usage; employment mobility and empowerment. Other vital issues that could facilitate skills development included: Expatriate Quota; TVET; national education; and certification of training and competency.

ii) The main areas of consensus among the various "discourse constituencies" were in relation to: skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills); skills development for empowerment and employment generation; TVET for skills development, skills development for life-long usage; and skills for indigenous technology development.

iii) The main areas of dissensions between the state and labour "discourse constituencies" pertained to: skills for technology transfer, expatriate quota for skills development, skills development for technology domiciliation.

iv) There was considerable overlap in the discourses of the state and organised labour with regard to the 'prescribed" and "idealised" trajectories of human capital formation in Nigeria. The 'paths' favoured by these two "constituencies" were in relation to skills development for employment mobility (portability of skills), skills development for empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment generation, TVET, skills development for life-long usage, skills for indigenous technology development.

v) The discourses privileged the role of MNCs as a vital agent in national human capital formation. This was besides criticisms by some respondents about how MNCs currently played their role.

vi) Many respondents (especially from organised labour) were critical of lacklustre monitoring and regulatory environment vis-à-vis MNCs training and skills development activities.

Research Question 2: What are the skills development strategies of the selected multinational companies?

i) The skills development strategies adopted by the three MNCs were: On-the-job training; Coaching; Simulation; Mentoring; Company training school; and Online learning platform. Others are – Conventional educational institutions; Workshops, Conferences and Seminars; and Staff exchanges and Job rotation.

ii) The three MNCs' skills development strategies were quantitatively expressed in the ratios 70:20:10. The 70% of the training strategy was exclusively On-the-job in the three MNCs; Mentoring and Coaching constituted 20% in Lafarge and MTN while Formal instruction constituted 10%. The reverse was the case in Unilever as Mentoring constituted 10% while formal instruction constituted 20% of the company's training programme.

iii) While the strategies had similar names across the three MNCs, they differed in terms of how they were operationalised within each company. For example, "Coaching" was practised differently in Lafarge and Unilever. The Coaches in Lafarge were exclusively expatriates deployed for inadequacies in the technical 'hot spots' for a short period, while in Unilever and MTN, Coaches were senior officials in different units and department.

iv) Specific strategies (such as "Coaching" in Lafarge) relied heavily – in some ways exclusively – on foreign expertise.

v) Employees were not favourably disposed to some of the strategies, arguing for instance, that some of the expatriates were really not needed for some of the jobs they were doing as there were local professionals who could do the job. The idea of sending Coaches from the parent company was also criticised by some employees especially the shop stewards.

vi) The various strategies were found to be almost entirely company- and product–centred.

Research Question 3: How do the skills development strategies of the selected MNCs intersect with the dominant human capital formation discourses in Nigeria?

i) The discourse matrix (Section 7.9) showed that only few strategies explicitly aligned with national human capital formation "prescriptions" and "idealisations" (as gleaned from, especially, the state's and organised labour's discourses).

ii) Specific skills development strategies (such as Coaching, Mentoring) appeared to explicitly undermine the "preferred" national human capital formation "prescriptions".

iii) Weak and ineffective monitoring and regulatory frameworks limited the realisation of national skills development "prescriptions".

8.3 Discussion of findings

Taken together, the findings of this study highlight at least four issues for discussion; these are discussed below:

8.3.1 Skills and national development

The study found, from the discourses of the different "discourse constituencies", that different sectors of the Nigerian society attach great importance to the role of skills in national economic growth and development. This confirms the established notions about skills development in scholarly literature (see, Toner, 2011; Khiji et al, 2012). The vital role of skills is visible at individual and corporate levels. Skills are essential for improving productivity, income generation and enhancing access to employment opportunities. Bloom

et al (2014) assert that a nation's human capital endowment – the skills and capacities that reside in people and that are put to productive use can be an important input in its long term economic prosperity. These positions are reflected in the human capital theory employed in this study to advance the argument on the need for training and skills development for human resource development (Becker, 1964; see also Schultz, 1992).

It is not surprising that the 'North-South' divide has been sustained. Developed countries which have skilled human resource continue to invest in skills development; capacity building; research and development in order to maintain their skills advantage (see, Brown, et al, 2008). More so, some developing countries of Asia, such as Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong and others which are not endowed with natural resources, have transformed their economies positively through investing and usage of their efficient and adequately trained human resource (Nkogbu, 2014, see also Page, 1994). It could therefore be deduced that Nigeria's quest to achieve development and socio-economic transformation could be accelerated by emulating the Asain Tigers through investment in training and skills development of its human resource. Nigeria is endowed with vast natural, material and human resources which could transform it to an industrial giant (Hudson, 2014), but without skills, the country's quest for socio-economic transformation will be difficult to realise. The issues of unemployment and poverty are rife among the people according to CIA Fact book, 2015, unemployment was 23.9% (2011 estimate; see also Asaju, et al. 2014). It could be deduced that Nigeria's progress could be fast tracked with adequate investment in the skills development of its citizens to engender the much desired human resource development (Hudson, 2014).

An OECD Report (2012) notes that investment in skills development should continue throughout the life cycle; from early childhood, through compulsory education and throughout a working life. The human resource must be motivated through training and skills development strategies to generate returns for individuals as well as for the economy as a whole. Thus, there is need at different levels for appropriate policies aimed at promoting skills development (ILO, 2008). In addition, developing skills requires an integrated effort and partnerships as it is a continuous process. A country's educational system should be functional as it provides the foundation for all skills requirements – technical, professional and managerial. Investments in infrastructural facilities for training and funding of skills development institutions are essential – both public and private

agencies concerned with skills development and utilisation should make it a priority. The government should commit resources to skills development and training of its citizens (see ILO, 2008:1-3; Maclean et al, 2013).

Studies have found that to obtain the best return on investment in skills requires the ability to assess the quality and quantity of the skills available in the population; determining and anticipating the skills required in the labour market; and developing and using those skills effectively for better lives (OECD, 2012; Brown, et al, 2008). It therefore becomes very essential for skills to be upgraded to meet emerging global trends and requirements (Ogunade, 2011; Brown, et al, 2008; Lall, 1999:3-10; World Bank 1999:47). These skills development and utilisation projections are to help in reducing skills mismatch, skills shortage and unemployment – as noted earlier in this thesis (see chapter one, sections 1.1 and 1. 2).

The study showed that efforts have been made by successive Nigerian governments in terms of formulating policies and establishing agencies and institutional frameworks to address the country's skills development predicaments. There is the realisation that skills development is critical in the country's search for development and socio-economic transformation (see chapter 4). The various human capital formation issues revealed in this study, revolved around the need for skills development. Thus, as part of its efforts to develop skills, the Nigerian government has offered liberal incentives to encourage multinational companies to invest in Nigeria with the expectation that the country will benefit from their skills advantage. This confirms the view advanced by Becker's human capital theory (see chapter two, sub-section 2.3.1) on training and skills development - that through training and skills development, the potential of individuals and the country as a whole are enhanced.

8.3.2 MNCs: Channels of technology and knowledge diffusion?

As highlighted in this study, at both the theoretical and empirical levels, MNCs' operations in host countries have spawned a lot of contestations and contradictions. One scholarly position is that MNCs are the custodians of cutting edge technology, a product of their massive investment in research and development in Nigeria as in other developing countries (see Sambharya and Lee 2014; Dahlman, 2007). This position is echoed in the

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) narrative which emphasises that through MNCs' investments, employees of host countries, such as Nigeria, could tap from their skills and technological advantage (Bloomstrom and Kokko, 2001). Thus, MNCs are seen by some scholars as agents of change and as channels of technological innovation as they are called end users of technology (Abereijo and Ilori, 2012; Rugraff and Hansen, 2011; Kwok and Tadesse, 2006). To this set of scholars, MNCs contribute in no small measure to promoting socio-economic transformation and development of their host countries.

On the other hand, there are scholars, particularly from developing countries, who view MNCs as capitalist organisations consumed by a desire for profit, irrespective of the broader societal effect of their profit drive (Tirimba and Macharia, 2014; Erunke and Kigbu, 2012; Bakan, 2004). These scholars have advanced the argument that MNCs engage in a number of 'nefarious' activities in their host countries. According to this school of thought, multinationals engage in activities that have negative consequences for the host environment, such as pollution of host environment without care for health implications. MNCs deploy old and obsolete equipment and technology, deskill people, rely on skills in host country and "protect technology through coding" thereby preventing the host country from benefitting (Hammarlund (2005:240), among others. These scholars therefore call for the regulation of MNCs' operations as a way of curtailing their activities (see, Erunke and Kigbu, 2012, Prasad et al 2008).

Taking its base from the debates, contentions and contradictions in literature, the study examined empirically, the philosophy underlying skills development in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector using three multinational companies as case studies. They are: Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria; Unilever Nigeria and MTN Nigeria. Through interviews held with relevant personnel in the organisations and surveys of shopfloor employees, the study revealed that the three selected MNCs operated a wide canvas of skills development strategies. Through the deployment of technology and employment of Nigerians, the MNCs were contributing to knowledge and technology flow. Some of their skills strategy include: On-the job training; Coaching; Mentoring; On-site training school; Conventional educational institutions among others. These training and skills development strategies were also outlined in the literature as having both advantages and disadvantages (see Noe, 2010). However, there were slight differences in the way the strategies were operationalised. For instance, as articulated in the section on key findings (see, section 8.2), the Coaches in

Lafarge were expatriates who were deployed for specific purposes in which they had expertise.

In addition, the study found that there was extensive emphasis on on-the-job training for employees' skills development which, although had its benefits (see Noe, 2010), pointed to the focus of the MNCs on the sustenance of MNCs' corporate objective. This finding suggested that while the MNCs are engaged in employee training and skills development (using the various strategies explained in Chapter Seven), the corporates interests of the companies predominate as the determinant of both the skills development programmes and their operationalisation. While on-the-job training, as identified in the literature, has the potential of facilitating skills transfer, skills for technology transfer and skills for domiciliation of technology, this has yet to be realised in Nigeria. Thus, in spite of the skills and technology advantage of the multinational corporate sector, evidence from the three MNCs selected for this study shows that the sector has not served to propel Nigeria technologically in terms of strategic skills needed for real technological takeoff. The findings here confirm the position of human capital theory on the importance of training and skills development (see chapter two, sub-section 2.3.1). It also affirms the narrative of protectionism (chapter two, sub-section 2.3.5) that MNCs will protect skills and technical know-how and prevent diffusion of such productive advantages in order to enhance their corporate objective of maximising profit.

8.3.3 Disguised protectionism?

The study revealed some dynamics within the Nigerian multinational corporate sector which might account for the persistent skills challenge in Nigeria. As noted in chapter one (section 1.2), the business successes recorded by MNCs in Nigeria has occurred despite society-wide skills shortages and despite claims by the MNCs that their skills development strategies are guided by national human capital formation "prescriptions". It would seem that over the years, skills development in the MNC sector has not had much spinoff for skills development within the society, an indication that some forms of systemic protectionism might be occurring. While the multinational corporations claimed to contribute towards promoting Nigeria's skills development aspirations, the study found that some of their skills development strategies would not lead to realising such goals. For instance, the use of Coaches in Lafarge who are exclusively expatriates stationed outside

the country and coordinated from the company's headquarters, for technical emergencies fall short of national aspiration. This could explain the fact that despite several decades of profitable operations, the technical skills of the Coaches are not planned to be domiciled in Nigeria for 'strategic reasons'. As a 'technical strike force', Coaches could only stay in a place of technical emergency deployment for a maximum of six months. In addition, the study found that on-the-job training constitutes 70% of the selected companies' training. This company- focused training and skills development strategy as well, indicates an attempt to streamline employees' knowledge and skills within the company, and by extension, their respective industry. This echoes the key insights of labour process theory, especially the view that in the capitalist economic system, employers device different ways of maximising the potentials of their employees and ensure firm control of social relations in the work organisation. This was explained in detail in chapter two (sub-section 2.3.4).

The study also revealed that MNCs are first and foremost driven by profit – "the pathology of profit seeking". The idea that profit underpins all MNCs' activities is promoted by scholars such as Bakan (2004), Rodney (1973), O'Connor and Lunati (1999) and Kapfer (2006). This suggests that MNCs could do anything to achieve their profit motive (Bakan, 2004). The argument further suggests that MNCs' training and skills development programmes would be tailored to ensuring their corporate interest. MNCs will facilitate employees' training and skills development in order to improve their performance in the production process even though the employees would benefit. The scholars in this category note that MNCs would go to the extent of exploiting institutional weaknesses and manipulate the regulatory mechanisms of host countries in furtherance of their corporate interests (see Rodney, 1973, Kapfer, 2006:10). MNCs have also been viewed to code their technologies for restricted usage and adoption (Kapfer, 2006:10).

The study further revealed that the selected MNCs have few expatriate employees. Nonetheless, the few expatriate employees occupy strategic positions and offices in the companies (and these are where vital decisions are made), besides the influence exerted by the parent company. These factors possibly explain why countries like Nigeria, which hosts a number of MNCs, continue to struggle to develop skills for industrial development even when they have for many decades been hosts to many MNCs, who are widely known to be "repositories" of skills. Even so, this scenario has persisted despite claims by the MNCs that their operations (skills development strategies, in particular) are guided by

national human capital formation “idealisations” and “prescriptions” (see chapter six, sub-section 6.13). Scholars who adopt the narrative of protectionism argue that the activities of MNCs are covert manifestations of protectionism (see Chase, 2004). The present study has found corroborative evidence that while MNCs claim to follow national “prescriptions” and “idealisations” about skills development and national human capital formation, skills development practices within the sector mirrors systematic corporate attempts to maintain skills disparities amongst different demographics.

8.3.4 Linking skills development strategies to national human capital formation “prescriptions”

Gleaned from responses from the four delineated “discourse constituencies” identified in this study, the findings revealed that Nigeria’s skills predicament could be attributed to weak policy implementation, lack of effective supervision and monitoring of MNCs’ skills development strategies to confirm that they are aligned with national skills development expectations. In addition, lack of harmonisation of the programmes of skills development institutions and agencies has led to duplication of efforts culminating in limited successes. The study found that skills development, education and training and TVET, were emphasised in Nigeria’s development plans over the years since independence and progress was achieved through government institutions, while the education system was functional. However, since the early 1980s, the crises in the education sector began to negatively affect the quality of training and skills development. The deficiencies in Nigeria’s education sector are outlined in scholarly literature (see Babarinde, 2012).

Fieldwork outcomes showed that there are disconnects between skills being developed in institutions concerned with skills development in Nigeria and requirements of the industry. This necessitates the training and re-training of graduates from Nigeria’s training and skills development institutions. With respect to the study’s aim to examine the three MNCs’ skills development strategies vis-à-vis Nigeria’s human capital formation discourses, there was an agreement among the four “discourse constituencies” that MNCs were custodians of skills, innovation and technology, and that they could be veritable agents of socio-economic development.

It was further revealed that the three MNCs invest in employee training and skills development. Their training strategies broadly are classified as On-the-job and Off-the-job training. The study found that some of the skills programmes and strategies of the MNCs aligned with the 'idealisations' and 'prescriptions' on national human capital formation aspirations in Nigeria. However, some were not. The findings of the study indicated that there were connects and disconnects between MNCs' skills strategies and national skills development aspirations.

The study identified that Coaching is a skills development strategy adopted in the three MNCs; however, the way it is implemented in the companies will only afford employees the opportunity of acquiring very limited knowledge of 'peripheral' skills because the expatriate coaches, as revealed in Lafarge, hold the 'key' that could unlock 'critical skills' challenge in the production process. With this arrangement, production would go on for several years while the anticipated acquisition of the critical skills that sustain MNCs would not be transferred, domiciled or lead to development of indigenous technology. In short, as the study found, the expectations of skills development and technology transfer, skills development for technology domiciliation and expatriate quota for skills development may remain unrealised in Nigeria.

In addition, the study found that on-the job training which is the most prominent skills strategy of the three MNCs and involves all employees is extensively product-specific and company-centred. This will only empower employees on the work and industry and by extension, is a form of national empowerment. On-the-job training will facilitate employment mobility (portability of skills) within their respective industries. However, the anticipated technology transfer, domiciliation may not be realised. As revealed in Unilever, the idea of contracting former employees to produce for the company bears testimony that Unilever still exercises control over employees that have acquired the skills, through such contractual arrangement.

Furthermore, Simulation strategy as implemented in Lafarge, is a strategy of replacing technical skills of experienced, old and retiring employees. It is a medium of skills transfer from employees who have spent a large part of their working lives in the company to young employees. Simulation is in-house and will only empower such employees within the company and industry.

In addition, the mentoring strategy which is adopted in the three selected companies, is a process of preparing the employees for higher responsibilities. The strategy inculcates company values, ideals and ethics in the employee over a long period thus making the employee to see himself/herself as an integral part of the organisation. With this strategy, an employee thinks of the organisation first before national interest. Thus, the national aspirations might be mortgaged in favour of corporate interest of company. In as much as mentoring would empower employees and would facilitate job mobility, its company-centred orientation first aligned with the companies' interest before Nigeria's national human capital development aspirations.

For its part, the Company training school, usually on-site, is another skills strategy adopted by the MNCs for imparting technical, vocational skills on employees. Lafarge runs this school, as the study revealed, while Unilever and MTN have no formal on-site training schools but make use of external consultants for training purposes. Since the on-site training school was established for company training, it would only facilitate customised training of employees. Trainees at the school will acquire extensively, technical vocational skills relevant to the company and industry. In essence, the company training school strategy aligns with the 'idealisation' and 'prescription' on human capital development trajectory and will facilitate the acquisition of technical and vocational skills which would empower employees and lead to employment mobility. However, the school is established to promote company-specific objectives and may not facilitate skills development for technology transfer or skills development for technology domiciliation.

In addition, the same result would obtain with the Online learning platform adopted in the three MNCs where the modules uploaded are company- specific. More so, while the national educational system lays the foundation for realising all the Nigerian national skills development aspirations, the customisation of the skills imparted to graduates to meet company and industry's specific requirement limit the actualisation of 'idealised' and 'prescribed' national skills development aspirations.

Finally, the organised labour and organised private sector agencies remain critical that despite numerous MNCs that are custodians of needed skills, that Nigeria is not deriving adequate benefits from these companies' operations due to inadequate, weak and

inefficient evaluation and monitoring of their skills programme to ensure alignment with the 'idealised' and 'prescribed' national skills development aspirations.

8.4 Contribution to knowledge

This is a study on the developmental connects, disconnects and paradoxes of skills development in the Nigerian multinational corporate sector. The study breaks new grounds in a number of ways. First, it provides a crucial scholarly basis for identifying and interrogating existing and putative cleavages in national human capital formation discourse. Existing studies have tended to take this discourse for granted unaware of (or perhaps ignoring) what this study has found – namely, the fact that there are different "discourse constituencies", each of them promoting a specific appraisal, critique and advocacy vis-à-vis present and future trajectories of skills development and human capital formation.

Second, it subjects the skills development practices in the MNC sector to scrutiny, bringing into focus some of its most consequential (but hidden) dimensions. Indeed, while the conventional discourse on MNCs and skills development portrays the MNC sector as the crucible of best practice in, and the seedbed of, skills development, this study utilises a triangulation of analytical perspectives to uncover what may well be termed the "sordid side" of "best practice". The antinomies of "coaching" in Lafarge Cement Wapco, is an excellent example of this "sordid side".

Finally, the use of a "discourse matrix" to interrogate linkages between dominant practices and dominant discourses must be viewed as an original contribution to industrial sociology and development studies.

8.5 Policy recommendations

The findings of this study have clear policy implications, hence the following recommendations become necessary:

- The expatriate quota regime has not achieved the desired objective, looking at it from the expatriates in companies and positions occupied; and the local content programme is not being implemented due to the existing weak monitoring and

regulatory framework. The Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment negotiates with MNCs for investments; the Federal Ministry of Labour monitors the training and skills development programmes while the Ministry of Interior is responsible for granting the expatriate quota. With this situation, a harmonised and a strong monitoring regulatory framework that will function better is necessary to ensure that MNCs adhere to rules and procedures, for the benefits of Nigeria.

- The developing countries hosting MNC subsidiaries should collectively work out a clear rule of engagement through the bilateral and multilateral agencies so that the ambiguous, liberal and undefined policies like the ones embedded in TRIM, which act as a cover under which MNCs hide to perpetuate a self-serving agenda, is properly redefined (see Chase, 2004:6).

- Given the importance of MNCs as custodians of modern skills and technology, MNCs' training and skills development programmes should be incorporated into Nigeria's broad national skills development agenda. This will enable trainees to have their skills and competencies evaluated, certificated and accepted beyond the "industry gate". The skills programmes should have a national outlook, with supervision being carried out not only by ministry officials but also by professionals and experts from the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE).

- All the 'discourse constituencies' (with the exception of the state) questioned the quality and/or capacity of the national educational system to address human capital formation and development issues. This unusual consensus makes it crucial for the Nigerian government to review the curriculum of the Nigerian educational system as a first step towards addressing the problem of skills mismatch identified in this study. Beyond this, the government should fund the education sector properly in line with UNESCO's recommendations.

- Finally, the study recommends the establishment of a functional national agency (similar to the defunct National Manpower Board (NMB)) charged with the responsibility of undertaking an analysis of the Nigerian labour market, carrying out assessments of the demand and supply of skills, and projecting future demands

based on sound research. Nigeria is in need of a robust labour market information system to guide human resource development.

8.6 Conclusion

One narrative which the findings of this study have confirmed is that multinational corporations are masters of strategy – in this case, strategy pertaining to employee training and skills development. That the three MNCs examined in this study (Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria, Unilever Nigeria, and MTN Nigeria) have attained unparalleled prominence and dominance in their areas of operations in Nigeria is testimony not only to their resource and marketing prowess, but, perhaps more than anything else, their ability to deploy a broad and robust canvas of training and skills development strategies to equip their employees to achieve optimum levels of productivity under any condition. Even so, as gleaned from the relevant human capital formation discourses and respondent accounts in the relevant chapters of this work, the companies' carefully crafted and managed capacity development strategies appear to have successfully served their productivity and profit calculations in spite of the skills-related inefficiencies in the Nigerian formal education system. In other words, they are able to recruit products of a relatively inefficient formal educational system and mould them into highly productive employees.

However, the study has also revealed that the skills development strategies themselves appear to have been conceived and deployed in ways that suggest an overwhelming company- and product-centeredness, even to the point where, it seems, Nigerian employees are deliberately "prevented" from accessing certain levels of know-how. As demonstrated in one of the empirical chapters, the subtle, but carefully managed, distinction between "everyday", and even "high level" skills – which are readily acquirable by local employees - and "strategic" skills, which are shielded from those employees, is a case in point. Aided by a weak national regulatory and monitoring framework, skills protectionism appears to have thrived under different training and skills development guises. While the national educational system gropes in the dark for guidance and innovation with regard to how to produce highly skilled human resource for the local economy, the skills development strategies and "ingenuities" of the MNCs remain closeted behind their factory gates. The result is a national landscape where MNCs boast levels of skills (and productivity) which are out of sync with the rest of the Nigerian economy.

Seen against the backdrop of specific practices within the multinational corporate sector, therefore, the terrain of skills training and human capital formation in Nigeria is, in a very demonstrable way, a terrain of connects, disconnects and paradoxes.

An agenda for future research has thus been defined. While the present study has focused on MNCs in three sectors (cement, home products, and telecommunications), a future study should expand this empirical focus, to include more sectors. Comparative studies should also be contemplated, as the contradictions brought out in the present study could be milder in some sectors, worse in others, and perhaps non-existent in certain others. It should also be of interest to examine what policy mechanisms exist at the national and multilateral levels to tackle, for the instance, the problem of disguised (or overt) skills protectionism, how such mechanisms work, and what their successes and/or failures have been. This researcher intends to devote a substantial part of his postdoctoral career to studying these and other related issues.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: KEY-INFORMANT INTERVIEW: POLICY MAKING ESTABLSHMENTS

Interview Schedule

Introduction:

My name is Joseph Jiboku, a doctoral student of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Fort Hare, East London Campus, South Africa. I am conducting a study to explore the skills development programmes of multinational companies with a view to understanding how they intersect with national discourses pertaining to local human capital formation. I would greatly appreciate your candid responses to the questions in this interview guide. Please be assured that the interview is exclusively for academic purposes (as part of my data collection process), and that your participation is voluntary and that all information obtained from you will be used anonymously and confidentially.

Thank you for your assistance.

Thank you.

Name of organisation ----------

Position held in the organisation----------

Date----------

Questions:

1- Where do MNCs operating in Nigeria generally source their shop-floor employees and from the point of view of your organisation, how are the employees expected to be made to fit the jobs for which they are employed?

2- To the best of your knowledge, are they national guidelines and yardsticks on training and skills development for the MNCs operating in Nigeria?

3- What is the position of government regarding technology transfer, expatriate quota, indigenisation of high-level manpower, with particular regard to MNCs operating in the country.

4- What informed government position on these issues?

5- If the government has no clear position on these issues, why do you think that is the case? Why do you think MNCs in the country adopt skills development programmes like In-service training, On-the-job training, Use of Consultants and others?

6- Are there national institutional frameworks for monitoring the MNCs to ensure their compliance with specific policies governing skills development (with reference to indigenisation of high-level manpower, expatriate quota, technology transfer, skills transfer, etc)?

7- What consequences are stipulated in the relevant laws to deal with violations?

8- From the standpoint of your organisation, what does government intend to achieve with the specific policies and stipulations (e.g. indigenisation of high-level manpower, expatriate quota, technology transfer, skills transfer, etc)?

APPENDIX B: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW AT THE OFFICES OF THE THREE SELECTED MNCs

Interview Schedule

Introduction:

My name is Joseph Jiboku, a doctoral student of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Fort Hare, East London Campus, South Africa. I am conducting a study to explore the skills development programmes of multinational companies with a view to understanding how they intersect with national discourses pertaining to local human capital formation. I would greatly appreciate your candid responses to the questions in this interview guide. Please be assured that the interview is exclusively for academic purposes (as part of my data collection process), and that your participation is voluntary and that all information obtained from you will be used anonymously and confidentially. Thank you.

Name of organisation ----------

Position within the organisation----------

Date----------

1- What skills development programmes exist in this company – both those targeting shop floor employees and those in management and technical sections?

2- Do your company's international head office (overseas) play a role in the design of the programmes? If so, what role?

3- Do you obtain input from Nigerian human capital development agencies in designing and/or implementing these programmes? If so, what kinds of input?

4- What criteria guide the selection of employees to benefit from these programmes?

5- Among shop floor employees in particular, how are these programmes implemented?

6- Among management and technical employees, how are the programmes implemented?

7- To what extent would you say the programmes have assisted in the realisation of corporate objectives?

8- Which of your company's corporate objectives would you say are particularly assisted by the various skills development programmes?

9- What are the principles guiding the skills development strategies of your organisation?

10- What are the principles guiding the ways the strategies are operationalised; for example (e.g. the frequency of specific training programmes, the selection of employees to take part in skills development programmes, the targeting of specific departments/units for skills development, the choice of Nigerian versus expatriate staff to take part in skills development programmes, the adoption/non-adoption of skills development input from your international head office, etc.)

11- Are there government agencies that show regulatory or other interest in how you implement your skills development programmes, or how what factors you emphasise or do not emphasise in your skills development programmes?

12- When you look at the skills levels in Nigeria as a whole, what contributions would you say your skills development strategies make towards improving the country's high-level skills base?

13- Do you support the idea of high-level skills transfer to Nigerians, especially in a multinational environment like yours?

14- Are you aware of any policies of government that require you to embark on skills development in a particular way? Please expatiate (what policies? What do such policies expect of your organisation?)

15- Has your company ever received any praise from the relevant government agencies for complying with such policies or stipulations?

16- Are you aware of any consequences should companies go against or fail to fully comply with such policies? Please expatiate? (Are you aware of MNCs in Nigeria that have been sanctioned? Has your company ever been sanctioned?)

17- What are the views of your organisations on issues such as technological transfer, expatriate quota, local content, etc.?

APPENDIX C: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE – LABOUR (NLC, TUC)

Introduction

My name is Joseph Jiboku, a doctoral student of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Fort Hare, East London Campus, South Africa. I am conducting a study to explore the skills development programmes of multinational companies with a view to understanding how they intersect with national discourses pertaining to local human capital formation. I would greatly appreciate your candid responses to the questions in this interview guide. Please be assured that the interview is exclusively for academic purposes (as part of my data collection process), and that your participation is voluntary and that all information obtained from you will be used anonymously and confidentially.

Thank you.

Name of organisation ----------

Position within the organisation----------

Date----------

1. What is the position of labour on MNCs when it comes to skills development in Nigeria? What are the expectations of organised labour on how MNCs should embark on skills development?

2. From the standpoint of organised labour, are MNCs investing in skills development in a way that ultimately helps Nigeria's development? Expatiate.

3. What is labour's view on ideas such as indigenisation of high-level manpower, technology transfer, skills transfer, expatriate quota, etc?

4. To what extent could Nigeria benefit from government policies of that explicitly demand MNCs to incorporate these into their skills development programmes?

5. In the view of labour, are MNCs in Nigeria actively pursuing these ideas (indigenisation of high-level manpower, technology transfer, skills transfer) in their skills development programmes?

6. If they are not actively pursuing such policies, should they be compelled to? How?

7. Looking at Nigeria's human capital base, would the active implementation of policies of indigenisation of high-level manpower, technology transfer, skills transfer, etc., be of help?

8. To the best of your knowledge, what kinds of skills development strategies do MNCs in Nigeria adopt?

9. To what extent does the input of organised labour feature in the skills development policies of MNCs in Nigeria?

10. If labour's input does not feature – or does not matter to the MNCs – is this an issue of concern to your labour organisation? Why?

11. If it is not a concern, why not?

12. What would you say are the priorities of MNCs in Nigeria when it comes to skills development?

13. To what extent would you say the skills development programmes and strategies of MNCs are informed by issues such as the need to indigenise high-level manpower or make Nigeria a technological competitive country without the country having to rely on 'imported' manpower?

14. Would you say MNCs in Nigeria are genuinely adhering government's stipulations regarding expatriate quota, indigenisation, local contents, technological transfer etc?

15. If, in your opinion they are not, why are they not?

16. In the view of labour, how relevant are the training and skills programmes to the employees outside their current work organisations – especially if they were to resign or be retrenched?

17. Would you say MNCs in Nigeria submit regular skills-related assessment reports to the relevant government agencies?

18. In your opinion, would you say such reports reflect the true state of compliance when it comes to the skills development practices and priorities of the MNCs in Nigeria?

APPENDIX D: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE – MNC SHOP STEWARDS

Interview Schedule

Introduction

My name is Joseph Jiboku, a doctoral student of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Fort Hare, East London Campus, South Africa. I am conducting a study to explore the skills development programmes of multinational companies with a view to understanding how they intersect with national discourses pertaining to local human capital formation. I would greatly appreciate your candid responses to the questions in this interview guide. Please be assured that the interview is exclusively for academic purposes (as part of my data collection process), and that your participation is voluntary and that all information obtained from you will be used anonymously and confidentially.

Thank you for your assistance.

Name of organisation ----------

Position within the organisation----------

Date----------

1- As a union leader in this organisation, would you say MNCs are investing in skills development in a way that ultimately helps Nigeria's development? Expatiate.

2- What is your union's view on ideas such as indigenisation of high-level manpower, technology transfer, skills transfer, expatriate quota, etc? Would you say your company is pursuing these sorts of objectives in its skills development strategy?

3-If they are not actively pursuing such objectives, should they be compelled to? How?

4-Would Nigeria benefit more if government policies were to explicitly demand MNCs to incorporate these into their skills development programmes?

5- Looking at the skills levels in Nigeria, would the active implementation of policies of indigenisation of high-level manpower, technology transfer, skills transfer, etc., be of help?

6- To the best of your knowledge, what are priorities pursued in your company's skills development strategies?

7- To what extent does your union's input feature in such strategies?

8- If your union's input does not matter to the company – is this an issue of concern to your union? Why?

9- Have you raised matters of this nature with management?

10. If it is not a concern, why not?

11. Generally, would you say MNCs in Nigeria are genuinely adhering government's stipulations regarding expatriate quota, indigenisation of high-level manpower, local content, technology transfer etc?

12. If, in your opinion they are not, why are they not?

13. In your view, do you think the skills acquired by your union members in this company would be of help to them should they be retrenched, resign, or decide to go into self-employment?

14. To the best of your knowledge, would you say MNCs in Nigeria submit regular skills-related assessment reports to the relevant government agencies?

15. In your opinion, would you say such reports reflect the true state of compliance when it comes to the skills development practices and priorities of the MNCs in Nigeria?

16. What aspects of the skills development strategies and programmes of this company is your union particularly happy about?

17. Are they any aspects of such strategies and programmes that you do not particularly like? Which?

APPENDIX E: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES AT THE SHOP FLOOR OF THE STUDY ORGANISATIONS

Introduction:

My name is Joseph Jiboku, a doctoral student of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Fort Hare, East London Campus, South Africa. I am conducting a study to explore the skills development programmes of multinational companies with a view to understanding how they intersect with national discourses pertaining to local human capital formation. I would greatly appreciate your candid responses to the questions in this interview guide. Please be assured that the interview is exclusively for academic purposes (as part of my data collection process), and that your participation is voluntary and that all information obtained from you will be used anonymously and confidentially.

Thank you for your assistance.

Instruction - Kindly provide your honest responses in the spaces provided.

1. Age
   (a) 26 – 30 ( ) (b) 31 – 35 ( ) (c) 36 – 40 ( ) (d) 41 – 45 ( ) (e) 46 – 50 ( )
   (f) 51 – 55 ( ) (g) 56 and above ( )

2. Gender (a) Male ( ) (b) Female ( )

3. Marital status (a) Married ( ) (b) Single ( ) (c) Divorced (d) Widowed ( )

4. Educational level attained
   (a) Primary ( ) (b) Secondary ( ) (c) Technical College ( ) (d) Polytechnic ( )
   (e) University ( )

5. How many years of service have you put into this organisation? ----------

6. What is your monthly income?
   (a) 21,000 – 30,000 ( ) (b) 31,000 – 40,000 ( ) (c) 41,000 - 50,000 ( )
   (d) 51,000 – 60,000 ( ) (e) 61,000 – 70,000 ( ) (f) 71,000 - 80,000 ( )

7. Does this organisation have training and skills development programmes for employees?
   (a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( )

8. Have you attended any training and skills development programme since you joined this organisation?
   (a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( )
9. If yes, in what year did you attend the most recent training? ……

10. If yes to Q. 9, what, in your view, was the training and skills development programme designed to achieve?
(a) Improve skills ( ) (b) Reduce cost of payment to consultants ( )
(c) Development of local skills ( ) (d) Empowerment of local people ( )
(e) Others, please specify ----------
---

11. Where did the training and skills development programme take place?
(a) Within the organisation ( ) (b) Outside the factory ( )
(c) Organisation's training school

12. To the best of your knowledge, who is in charge of training and skills development in this organisation?
(a) Expatriate staff (b) Nigerian staff (c) Don't know

13. How, in your opinion, could the training and skills development programme of this organisation be improved?
(a) Through training and retraining
(b) Regular follow-up on skills acquired
(c) Getting trained personnel more involved with new tasks
(d) Assigning training responsibilities to trained employees
(e) Through on-the-job training
(f) Others, please specify ----------
---

14. In your view, does the company's skills development programme equip employees with skills that could make them employable outside this company in the event of resignation or retrenchment? (a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( ) (c) Don't know.

15. To what extent would you say that Nigerian employees in this company are exposed to the core technical aspects of the work of the company?
(a) Deeply exposed
(b) Only superficially exposed
(c) No exposure
(d) Don't know

16. Who maintains the factory equipment and machinery in the factory?
(a) Nigerian staff ( ) (b) Expatriate staff ( ) (c) A team of Nigerian and expatriate staff ( ) (d) Don't know ( ) (e) others, (please specify) ----------

17. Can work go on in the factory without expatriate officials?
(a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( ) (c) Don't know ( )

18. If your response to Q.17 is 'Yes' or 'No', please could you give reasons:

---

19. In your opinion, do you think the (overseas) parent body of this company is helping to helping the Nigerian subsidiary to acquire the levels of technology that could make the local subsidiary self-sustaining?

(a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( ) (c) Don't know ( )

20. If 'Yes' or 'No') to Q.19, please could you provide reasons

---

---

21. In your opinion, would you say the training and skills programme(s) of this organisation are helping the Nigerian economy in a very significant way?

(a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( ) (c) Don't know ( )

22. Do you know of any government directives relating to training and skills development? (Please tick all of the options you know of):

(a) The need to ensure that high-level (skilled) positions are held by Nigerians?
(b) Expatriate quota
(c) Indigenisation
(d) Others, please specify----------
(e) Don't know of any government directive.

23. If you have expressed awareness of specific directives in Q. 22, would you say that the training and skills development programmes of this organisation align with those directives?

(a) Yes – wholly ( ) (b) Yes – to some extent ( ) (c) No ( ) (d) Don't know ( )

24. Are there ways that you think your company's training and skills programmes could be made more beneficial to Nigerians? Please specify.

APPENDIX F: INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT by Participant

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding ..... I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

P Esele

..... Date: 6/3/13

Signature of participant

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

P Esele

..... Date: 6/3/13

Signature of participant

Comrade Peter Esele

INFORMED CONSENT by Participant

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding ..... I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

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I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

Anumo Lee 01/03/013

.....

Signature of participant

Date: 01/03/013

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

Anumo Lee

.....

Signature of participant

Date: 01/03/013

INFORMED CONSENT by Participant

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding ..... I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

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I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

R Ampolabz
Signature of participant Date: 15/05/13.

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

R Ampolabz
Signature of participant Date: 15/05/13

INFORMED CONSENT by Participant

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding ..... I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

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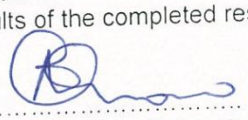
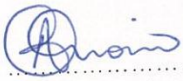


..... Date: 22/5/13

Signature of participant

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study



..... Date: 22/5/13.

Signature of participant

APPENDIX G: LETTER OF CREDENCE

Department of Sociology and Industrial Sociology

Block E
Office No.204
East London Campus

Ph: +27 43 704 7082| Fax: +27 86 628 2108
Email: lmdangayi@ufh.ac.za

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

05 December 2012

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir / Madam

DATA COLLECTION – REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

This letter serves to confirm that.....**Mr Joseph Jiboku....(Student No: 201210493**....) is a registered Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Sociology and Industrial Sociology, University of Fort Hare, East London campus.

He is currently collecting empirical data to enable him complete a research project, which is a major requirement for the degree.

We would greatly appreciate whatever assistance you can offer to enable him to successfully fulfill this important aspect of the degree requirements.

Please be assured that the data collected are strictly meant for academic purposes.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

DR. PHILANI MOYO
Head of Department

APPENDIX H: CORRESPONDENCE WITH FIELD SITES

Department of Sociology,
University of Fort Hare,
East London Campus,
South Africa.
1st March, 2013

The Director General,
NACCIMA,
PLOT 8A, Oba Akinjobi Road
GRA, Ikeja.
Lagos.

Dear Sir,

Request for Interview Session

I humbly request your kind participation in an interview session in your office on Multinational Corporations and Skills Development in Nigeria. This is a part of the process of collecting data for my PhD programme in Sociology at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa.

Attached are photocopies of my identity card, letter of introduction from the University and a sample of the interview schedule.

I look forward to your kind consideration.

Yours faithfully,

JOSEPH O. JIBOKU
080 3380 4375
Email- jibokujoe@yahoo.com

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL
NACCIMA
LAGOS

Rev. Sr. Victoria
Sunday 04/03/13

2012 student
University of Fort Hare
East London Campus
Student # 201210493
Name : MR JOSEPH OLUTOYIN JIBOKU
Degree: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIAL S
Residence
RSN:

NACCIMA
01-7612099

Department of Sociology,
University of Fort Hare,
East London Campus,
South Africa.
15 February, 2013

The Training Manager,
Lafarge Cement Wapco Nigeria,
Lagos.

Dear Sir,

Request for Interview and Questionnaire Sampling of Factory Workers

I humbly request your kind participation in an interview session in your office on Multinational Corporations and Skills Development in Nigeria. This is a part of the process of collecting data for my PhD programme in Sociology at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa.

Attached are photocopies of my identity card, letter of introduction from the University and a sample of the interview schedule.

I look forward to your kind consideration.

Yours faithfully,

JOSEPH O. JIBOKU
080 3380 4375
Email- jibokujoe@yahoo.com

LAFARGE CEMENT WAPCO NIG. PLC
7th Floor, Reception
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22 FEB 2013
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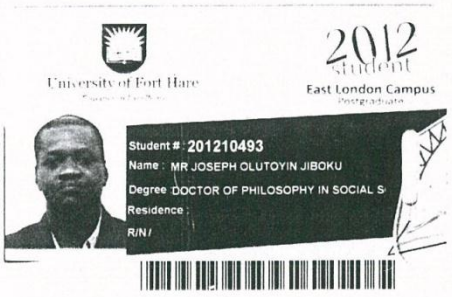
01-2713990



Department of Sociology,
University of Fort Hare,
East London Campus,
South Africa.
15 February, 2013

The Company Learning Manager,
Unilever Nigeria Plc.
Oregun,
Lagos.

Dear Sir,

Request for Interview and Questionnaire Sampling of Factory Workers

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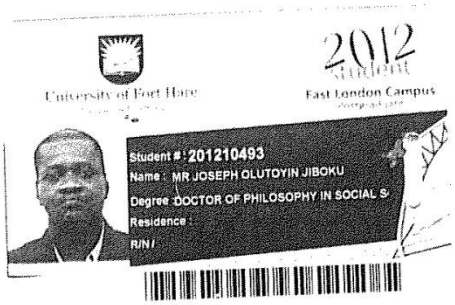
Yours faithfully,

JOSEPH O. JIBOKU
080 3380 4375
Email- jibokujoe@yahoo.com



Original copy received by Elunoluwa
22/02/13.

Department of Sociology
University of Fort Hare
East London Campus
South Africa
28th May, 2013

The Corporate Affairs Manager,
MTN Ngeria
Falomo, Lagos

Dear Sir,

Request for Interview

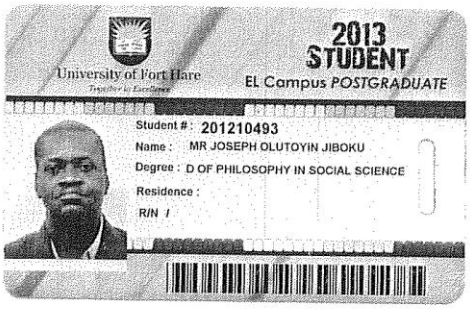
I humbly request your kind participation in an interview session in your office on Multinational Corporations and Skills Development in Nigeria. This is part of the process of collecting data for my PhD programme in Sociology at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. It would involve discussions on what, why and how MTN Nigeria carries out its **Training, Skills Development and Capacity Building** programmes in Nigeria.

Attached are photocopies of my identity card, letter of introduction from the University and a sample of the interview schedule.

I look forward to your kind consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph O. Jiboku
0803 380 4375
Email – jibokujoe@yahoo.com



Department of Sociology,
University of Fort Hare,
East London Campus,
South Africa.
1st March, 2013

The Director General,
Nigeria Employers Consultative Association,
PLOT A2, Akeem Balogun Street,
Alausa, Ikeja.
Lagos.

Original copy received by
Babalola Ayo
Ayo
6/3/2013
12.10pm.
01-7746352

Dear Sir,

Request for Interview Session

I humbly request your kind participation in an interview session in your office on Multinational Corporations and Skills Development in Nigeria. This is a part of the process of collecting data for my PhD programme in Sociology at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa.

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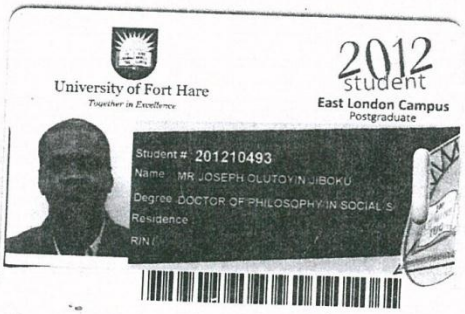


Department of Sociology
University of Fort Hare
East London Campus
South Africa
30th May, 2013

DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE ASCON
RECEIVED
30 MAY 2013
DUPLICATE
TOPO BADAGRY

The Director-General
ASCON
Topo – Badagry
Lagos

Dear Sir,

Request for Interview

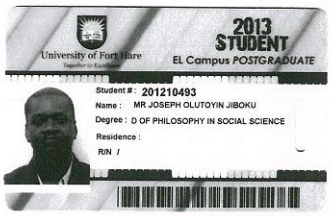
I humbly request your kind participation in an interview session in your office on Multinational Corporations and Skills Development in Nigeria. This is part of the process of collecting data for my PHD programme in Sociology at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. It would involve what, why and how ASCON carries out its **Training**, **Skills Development** and **Capacity Building** programmes in Nigeria.

Attached are photocopies of my Identity Card, letter of introduction from the University.

I look forward to your kind consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph O. Jiboku
0803 3380 4375
email- jibokujoe@yahoo.com



APPENDIX I : ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
  - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
  - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
  - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
  - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Gideon de Wet
Dean of Research

23 September 2014

APPENDIX J: EXPATRIATE QUOTA ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

(3) GRANT OF BUSINESS PERMIT/EXPATRIATE QUOTA POSITION

All applications by companies for Business Permit and expatriate Quota should be accompanied by the following documents:

(A) BUSINESS PERMIT

For only Joint Venture and wholly Foreign owned Companies.

(i) Completed Immigration Form T/1;

(ii) Certificate of Incorporation;

(iii) Memorandum and Article of Association;

(iv) Feasibility Report (should be certified or registered with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC)

(v) Corporate Affairs Commission's Form CAC 2.3 & 2.5 or CAC C02 & C07

(vi) Joint Venture Agreement for partnership venture between Nigerian and foreigners (original to be presented for sighting);

(vii) Company's Current Tax Clearance Certificate (Original to be presented for sighting);

(viii) Lease agreement for C of O for operating premises (original to be presented for sighting).

NOTE: For Business permit, the Authorized share capital must not be less than N10 Million in respect of each Company.

2.

(B) **GRANT OF EXPATRIATE QUOTA ONLY**
Same documents as in (a) above plus:

(i) Evidence of imported machinery, such as, Form M, Proforma invoice, Shipping documents and Clean Certificate of Inspection issued by Government appointed Pre-shippment Inspection Agents.

(ii) License / Permit / Certificate from relevant Government Agencies / department / Ministries for the operation or execution of project if company is engaged in oil services, health care services, fishing, mining, constructions (Work Registration Board), etc (original to be presented for sighting);

(iii) Evidence of work at hand, its duration and value attached to the contract(s) if the company is engaged in building, civil engineering, construction, etc (original to be presented for sighting);

(iv) Proposed annual salaries to be paid to the expatriates to be recruited indicating designation, names, jobs description and qualifications (CV and copies of credentials of expatriate to be attached).

(C) **RENEWAL OF EXPATRIATES QUOTA**

(i) Completed Immigration Form / T2,

(ii) Corporate Tax Clearance Certificate (original to be presented for sighting);

(iii) Current Tax Clearance Certificate of the expatriates (original to be presented for sighting);

(iv) Expatriate Quota Returns for the three months preceding the date of approval;

(v) Detailed Training programme for Nigerians;

(vi) List of Nigerians understudying expatriate on prescribed format showing date employed, qualification, etc;

(vii) List of Nigerian Senior/Management Staff showing names, designations, qualifications, salaries per annum;

(viii) Certified Current Audited Accounts; and

(ix) Annual income tax Clearance Certificate of the Expatriate staff (original to be presented fro sighting);

(D) **ADDITIONAL EXPATRIATE QUOTA**

Same documents as for renewal of expatriate quota plus:

(i) Evidence of acquired machinery or expansion if company is engaged in manufacturing in the form of Clean Certificate of inspection (CCI) issued by Government appointed Pre shipment inspection Agents;

(ii) Evidence of new contract if Company is engaged in construction/engineering and oil (original to be presented for Sighting) see b (ii) for guidance;

(iii) Evidence of acquired farm / factory if Company is engaged in agro-allied business (original to be presented for sighting).

(E) **RESTORATIONS OF QUOTA**

In applying for restoration, there must be reasons and proof for the reactivation and revitalizing the company i.e. previously depressed economy, increased demand for the Company's product / services and acquisition of new machinery i.e. Clean Certificate of Inspection (CCI)

issued by Government appointed Pre-shipment inspection AGENTS.

(F) **REDESIGNATION OF QUOTA**

In cases where a Company has difficulty in filling or owing to exigency of Operations, it is at liberty to apply for the re-designation of the affected position and this will be considered, purely on its own merit.

(G) **PERMANENT UNTIL REVIEWED QUOTA - (P.U.R)**

The main reason for the granting of P.U.R quota slot for which a Certificate would be issued, is to enable the foreign subscriber(s) adequately protect their interest and to give them a sense of greater commitment. The criteria and documents required for P.U.R are:

(i) Minimum share capital should be N10 Million

(ii) Appreciable net profit of which not less than N2 million has been paid as Corporate Tax (original to be presented for sighting);

(iii) Certified and Detailed Audited Account;

(iv) Certificate of Incorporation

(v) Monthly Returns of Expatriate Quota;

(vi) Company Organisation Structure; and

(vii) Individual Income tax Clearance Certificate of the expatriates (original to be presented for sighting).

NOTE: Other factors that would also be considered when