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Talent Management In The Ghanaian Gold Mining Industry: A Critical Exploration

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Abstract

Privatisation of Ghanaian state-owned enterprises has resulted in domination of Western multinational companies (MNCs) in the gold mining industry. Consequently, expatriate managers dominate industry. The Government of Ghana, realising the problem of national managerial gap in industry has made development of national managers pre-condition for granting of mining lease to MNCs entering the industry. This is an attempt to 'empower' national managers for eventual takeover from expatriates. The paper reports on a research project that sought to investigate the operation of MNCs in the gold mining industry of Ghana with respect to considering how their HR policies and practices are enhancing the development of local managerial talent. Twenty-six national managers were interviewed to collate views on their talent development (by MNCs) in industry. Resultant data discussed using critical discourse analysis, a problem identification of problem solving method based on text and language. Discussion of qualitative data reveals domination of Western ideas and practices in developing national managers – approach which does not go well with local managerial talent development. The paper concludes by recommending further research into managerial development approach that suits the Ghanaian context.

Introduction

In April 1983, Ghana embraced the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programme (SAP) and its privatisation policy. Throughout the adjustment period it was a central goal of the government of Ghana to promote the expansion of large scale gold mining in an effort to create an attractive investment

climate for multinational companies (MNCs). This led to review of policy and legislation applicable to the mining industry and subsequent promulgation of a new regulatory framework – The Mining and Mineral Law of 1986, PNDC Law 153, now the Minerals and Mining Law, 2006 (Act 703) (Amos, 2004; Awudi, 2004). It has also resulted in huge foreign direct investments (FDI) inflows into the gold mining sector and resultant influx of Western multinationals into the sector. The present state of ownership of gold mining companies in Ghana indicates this ‘subsidiarity’ control of vast mining concessions (Shima, 2004; Dansereau, 2005). Recently Eshun and Jellicoe (2011) revealed that not a single gold mining company is wholly owned by the government of Ghana and/or Ghanaian investors. With regard to managerial staff in the gold mining industry, privatisation has led to a drastic reduction in employment as MNCs believe that expatriate managers are more efficient than national managers to achieve organisational goals. This has resulted in greater percentage of expatriates in management compared to Ghanaian managers.

To equip national managers with the necessary competences and to empower them for eventual takeover of the management of industry, the development of national managers is a condition for granting of mining lease to foreign investors. National managerial development is therefore a legal requirement for MNCs as enshrined in the Minerals and Mining Law, 2006 (Act 703). Two significant provisions include a localisation plan (details of expatriate positions, and nationals to understudy these expatriates for eventual takeover) and expatriates quota (allowable number of expatriates in any company at any given time). The idea behind these two provisions is to eventually empower national managers (in terms of competences) to eventually take over the management of the industry. These are however not being implemented as required. While national managers believe that this is strategic device to disregard the localisation plan and expatriates quota and to dominate national managers, MNCs argue that local managers lack the experience and expertise that expatriates have to drive efficiency in the industry (Eshun and Jellicoe, 2011). The aim of this paper is to explore the current state of managerial talent development in the Ghana mining industry. We speculate that domination of the industry by western MNC is leading to a

suppression of the potential of national managers. We will proceed as follows. Firstly we will provide a brief overview of some of the key approaches to talent management. We will then outline our methods for an exploration of the working of HR policy within the industry for talent management, based on interviews with managers. Using critical discourse analysis, we then present some of the results before providing comments and recommendations.

Talent Management and Development

The issue of identifying and preparing the next generation of leadership talent is consistently cited by executives and boards as one of their most critical business priorities (Busine and Watt, 2005). During the 1990's and into the 2000s, many organisations were engaged in a 'war for talent' (Michaels et al, 2001) with a clear focus on finding staff of 'high potential' who could provide 'high performance' at work. The belief that there was a shortage of such staff resulted in policies of talent management to attract, develop and retain them. Further, according to a research by the Human Capital Practice of Deloitte (see Deloitte, 2005), the impending Baby Boomer retirements, widening skills gap driven by declining educational standards and outdated and ineffective approaches to talent management were combining forces to produce a 'perfect storm' that threatened the global business economy. Citing a survey involving 123 HR executives the research revealed that incoming workers with inadequate skills (70%); Baby Boomer retirements (61%); and inability to retain key talent (51%) combined to pose the greatest threats to business performance. Of course, these figures relate to the years just before another 'storm' arrived, in the form of the banking and financial crisis which triggered the greatest economic recession to hit the global economy since 1931.

Nevertheless Buhler (2008) suggested talent shortage will impact every organisation without regard to industry especially managerial talent, and explains that this stems from the fact that the skills set possessed by available workers may not match the

advanced, more complex skills required by businesses. Buhler then advised that organisations should take specific initiatives now to better position themselves to meet the challenges of the talent shortage. Charan (2010) emphasises the need for talent management where talent is the differentiator between companies that succeed and those that don't. He argues that "if businesses managed their finances as loosely as they manage their talent development, most would go bankrupt" (p.24). Charan implies that businesses do not attach the needed seriousness to their talent development as they do to their finances and/or other aspects of business that they believe give them competitive advantage. However, developing people's talent should be seen as the whole of a company since products are all time-perishable but the only thing that stays is the development of skills and capabilities in our people. Therefore, as revealed by Ashton and Morton (2005), getting the right people in pivotal roles at the right time should be nothing new to HR professionals, but done differently, talent management can create long-term organisational success and this is very important – creating a talent mindset in organisations.

The global recession, especially in the US and Europe, has tended to alter the focus of talent management towards developing talent in-house and strengthening relationships (Tansley et al, 2007; CIPD 2009). In the UK, recent surveys show a decline in organisations undertaking talent management activities but in those that do, around 40% take a broad view of talent but most tend to focus exclusively on senior managers and leaders (CIPD 2012). This perhaps reflects what might be seen as the dominant view of talent within western cultures, where there is a preference to emphasise the individuality of key people assume to be necessary for organisation success (Groysberg 2010). This has the consequence of identifying those individuals who are considered 'high potential' and/or 'high performing' (IDS 2010) who can then join the 'talent pool' feeding the 'talent pipeline' and become entitled to take advantage of talent management activities. Alternatively, but just as individualised, is the approach that starts from the question, 'what are the key positions that are needed to meet the strategy?' (Bratton and Gold, 2013). Huselid *et al* (2005), for example, consider 'A' positions, filled by 'A' players as refer to strategically critical jobs. Improving

performance by 'A' players in 'A' positions is assumed to have a more than proportionate impact on overall organisation performance.

A more inclusive approach widens the scope for talent management giving attention, for example to the organisation of work in teams and groups. Because more people are included in talent activities, the chances of demotivation which can occur in with exclusive approaches are diminished (Groysberg et al 2004; CIPD 2012). It also allows more attention to be given to relationships of co-operation, goodwill and trust and accessing networks both within and outside organisations – referred to as social capital development (McCullum and O'Donnell 2009; Collings and Mellahi 2009).

While talent management has generally been considered from a US and western Europe perspective, our interest is in Western Africa, specifically the mining industry of Ghana. As we have indicated this industry has been dominated by western MNCs, who believe that expatriate managers are more efficient than national managers to achieve organisational goals resulting in higher management positions allocated to expatriates. This suggests that the individualist focus inherent in most talent management practices is likely to continue. But this also comes at a price. From his study of ethnicity and human resource management practice in sub-Saharan Africa, Nyambegera (2002) revealed that talent management was a necessary tool for MNCs operating in Africa and explained that 'the ethnic diversity found in African organisations has played a role in excluding talented and capable people' (p.1078). He therefore argues that there is the need for Africa to move away from approaches of 'exclusion' and embrace the 'inclusion' of those qualified regardless of ethnic affiliation.

More generally in Africa, talent management and development for the indigenous population tends to reinforce a low skills and low income economy. This is the outcome of the work of Debrah and Ofori (2006), assessing the human resource development needs of Tanzania, which revealed that funding for national human resource training programme focused on low level skills training as means of reducing unemployment

because professionals and other higher level employees were considered privileged and therefore able to develop themselves in their careers.

Western MNCs in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa are likely to individualise the talent management process around expatriate managers and this compounds the exclusion of not only local managers but also the suppression of their potential to become leaders and managers in the future. Further, and this is crucial, it is culturally oppressive for local managers and the workforce as a whole. For example, if we make use of the work by Hofstede, (1980) on the influence of national culture values in the workplace, it can be shown that Ghana's scores contrast sharply with western countries (See Table 1).

Table 1: Scores of Cultural Dimensions

Cultural Dimensions	Individualism (IDV)	Power Distance Index (PDI)	Masculinity (MAS)	Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)	Long-Term Orientation (LTO)
	Degree to which personal needs are valued over the needs of the group	Amount of perceived power differential between authority figures and subordinates	Tough values such as competition and achievement, versus tender values such as interpersonal relationships	Degree of comfort one has with ambiguous or risky situation versus situation in	Orientation toward savings, thrift, and future plans versus a need for immediate gratification

			and care for others	which the outcome is assured	
USA	91	40	62	46	29
UK	89	35	66	35	25
Australia	90	36	61	51	31
World Average	43	55	50	64	45
Ghana	16	76	42	55	12

Source: http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.php

The importance of these differences is how national cultural dimensions have translated into work values which have resulted in western talent management and HRM practices generally dominating in the Ghanaian gold mining industry. This dominance tendency has created a neglect of Ghanaian cultural values and practices that shape the behaviour of the indigenous people and have significant influence on TM practices. As a result, Ghanaian workers tend not to mobilise their full strength and potential because they are not fully connected to the business. This is in part because Ghanaian cultures have not been integrated into the workplace and existing corporate cultures are foreign to most Ghanaian workers. There is therefore isolation and exclusiveness of the Ghanaian traditional values in industry (Mthembu, 1996). Our purpose in this research is to begin a critical exploration of TM in Ghana's mining industry as a step along the road to a model of TM that shows appreciation for the work values of Ghana, its managers and its workforce.

Our Research and Methodology

Due to privatisation in the mining industry, national managerial staff has been drastically reduced on the expense of expatriate managers who are believed to be more

competent. It is argued that successful development of national managers, equipped with the relevant expertise will be pivotal part of the industry as their managerial skills and expertise are key local resources and capabilities to industry (Amankwah-Amoah and Debrah, 2011) because these unlock the potential of managers who can efficiently implement strategic goals of the individual local organisations (Walumbwa, Aviola and Aryee, 2011). However, as a leading industry in Ghana, TM in gold mining seems be focused on an exclusive expatriate group.

This paper reports on findings of a research project that sought to investigate the operation of MNCs in the gold mining industry of Ghana with respect to considering how their TM policies and practices are enhancing or restricting the development of local managerial talent. Our expectation is informed by the view that the privatisation of Ghanaian gold mining companies, the inflow of FDIs and the subsidiarity of Ghanaian businesses have all resulted in the domination of Western HRM policies and practices in Ghana. Therefore the introduction and implementation of the SAP policies introduced by the World Bank/IMF and their conditionalities are regarded and accepted as a new form of colonialism in decolonised states (Yew, 2002). The policies adopted by Western MNCs in Ghana's mining industry turns out to be policies of strong Western companies seeking economic hegemony over the independent nations. Because it was with great reluctance that the colonial masters granted independence to their erstwhile colonies from where they had held total control for generations that had enabled them to exploit human and material resources (Salisu, 2010), the use of this different form of colonisation is to enable the ex-colonisers to re-dominate as portrayed by the ownership and management of Ghanaian gold mining companies.

We speculate that this neo-colonisation concept (Banerjee and Linstead, 2004) has resulted in the domination of Western HRM policies and practices in the industry. Further, we speculate that this dominance tendency has created a neglect of Ghanaian cultural values and practices that shape the behaviour of the indigenous people and have significant influence on HRM practices. This Western dominance versus the neglect

of Ghanaian cultural practices creates tension in the implementation of HRM policies and practices. This research therefore employs post-colonial methodology to tackle the neo-colonial influence in industry.

We gathered data through interviews from 26 national HRM managers in four Ghanaian subsidiaries of MNC mining companies, the results from which were transcribed before analysis. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was the main qualitative data analysis method. CDA has become an increasingly popular method in organisation and management studies (Phillips et al 2008) and this useful and productive qualitative methodology (Smith, 2007) is applied to explore managerial talent development situations. Using qualitative interview results produced by HRM managers in the industry we examined talent management texts and their power effects and marginalisation defects. CDA is problem identification and problem solving as it combines relational and dialectical elements (negative critique to diagnose a problem) and positive critique to identify unrealised possibilities of tackling the problem (Fairclough, 2001). The method strives to recognise cultural regularities in participants' accounts in order to examine the phenomenon studied at a macro-sociological level (Talja, 1999). This major tenet of discourse analysis suits the purpose of this paper as we consider the gold mining industry through individual managers' accounts and interpretations, which are context-dependent and variable.

Analysis of Interview Data

Fairclough (2001) outlined an analytical framework for CDA which is problem identification and problem solving and based on analysis of interviews and text as well as recorded talk (Silverman, 2006). The framework, which informs this analysis, is considered in stages by Fairclough (2001). The five stages of the CDA framework are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Analytical Framework for CDA

1. Focus upon a social problem which has semiotic aspects
2. Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through the analysis of
 - a. the network of practices it is located within;
 - b. the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular discourse concerned; and
 - c. the discourse (the semiosis itself)
3. Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense 'needs' the problem
4. Identify possible ways past the obstacles
5. Reflect critically on the analysis (1-4)

Source: Fairclough (2001)

Stage 1: Focus upon a social problem which has semiotic aspects

At this stage of analysis, the approach is problem-based. Here, CDA is seen as social science aimed at highlighting the problem of talent development confronting national managers in the gold mining industry. This problem takes the form of social life and people contributing resources in tackling the problem. This means going outside the text (the main object of analysis) to source resources that help make sense of its social context. These outside resources mean soliciting broad perspective about a social problem. The aspect of people contributing resources to tackle the problem is highlighted in the text in the form of participants' anger against the Minerals Commission who is in charge of valuable resource (the Law) that needs to be

implemented towards solution of talent development problem in industry, and MNCs' unwillingness to respect the localisation plan and expatriate quota provisions.

The Minerals Commission is not enforcing this so we keep on replacing Ghanaian positions with expatriates.

The social problem analysed from CDA perspective should have semiotic effect thus, there should be meaning-making that is reflected in social practice (Fairclough, 2001). Therefore, there should be dialectical relationship between semiosis (including language) and other constituents of social practice. Semiosis is produced in three broad ways in social practice (Fairclough, 2001). Firstly, semiosis is enacted as part of social activity within a practice. This means social practice is produced through language (including talk and text) and other forms such as body language and visual images (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). Producing the people development policies in the individual mining companies; identifying and selecting potentials; running training programmes; communicating talent expectations, actions and feedbacks are indications of social activities that are enacted through language. One example of semiosis enacted as part of the talent development process which relates to identification of potentials is given in the following:

'Selection of potentials should be based on job analysis and what goes into it to match with the competencies required for the job. Through our regular performance management some people will emerge and these targeted if they fit into the competencies of the key job requirements.'

Secondly, semiosis figures in representations. Social actors within any practice produce representations of practices of others, and reflexive representations of their own practices. Participants' narrations; views and criticisms of World Bank/IMF policies on SAP; policies and implementation of managerial development programmes by MNCs; and implementation of the Minerals and Mining Law, 2006 by the Minerals Commission are instances of representations, while the production of participants' own experiences,

expectations and interactions with the researcher during interviews are examples of reflexive representations. For instance, participants have positively associated themselves with the policy and therefore no indications of advocating for a better alternative, as summed up in the quotation:

'The question however is, so if we don't agree to privatise what else do we do?'

Thirdly, semiosis figures in identity as shown in the performance of those in the practice as distinguished from the performance of those outside the practice. This is linked to the social actors. For instance, due to similar cultural and national identities, participants produced similar activities, giving similar history and expectations of employee development in industry.

Stage 2: Identify obstacles to it being tackled

This stage involves the diagnosis of the problem indirectly. Questions that arise at this stage include; what obstacles make the problem difficult to tackle; and which social life presents itself and poses resistance to solving the problem (Fairclough, 2001)? With regard to the first question, it is revealed that the text relating to talent development is situated in one practice which is part of network of practices that constitute management of the gold mining industry. However, the gold mining industry is part of the wider mining industry, which forms part of the economy of Ghana, a concern of the government which is also connected to outside bodies and organisations. This means the gold mining industry is situated within a wider network of practices which goes beyond the boundaries of Ghana to include other sponsored organisations such as the World Bank/IMF and foreign direct investors. Considering this network that forms the chain of social practices, the talent development problem is locked into a strong network, thus developing a powerful obstacle to tackling the talent development problem. Aspect of this strong network is exposed in the following quotation:

'Philosophically, mining companies are different – different shareholders; different principles; different values so having integration is a major challenge. ...Remember we are an international company not a Ghanaian one. So to change in Ghana means going to be changed in American, Australian, and Brazilian mines. It will not work because they draw these policies and practices from corporate philosophies so will require the integration of holding companies and that's a big task.'

The second question brings to the fore the way in which Western domination has marginalised national managerial staff in the domain of talent development. This is revealed in part by the disparities that exist between expatriates and national managers as the following quotation indicates:

'Our advocacy in the first place questions the disparities between expatriates and Ghanaians. ...The national manager-expatriate cost ratio is roughly 1:7, meaning that with one expatriate employed, the company can employ seven Ghanaians in the same position doing similar job.'

Fairclough identifies two forms of interactional analysis, of which the first form is more suitable here as the second one relates to other forms of language such as visual images which are not prominent in this analysis. This first inter-discursive analysis looks at the interactions that exist and link together different genres, styles and discourses. This is because it is assumed that an interaction (or text in the case of this paper) is considered as a blend of these elements which Farrelly (2010) describes as important aspects of practice and critical focus of CDA. These elements open up for a critical examination of necessary aspects of practice that are sometimes taken for granted (Fairclough, 2003). These are further considered in the ensuing sections.

Genre

This is a form of action that language takes when speaking or writing (Farrelly, 2010). The interview process and transcribed text can be seen as genres because they are recognisable forms of texts which are analysed to help find solution to the talent development problem. As a way of acting and the relationships that generate, the genres create networking of Western hegemony, Ghanaian cultural practices and talent development. If genre is seen as action (Fairclough, 2001), then it can be asked who is doing what? Who is the recipient? And under what circumstances? CDA can give general view of what relate and which are networked together.

Style

The second element is style – the way of being that speaking or writing entails (Fairclough, 2003), including how people themselves behave or appear or what they do not like about others, which could be followed by criticism. As text for this analysis is given through speech, style includes determination of characteristics of interviewees such as being authoritative, humble, receptive etc. Various styles emerged in the course of interviewing. Participants expressed mixed-feeling – happiness and frustration. They were happy when management development programme was initiated as a step towards the localisation agenda. They however became frustrated when the programme was terminated mid-way, therefore leading to many of the national managers involved in the programme leaving the company. This mixed-feeling also reveals criticism of the programme by the national managers as demonstrated by the following text:

'I was enthused when I joined the company because of the localisation agenda: identification of high fliers to succeed expatriate managers. This gave birth to management development programme that I was part. After completing the programme the next stage was not implemented; as increasingly deliberate agenda to frustrate the potential national managers who will succeed expatriate managers to establish this localisation agenda. ...Many that became frustrated have left the company.'

Participants also portrayed fear and anxiety about not growing in respective companies if managerial development programmes were not approved and implemented; fear of never rising if deliberate attempt to frustrate national managers continued, as revealed below:

'Ghanaian managers promoted to West African sub-region and you will be given a small office somewhere and you will have nobody to report to and you don't report to anybody or you report to everybody. So what happens is the guy becomes frustrated and the next day he resigns and leaves.'

Participants expressed irresponsibility on the part of management to cut down the numbers of expatriates, who are regarded more competent than their local counterparts, ideology disputed by participants as exemplified by the following:

'Unfortunately, Ghanaians that are seen as incompetent to work with MNCs in Ghana are going outside to work in other mining companies. If Ghanaians are incompetent working in their own country how can they be competent working in foreign countries?'

There is however a different idea regarding the readiness of national managers to perform like their expatriate counterparts:

'That a national could have technical competencies but how to blend the varying expertise ...in this case, an expatriate needs to be recruited and the national understudy him. So, over time when the national has been able to acquire the total competencies then it becomes fair that the nod is given to the national.'

Discourses

The third element deals with the way in which part of the world is represented, or imagined when one speaks or writes. The concept of discourse helps understand the way as a society, we tend to both organise and be organised by our use of language (Farrelly, 2010). All practices are means of production because they are arenas within which social life is produced (Fairclough, 2001). The lives of the national managers (the indigenous people) are represented through different discourses of different social actors and taking forms of social practices and each of these practices relating to different positions of social actors. The application of different terms and models of developing talent; the various approaches proposed; variations in styles of developing managers in industry are all clearly situated inside discourses, because the word 'discourse' is used to refer to the whole process of social interaction or practice (Moufahim et al., 2007). Various discourses as revealed in the interview data are presented in subsequent sections.

a. Linguistic Dimension

Discourse as concept helps understand the way we tend to both organise and be organised by our use of language, and choice of words helps understand position of participants. Recurring words and phrases such as 'potential', 'retention', 'localisation policy', 'critical' etc are cognitive macro-structures that serve as an important strategic cue to inform their interests in, and relevance of the situation. They announce straightforward industry's positioning strategy to see the national managerial development agenda followed and their dislike for attempts to frustrate the programme:

'Expatriates coming in as corporate social responsibility manager to be based in Accra [regional office] – unnecessary and a way of frustrating the localisation agenda.'

b. Ambiguity of discourse

Use of certain words, phrases and sentences suggest certain degree of ambiguity or lack of clarity. These range from the definition of talent and talent development;

interpretation of 'regional positions' and lack of clarity about the provisions of the Minerals and Mining Law, as the quotation below shows the lack of clarity with regard to which management positions cannot be occupied by national managers:

'The policy is fine, the Law is there but it has to go deeper than we have now. The Law should be able to explain a lot of things but not just interpretation of what talent management is about. It should be able to tell which managerial positions need to be localised, and should be able to define which are regional positions and why can't Ghanaians occupy them.'

c. Counter discourse

One of the important aspects of CDA analysis is looking at the everyday background in addition to the historical, economic, cultural and political environments in which data (language and practice) are produced (Irving and English, 2008; Prentice, 2010) so that how text is produced reveals the society in which it is produced. Looking at the setting in which text is produced – by indigenous people – there is counter discourse. The language used, knowledge of the subject, and the text produced are in sharp contrast to the knowledge and practices of indigenous (Ghanaian) workers who are thought to be marginalised, dominated and who are affected by the problem which is the focus of the research. Individual discourses rather depict educated people who are well-informed about the problem and whose choice and expression of words depict rather modern and Western individuals. Though they portray these features through language, a line of distinction is drawn between them and Western expatriates through power and domination:

'Will the person investing their money be ready to allow the Ghanaian to manage? If this question can be positively answered then we can drive the talent development concept. If not talent development will be difficult to work in the mining industry.'

National managers therefore become controlled participants or onlookers in the context of their development instead of agency to resist power to heighten their influence to change (van Dijk, 1993). As the quotation above shows this line of distinction makes national managers less powerful to put their (Western) knowledge and exposure to use in tackling the talent problem as they lack power in the form of controlled access to discourse.

d. Discursive innovation

Texts reveal statements that crystallise key ideas about priorities for talent development process. Such discursive innovations (Vaara, Sorsa and Palli, 2010) highlight new ideas. One such discursive innovation is the statement that talents once identified are considered 'raw' and need to be developed to the standard required by the organisation, no matter how skilful they are. This is described in the text as follows:

'No matter how talented you are before joining a company your talent could be described as raw because the work ethics through which the talent is portrayed may not meet the standard in the new organisation.'

The statement generates new idea in talent development about new and unrealised priorities. This shows central idea in the meaning of talent development as no talent can be used without further development, making the talent development concept inevitable in industry. This reveals two ideas; 1) how talents should be treated, and 2) the need for talent development programme as even potentials, high fliers, stars are subject to further development.

e. Strategic devices

One of the rhetorical devices and narrative strategies (Moufahim et al., 2007) of the talent development discourse is the narration of the situation and struggle of what participants put as "what the Law wants it to be" are expressed in a clear 'us' and 'them' dichotomy. For instance, participants expressing views on the relevant skills required to

effectively manage the gold mining industry believe that 'we' (Ghanaians) lack the skills that 'they' (expatriates) need to provide:

'So, in the view that some skills are not bound here we will need their expertise.'

Also, the national managers see regional positions as a deliberate move to perpetuate expatriate presence. This is strategy of continuous victimisation of national managers through power domination despite the Law to reverse this. Referred to as avoidance strategy (Moufahim et al., 2007), this could be seen as a strategy to avoid preparing national managers to eventually take over from expatriates, which the localisation policy seeks to achieve. This for instance is expressed as:

'Many of them [expatriates] come here for a number of years, would not have trained the Ghanaians to take over. Sometimes they think the Ghanaians are not ready; sometimes to perpetuate their stay, so anything to stop Ghanaians taking over is what the Law seeks to prevent.'

Another strategic device is the narration of Minerals Commission's unwillingness to implement the localisation policy and some national managers' refusal to approve developmental programmes of other national managers, notwithstanding the fact that two senior managers, including the expatriate vice president had already given their approvals. All these are vivid instances of reversal strategy (van Dijk, 1993) where some national managers and the Minerals Commission whose duties go towards tackling and solving the talent development problem are rather found guilty of perpetuating the suffering of the people.

f. Power and hegemony dynamic

Discourse produces power and hegemony dynamic between expatriates and national managers. There is the assumption that expatriate managers are knowledgeable and

skilled; nationals therefore regarding themselves as human resource secondary to expatriates and creating low status of power. The discourse that there are some national managers who can perform equally or even better than expatriates given the required training may further create conflict which may illuminate the feeling of powerlessness as, to achieve this standard, national managers will have to exhibit excellent performance and/or develop knowledge for their voices to be heard. Development and elevation of nationals will shift power to themselves. However, despite phrases as 'equity', 'teamwork', 'colleagues' which are gradually weakening dominance and hegemony, power remains dominant in Western subsidiaries in industry. Hegemonic discourse is produced through differences in conditions of service between expatriates and national managers doing similar job. Domination is also seen in the form of control of access to discourse which van Dijk (1993) termed as discourse dominance. Selecting and communicating to only those tagged as 'potentials' or 'stars' for the talent process and also keeping the talent process information from those selected for the programme suggest discourse dominance that tends to discriminate against or exclude other employees from the process:

'Those selected should not be informed. They should be observed, and only informed when they are due for the role ...so as not to put up the behaviour directed towards the talent programme on the expense of their normal job schedule.'

Another instance of discourse that illuminates power and domination is the unwillingness of MNCs to allow Ghanaians to take up higher managerial roles branded 'regional positions' because the responsibilities of such roles extend beyond the boundaries of Ghana. The Minerals Commission however insists that these positions should be open to Ghanaians as well since remunerations for such positions are generated from operations in Ghana.

g. Discursive construction of national identity

National identity is understood as the feeling to belong to a certain imagined community (Hernandez, 2008) and members of the community believe to have national uniqueness that distinguishes them from other nations. 'National managers' are thus understood to be those who have feelings of having the distinctiveness of being Ghanaians as are differentiated from managers of mining companies in other countries. Phrases such as 'expatriates perpetuating their stay'; 're-colonisation by both expatriates and Ghanaian elites' are all discourses that weaken the national identity which is constructed and conveyed in discourse. Such words and phrases as 'we', 'our', 'Ghanaian managers' are discourses intended to strengthen national identity:

'We believe that Ghana as a country with dedicated mining university which has been in existence for over 20 years should not be a place where expatriates should be in large numbers ..in our companies.'

Stage 3: Does social order in a sense 'needs' the problem?

This stage is concerned with being able to establish through critique that the social order generates the problem, which it actually 'needs' in order to sustain itself (Fairclough, 2001). Once this is established then CDA contributes to the rationale for fundamental social change. In this regard, does the Western dominance in the gold mining industry need the quietness over the development of national managers to sustain itself? If non-development of talent of national managers is not seen as a problem, the non-solution of which helps sustain Western hegemony then it does not generate need for social change and therefore no rationale for CDA application:

'I am not pleased with the idea of regional positions and perpetuation of expatriates in such positions.'

As the quotation illustrates, the phrase 'I am not pleased' denotes problem and 'perpetuation of expatriates' is seen as sustaining this social order and therefore forms a rationale for social change. This is linked to power and dominance as the problem (to the local people) is considered by the powerful as a way of sustaining the power which

degenerates into domination (of the powerful) and marginalisation (of the powerless). van Dijk (2001) regards power in critical work on discourse as social power, which is sustained through control, or social force (Wodak, 2009). Thus, people have power if they are able to control the minds and acts of members of another group, especially persuasive power based on knowledge or authority and part integrated in law.

When power is produced through control or social force, the relationship between power and domination becomes increasingly positive while suffering of the marginalised becomes increasingly deepened. FDIs especially into developing economies; internationalisation of businesses; and 'subsidiarisation' of Third World economies by Western corporations are seen as important parts of the new social order enacted in power and domination that contribute to the talent development problem of national managers. CDA and its emancipatory power seek to unveil the hidden effects of the power relations, domination and control (Moufahim et al., 2007). Identification and meanings of the various elements of power and control show attempts to sustain the power through control of the various talent development processes with little inputs from the indigenous people being developed.

Stage 4: Identify possible ways past the obstacle

In general terms, this is the problem solving stage of the analysis, which Fairclough (2001) describes as the stage that the analysis moves from negative to positive critique thus, searching for unrealised possibilities of effecting change. In this vein, this analysis moves to exploring if the interview text portrays any contradictions in the social order. Gaps or contradictions in respect of Western domination is revealed by the MNCs' move towards development programmes for national managers thereby creating division between 'is' and 'should be' of dominant representation. The contradictions are not only in their domination ('is') and accepting to initiate some management development programmes ('should be') but also refusing to implement the programme to the latter. This positive critique and ability to effect change form strong relationship that produces both resistance and different types of interactions in the discourse:

'You wouldn't believe that sometimes when a Ghanaian resigns the position is replaced with an expatriate. In some cases you have two expatriates replacing the Ghanaian... It is something that needs to be tackled at government level.'

As the above quotation illustrates, the MNCs are not willing to implement the localisation plan, therefore resisting the social change. Resistance to social change is usually put forward by the powerful group who do this in order to sustain their dominance. However, the marginalised and powerless can also resist the power and domination, as any configuration of power/knowledge creates its own particular room for resistance (Irving and English, 2008). Resistance by the powerless is expressed in:

'Now we say that let's wake up and develop our talents and keep them.'

Some obstacles or resistance to the problems have been identified. At this point, CDA with its discourse-historical approach draws the analysis towards examination of the following to clearly identify the possible ways past the obstacles.

First, what are the causes or background to the problem. These are informed by privatisation policy resulting in MNCs presence in the Ghanaian private sector notably the mining industry; alienation of Ghanaian culture in designing and implementing HR policies and practices in industry; and Ghanaian government agencies' approach to the implementation of the Law on developing national managers in industry. These multiple factors reflect the complex network that the managerial talent development problem is situated. The social actors present include the World Bank/IMF, senior management of MNCs in industry; and the government of Ghana through the Minerals Commission.

Second, who are responsible for solution? This is mostly dependent on adhering to the Law on developing local managers in mining companies; senior management's willingness to develop nationals to take over from expatriates; and national managers'

resistance to the social order and opening up for their emancipation. Social actors here therefore include the senior management; the government through the Minerals Commission; HR and Training and Development Managers who implement the employee development programmes of companies. Though national managers agitate for their development, implementation of the process depends mostly on the Minerals Commission and senior management in industry. Discourses reveal that not only the expatriates resist the change, but also nationals who have the power to influence and implement the process. This is portrayed in a narration that national HR manager failed to approve the development programme of a national manager notwithstanding the fact that two more senior managers, including the expatriate vice president and general manager had already signed to approve.

Third, how can the talent development problem solution be achieved? Various discourses represent moves for empowerment of the local people. Texts such as developing locals to take over from expatriates; Mineral Commission to do more to enforce localisation plan and expatriate quota; regional positions to open to local managers, all represent agitation for power shift and also illuminate how power has been enacted and sustained (Moufahim et al., 2007). However, discourse reveals reverse power as not all the locals (the less powerful group) are always dominated by the powerful group. This means local managers agitating for power already have some levels of power. For instance, local people decide on the quota of expatriates in companies based on size and number of years in existence; local people are in positions such as heads of department and HR managers who have power to make and implement decisions including those on talent development; employees have the power (freedom) to leave a company even after going through the talent process.

Stage 5: Reflect critically on the analysis

The fifth and final stage of the analytical framework illuminates the (social) emancipatory power of CDA (Prentice, 2010). The analysis reflects on itself and raises the question of how effective it has been as critique of the situation using the discursive techniques to contribute to social emancipation of the dominated. This reflection of the

hegemony requires evaluation of interaction discourses of all social actors, particularly the national managers and senior management of MNCs who are mostly Western expatriates. The following questions therefore arise.

Firstly, are the senior management of MNCs resisting the social change and therefore perpetuating the social order? 'Subsidiarity' of the gold mining sector by the Western multinationals through the privatisation policy is by law, and therefore legitimate practice. Law also enjoins MNCs in the course of the 'subsidiarity' process to develop national managers to eventually take over management of the companies. Domination of Western multinationals on the expense of use of local talent form the social order, and national managers agitate for a change towards their development. There are discourses that point to resistance to this social change. Firstly, MNCs fail to observe the expatriate quotas and continue to fill positions with expatriates. It is believed that some of these positions can be filled by nationals. The situation is believed to be fuelled by the Minerals Commission's inability to implement the localisation plan and expatriate quota policy.

Also, reserving some positions as 'regional positions' and therefore not accessible to nationals is a way of resisting the change. This justifies why Ghanaians cannot be made to occupy them because the roles do not only cover Ghanaian operations:

'Newmont explained that regional positions extend beyond the borders of Ghana and are therefore not solely Ghana positions.'

The government (through the Minerals Commission) however refutes this strategic device:

'But we insist that once salaries to these positions are derived from operations in Ghana, regional positions should also be for nationals.'

These discourses clearly illustrate the struggle for implementation of the talent process and insistence on expatriates' power and control.

Secondly, are there any discursive evidence of the national managers' (the dominated) willingness to, and acceptance of the change, and is this seen as their emancipation? There are passages in the text that suggest not only the national managers' willingness and acceptance of the managerial development initiative, but also their agitation to see it implemented to the latter. Realisation of the change, they believe, depends on the MNCs' willingness to invest in the talent process and also observe the expatriate quota provisions. It even goes beyond development to embrace retention to achieve the ultimate aim of the localisation policy – to have competent people who can take over from expatriates:

'Every company should have its own retention strategy. If you don't manage properly, forget because you will train them and they will leave the system.'

Thirdly, how does it reflect in the researcher's positioning in academic practice? Reflecting (critically) on the analysis re-enacts Fairclough's (2001) belief that academics should rethink how they carry out research by linking directly with activists agitating for social change that the research seeks to effect. The national managers in industry who are victims of power and domination, and who agitate for emancipation have been involved, their views collated, as well as other associate individuals and organisations, which constitute the main text for this analysis.

Summary and Further Research

Discussion of the qualitative data results reveals both general theory and how discourse figures as an aspect of social practice and analytical concept in industry. It also exposes how social power abuse, domination and inequality are produced, reproduced and opposed by text and talk in the context of national managerial talent development in Western multinational subsidiaries in Ghana. Also regarded as analytical tool (Baker et

al., 2008), CDA produces a general framework for tackling the managerial talent development problem.

Various discourses show attempts by MNCs to sustain power through control of the various talent development processes with little inputs from the indigenous people being developed. Even when they attempt to defuse the dominance, this is done with resistance thus depicting efforts to sustain the power. This blurs the line between what they are required to do and what they want to do. For instance, MNCs are willing to develop national managers by putting in place management development programmes. They however refuse to implement the programme to the latter. Although the move is made there is lack of clarity and unwillingness to fully adhere to the requirements of the localisation plan. These are indications of moves to sustain the social order in the face of national managers' agitation for social change to empower them for eventual takeover of management of industry – the main idea behind the localisation agenda. Results of data expose Western ideas and values which offer less recognition for Ghanaian cultural practices in the talent development process.

A key finding is Western ideas and practices in developing national managers that are alien and therefore need for talent management actions and practices that are based on Ghanaian cultural practices and values that national managers are familiar with. The paper concludes that though it has succeeded in revealing current situation in industry with regard to national managerial talent development, this is not conclusive. It rather breaks grounds for further work towards 'empowerment' of national managers in industry to achieve the ultimate aim of the localisation policy, which is to have competent nationals who can take over from expatriates. These Western ideas and practices could be localised – based on indigenous Ghanaian practices and traditional learning methods – to build talent development model to fit the Ghanaian context.

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