Implementation of Strategic Alliance in Weak Institutional Context. (A Case study of Multinational Companies in the Food and Beverage Sector in Nigeria)

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Implementation of Strategic Alliance in Weak Institutional Contexts.

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Acknowledgement and Dedication

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background/Motivation

Why and how do some firms perform better than others? This question has been at the forefront of research in strategy and strategic management. While this academic enquiry is ongoing, the global business environment has become more uncertain and unpredictable for organisations (Abbasi et al., 2015). Hence, business and institutional managers and leaders must think quickly and learn to act strategically (Obeidat et al., 2016; Masa'deh et al., 2017). A company's strategy helps it achieve its objectives (Obeidat et al., 2017) and prevent lost opportunities (Slater et al., 2010). Specifically, the strategy of a company covers areas such as operations, market positioning and market penetration (Rammal and Rose, 2014; Altamony et al., 2016). The thrust of a company's strategy aims to build and strengthen the company's long-term competitive position and financial performance, which enables it gain a competitive advantage over rivals (Kash et al., 2014; Masiero et al., 2017). Similarly, companies' strategic management processes must be adaptable to environmental changes (Obeidat et al., 2016; Alenezi et al., 2015), thus making strategy work an arduous task (Obeidat, 2008; El-Masri et al., 2015). Indeed, nine out of ten firms fail to implement their strategic plans for many reasons (Charan and Colvin, 1999). In this regard, for many companies, strategic failure occurs because limited time is devoted to implementation (Bolboli and Reiche, 2013).

Strategy implementation is the process that drives the strategies and plans of a company (Obeidat *et al*., 2017); a process that is as important or even more important than formulating the company strategy (Sage, 2015; Balarezo and Nielsen, 2017). Given the importance, it is unsurprising that strategy implementation is referred to as the most complicated and time-consuming aspect of Strategic management (Bell et al., 2010). Therefore, it is important that strategists understand how companies achieve their successes (Keseoglu *et al*., 2018; Wright and Stigliani, 2013). Previous studies have focused on this question from perspectives of a process and content-oriented approach. Researchers such as Hoskisson *et al*. (2013), Jensen *et al*. (2015) and Lin & Wu (2014) studied the content-oriented approach by investigating the best strategies, resources, and competencies a company should have to gain a competitive advantage. While other researchers (e.g Babafemi, 2015; Beyene, Sheng, & Wei, 2016; Bisbe and Malagueño, 2012) focused on the process-oriented approach, which involves discussing how and when strategies for success should be formulated, implemented and evaluated.

As a result, a significant amount of knowledge has been accumulated regarding formulation of strategy, and knowledge gathered has been used as a foundation for strategy implementation (Bamberger *et al*., 2014; Howsley *et al*., 2015; Koseoglu *et al*., 2018). Some researchers (e.g Proctor *et al*., 2013; Mishra and Chakraborty, 2014; Ahearne *et al*., 2014) have attempted to propose strategy implementation frameworks and others (e.g Okumus, 2001; 2003; Teece, Pisano *et al*., 1997; Grant, 1991; Howsley, Gradt, and Delgado, 2015; Mellor *et al*., 2014) have investigated the key factors for successful strategy implementation in organisations. *However, the operating environment in emerging countries is very dynamic, uncertain and continuously changing*. These circumstances force most Multinational Corporations (MNCs) who operate in developing countries to adopt more effective, unique and innovative strategies to maintain and improve their performance and to gain a larger portion of the market share (Koseoglu *et al*., 2018). Hence, while Alamsjah (2011) and Jiang & Carpenter (2013) focused on individual strategy implementation factors, other studies like Higgins (2005) and Noble (1999) concentrated on the big picture. This research will discuss the factors that are associated with the strategic implementation performance of Multinational Corporates (MNCs) in a weak Institutional operating environment.

In a bid to completely penetrate an environment or compete with competitors, firms formulate and implement strategies (Carmeli *et al*., 2012; Yoon, 2016). In order to form strategies, firms scan and assess their **external** and **internal** environments (Rouibah, 2014; Shepherd and Rudd, 2014). Strategic decisions are thus made upon developing and deciding on implementing these strategies (Costanzo and Di Domenico, 2015; Ibrahim *et al*., 2015; Kotler *et al*., 2016; Parayitam and

Papenhausen, 2016). Strategies are made up of different strategic choices with substantial resources allocated to these strategic decisions (Anchor and Aldehayyat, 2016; Pisano, 2017). Strategic choices are usually aligned with the mission and vision of a company, its resources, position in the market, and relationships with the shareholders (Anderson and Jamison, 2015; Kunz *et al*., 2016). Strategic decisions are long-term, involve risks, usually future-oriented and typically concern the whole organisation (Auvinen *et al*., 2015; Bromiley *et al*., 2015; Smith, 2014; Vecchiato, 2015). The main objectives of strategic decision-making are facilitating the growth and development of a company and enhancing its competitive advantage (Eshima and Anderson, 2016; Koryak *et al*., 2015; Larrañeta *et al*., 2014; McDowell *et al*., 2016; Pisano, 2017).

Many studies (e.g Shah, 2005; Kroon *et al*., 2013; Papadakis and Lyriotaki, 2013; Shepherd and Rudd, 2014; Ibrahim *et al*., 2015; Pisano, 2017; Pollanen *et al*., 2017) have been written about making strategic decisions and investigated the strategic decision-making and performance relationship. Also, although several studies (e.g., Klingebiel and De Meyer, 2013; Ryan, 2015; Anchor and Aldehayyat, 2016; Phadnis *et al*., 2016) have examined the implementation of the strategies emerging from strategic decisions, empirical research studies focused on the implementation of strategic decisions in developing countries and especially Africa are still limited (Chandy and Narasimah, 2015). This study emphasises the implementation drivers of strategic decisions (1), how and why the decisions were arrived at (2), and the barriers to their deployment in Nigeria (3). Specifically, this study focuses on local alliances' strategic decision implementation in a multi ethnic country. The term “strategic alliance” refers to agreements characterised by commitment of two or more organisations in order to achieve “common goals” and entail pool of resources and activities (Teece, 1992).

The study adopts Douma’s (1997) definition of strategic alliance as ‘*a contractual, temporary relationship between companies remaining independent, aimed at reducing the uncertainty around the realization of the partners’ strategic objectives (for which the partners are mutually dependent) by means of coordinating or jointly executing one or several of the companies’ activities. Each of the partners are able to exert considerable influence upon the management or policy of the alliance. The partners are financially involved, although by definition not through participation, and share the costs, profits and risks of the strategic alliance’* as its focal definition.

Cooperation between firms is considered as an important source of resource and learning (Kale *et al*., 2002). *Strategic alliances can be effective ways to diffuse new technologies rapidly, enter a new market, bypass governmental restrictions expeditiously, and to learn quickly from the leading firms in a given field (Elmuti and Kathawala, 2001).* However, strategic alliances are not simple or easy to create, develop, and support especially in a multi ethnic country. Strategic alliance projects often fail because of tactical errors made by management and the situation made more difficult in multi ethnic countries. Prior studies examine strategic alliances as discrete structures (e.g., alliances vs. M&A, equity vs. non-equity agreements) (Lin *et al*., 2011), or in terms of resource management or knowledge sharing. *This study investigates the implementation of strategic alliance in a multi ethnic country with weak institutions*. Studying implementation of strategic alliances is particularly important in developing countries given that market-supporting institutions are weak, and *hence there is less* ***trust*** *and greater perceived* ***opportunism*** *and* ***transaction hazards*** *among citizens* (Peng *et al*., 2008). In this regard, for better transaction governance in developing countries, some scholars have advocated internalising hazardous transactions within a single firm (Williamson, 2005). However, although internalisation mitigates opportunistic behaviour, it also increases bureaucratic costs (Williamson, 1985), decreases flexibility and reduces the benefits of using market mechanisms and hence might not be a plausible solution (Lin and Lin, 2010), especially in countries with weak institutions where compliance with laws or international governance standards is cumbersome (Peng *et al*., 2008). In response to institutional and context challenges, managers need to be more responsive by developing dynamic capabilities to help their organisations adapt (Teece *et al*., 1997). Thus, MNCs management create ambidextrous organisations that balance exploitation and exploration (Tushman and O'Reilly, 1996) which can ensure their survival in such difficult terrain (Christensen, 1997). Research in the MNC strategic alliance stream has largely overlooked the potential role of external institutional pressures (Sull *et al*., 1997) and especially so in developing countries. Whereas it is clear, that particular contexts influence firms' actions and strategies (Zuckerman, 2000; Useem and Gager, 1996).

Furthermore, it has been suggested that alliances are considered to be an occasional practice without a clear link to the companies' strategy and proper organisation, procedure or tools that could make the alliances profitable and enriching experiences (Morcillo-Bellido, 2019). Previous studies (e.g., Kale *et al*., 2000) report that firms with greater alliance performances, are those firms with superior alliance management capabilities (Kale, Singh and Dyer, 2000; Anand and Khanna, 2000). Accordingly, when firms having superior capabilities, implementation of some strategic alliances could be a source of competitive advantage (Ireland *et al*., 2002). The source of a successful alliance implementation lies in both the relationship between the partners and the management capabilities of the alliance (Draulans *et al*., 2003, Russo, 2016). In developing countries, firms embed themselves in a set of relationships to access resources and informally govern transaction hazards (Peng and Heath, 1996; Peng *et al*., 2008; Lin *et al*., 2010). While scholars have begun to recognise that informal relationships or relational embeddedness represent important governance mechanisms, they still fail to consider how informal alliances dictate success (Lin and Lin, 2010) especially in developing countries. This study goes beyond categorising strategic alliances as dyadic relationships which are formally structurally embedded and rather unearth factors that inform and determine strategic implementation success of MNCs taking into consideration the mix of market, hierarchical and social relationships in different regions/tribes within a country.

1.2 Research Purpose, Gaps and Method

Factors such as globalisation, new customer requirements, leadership requirements, difficulty in competitiveness and lack of resources push companies to enter into partnerships (Porter and Fuller, 1986; Garcia, 2004) and motivate strategic alliances. It is known that effective implementation of reasonable strategies, even if imperfect, is beneficial (Lee and Puranam, 2016). However, it is the "how" the strategies are developed and implemented that is a more difficult question to empirically answer (Hrebiniak, 2005). This conundrum becomes more difficult when considered in weak institutional contexts considering that flawed or not fit-for-purpose strategic implementation is a major reason for failures (Miller, Wilson and Hickson, 2004; Raes, *et al*., 2011; Henry, 2021; Correani, De Massis, Frattini, *et al.*, 2022; Grant, 2022). With increased globalisation, MNCs find themselves in unfamiliar territories, as they enter emerging markets, and developing and transition economies (Kostova *et al*., 2020). These markets are institutionally weak and characterised by high economic and political risks, unusual complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity and major deficiencies (Khanna, Palepu, and Sinha, 2005; Kostova *et al*., 2020). Thus, cross-country differences impact business management such as strategic alliances. There is a need to understand how to successfully navigate across diverse environments which are different from those MNCs from developed countries are used to (Kostova *et al*., 2020).

According to Greer *et al*. (2017), an important aspect of strategic implementation involves the management of the firm's resources (e.g., allocating resources to various tasks that must be completed to implement the strategy). Strategic alliances are resources that must be acquired, accumulated (developed), and sometimes even divested in the active management of the firm's resource portfolio (Sirmon, Hitt, and Ireland, 2007). In the strategic implementation process, the whole organisation workforce (at multiple levels) needs to perform the tasks assigned and complete them effectively (Greer *et al*., 2017). Additionally, Sull *et al*. (2015) argued that most managers find the people in their units willing to help implement the firm's strategy but encounter problems in gaining the support and coordination needed from other internal and external partners. Often, building relationships with the firm's stakeholders is critical for implementing a firm's strategy (Greer *et al*., 2017) as such, firms must build and continually maintain quality relationships with essential stakeholders which requires more than a passive role. Hence, we need to better understand how MNCs and their willingness to continue to collaborate, relying on their resources/capabilities, can promote more effective strategy implementation (Greer *et al*., 2017).

Therefore, this research explores how strategic alliances are implemented in weak institutional context. For the purpose of this thesis, Strategic Alliance will focus on Joint Venture between Multinational Corporates from different jurisdictions with local large corporates in Nigeria. It is necessary and timely to identify what really underlies alliance implementation success, and implementation success factors. Strategic alliance implementation in a multi-ethnic context requires a lot of dynamism. Considering the institutional distance between home and host countries of the MNCs, this study relies on Institutional and Dynamic capabilities theories, to identify how MNCs choose collaborative strategies and form alliances, how they implement strategies in the different phases of alliance life-cycle and identify *critical factors that make the choice of strategic partners a success*. Institutional distance provides a broad understanding of national contexts, encompassing not only cultural, but also regulatory and cognitive elements (Kostova, 1996; Scott, 1991). Similarly, Institutional distance also allows the capturing of the dynamic aspects of context, reflecting important institutional changes in context (Kostova *et al*., 2020). Furthermore, by employing a qualitative methodology comprising case study and interviews, this research will highlight the issues related to the heterogeneous alliance success in different regions and understand why some alliances are successfully implemented, and others fail.

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

This study investigates how MNCs in the Nigerian Food and Beverage sector leverage strategic alliances for market penetration, putting in context the country's weak institutional environment and its multi-ethnic diversity.

The specific objectives of the study include the following:

a. To investigate the strategies deployed by MNCs in the Food and Beverage sector in Nigeria to penetrate different regional markets, considering the country's multi-ethnic and weak institutional context;
b. To identify and analyze the factors influencing the formation and maintenance of strategic alliances by MNCs in different regions of Nigeria, with particular attention to Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry;
c. To examine the role of institutional factors and dynamic capabilities in facilitating and sustaining strategic alliances within weak institutional structures in Nigeria as a developing economy;
d. To understand the operational adjustments made by MNCs to accommodate strategic alliances across Nigeria's regional cultural and economic divides, particularly focusing on the Food and Beverage industry; and
e. To understand the strategic decision-making processes employed by MNCs in implementing and managing strategic alliances across various states and regions in Nigeria, considering its diverse cultural landscape and institutional fragility.

1.4 Research Questions

The key study questions are:

a. How do weak institutional structures affect the formation, implementation, and overall performance of strategic alliances by MNCs in the food and beverage industry in Nigeria?

b. What are the most effective strategies for managing cultural differences, regional variations, and potential conflicts between MNCs and local partners in Nigerian strategic alliances in the focal sector?
c. Compared to traditional partnerships, do strategic alliances by MNCs offer any significant advantages for local food and beverage companies in Nigeria, considering the challenges of weak institutional contexts and social diversity?
d. What are the key challenges to the long-term sustainability of strategic alliances formed by MNCs in a weak institutional economy with a multi-tribal context, and how can these challenges be mitigated?

1.5 Contribution

Strategic management, as a process, constitutes four steps: Strategic Analysis, Formulation, Implementation, and Evaluation (Grant, 2015). However, this approach distorts the strategic decision implementation literature for two reasons. First, the implementation of decisions is often considered part of planning and formulation, rather than as a different or intertwined phase of strategic management. Therefore, empirical studies in strategic decision implementation literature have generally addressed implementation inadequately (Babafemi, 2015; Engert and Baumgartner, 2016; Köseoglu *et al*., 2018). Also, managers tend to concentrate on developing Strategic plans rather than Strategic management implementation (Higgs and Rowland, 2005; Hanley, 2007; Carter *et al*., 2010; Radomska, 2014; Johansson and Svensson, 2017; Köseoglu, Altin, Chan *et al.*, 2020). In Nigeria, as in other emerging economies, more empirical research is needed to explain how to achieve successful implementation of strategic decisions in an international business context, bearing in mind the diverse environment, institutional context, culture and business ethics.

This study will reveal decision making, regarding implementation issues such as: how the determination of the market is arrived at; strategic alliances to pursue and implement; and business operation plan in a multi-ethnic society. Domain implementation issues such as; specific region penetration strategy and partner selection will be captured. The comprehensiveness of the study will have managerial impact, as it will point managers (especially those within the food and beverage sector) in the direction on how to best implement strategies in developing countries with weak Institutions.

Furthermore, by exploring the implementation of strategic decisions, how and why the decisions were arrived at and the barriers to their deployment in Nigeria, this research will extend the understanding of Institutional Theory in weak Institutional contexts. Secondly, focusing on an under-explored phenomenon, context and using a case study approach, this study provides further understanding of the complex dynamics underpinning strategic alliance implementation in a multi-tribal environment. Studying this complex event over time contributes to a better understanding of how strategic alliances are successfully or otherwise implemented in a weak institutional environment with multi-tribal context. Thirdly, by focusing on MNCs in a multi-ethnic developing country with weak institutions, the study sheds light on the role played by Institutions in shaping the strategic alliance relationship within which MNCs engage in a multi-tribal environment. Fourthly, the study clarifies the role of dynamic capabilities in explaining how MNCs utilise strategic alliances to succeed in a challenging multi-ethnic environment.

This study synthesises and analyses interviews, reports and news on 3 MNCs operating in different regions of Nigeria *and reveals their strategic alliance implementation success in the different regions and length of continuity*. Finally, this study offers insights and specific actionable recommendations for a more disciplined and rigorous approach to strategic alliance implementation in weak institutional contexts with multi-ethnic environment.

1.6 Thesis Structure

After this introduction, chapter two is the literature review and theoretical framework of the entire thesis. In this chapter, a comprehensive literature review which discusses strategic alliance, strategic alliance implementation and strategic alliance implementation successes was conducted, followed by discussions on the Institutional, International distance and Dynamic capabilities theories.

Chapter three represents the research methodology of the thesis. This study covers how strategic alliances are implemented in a multi-ethnic and weak institutional context. First the research context and chosen companies discussed. For this research, a dual-qualitative method was adopted. Hence, this chapter discusses the theoretical framework that underlies the qualitative research method, the research design, including the three methods adopted and data analysis approach (thematic analysis) adopted.

Chapter four presents the summary of key qualitative findings of how strategic alliances are implemented in multi- ethnic, weak Institutional context of state like Nigeria. Chapter five discusses findings using relevant theoretical framework. Chapter six deals with the implications of the study findings for developing countries with similar diversity and governance deficit like Nigeria, as well as the limitations of the Study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

Strategic alliances are important for business growth in global markets (Brondoni, 2003). Strategic alliances are one of the mechanisms used by firms to achieve some organisational target, goal or objective. These goals could be scaling up the business, reduction of running costs, new skill or product acquisition and trimming down of risk (Bamford, Gomes-Casseres and Robinson, 2003). Hence, there exists numerous other means to achieve these said corporate objectives, such as the creation of an internal position, purchase or lease of a patent, entering contracts with other firms and purchase of insurance. However, not all goals can be achieved by the firm acting alone, as some goals involve constellations of activity, embedded networks, uncertain political and legal environments and highly unique consumers, of a scale extremely challenging to a sole firm. Moreover, the transition of the global economy to neoliberalism, the opening up of certain markets and the effect of the forces of globalisation (technology, communications, consumer growth, etc.) create a situation where firms require more than just money to grow: they need to work with others. Enter the Strategic alliance. Strategic alliances are seen as a response to market globalisation and to the increasing economic environment's uncertainty and complexity (Russo, 2016).

Strategic alliances are able to provide firms the possibility to bridge internal weaknesses (sharing costs, resources, knowledge and competencies) and to cope with the complexity of the business environment (creating alliance with the actors of the environment as customers, competitors, suppliers, etc.). In global markets, several elements such as institutional distance, the intangible elements that outweigh the tangible ones, time and space become competitive factors that lead to a new system of relationships (Brondoni, 2010). Furthermore, no organisation can compete in the marketplace, as in the past, only with its own resources, knowledge and skills. *The global economy requires structured, widespread and highly interconnected organisations called global networks. These complex structures favour the management skills and relationships with co-makers and external partners* (Brondoni, 2008).

Global markets interdependence and hyper-competition leads MNCs to develop a philosophy that is market oriented in which "competitive customer value management" prevails as MNCs are in a direct and continuous confrontation with competitors (Brondoni, 2010). A market-driven orientation therefore pushes MNCs to change their market structure or players' behaviour in a manner that continuously improves their competitiveness, looking for new sources of value for customers or growth opportunities (Arrigo, 2012). In these global markets, MNCs adopt “outside-in management” that enables them to tie their strategies with the external environment so that it can be anticipatory and responsive in satisfying customers better and faster than competitors (Arrigo, 2012). Strategic alliances allow MNCs to expand in global markets more easily, leveraging their core competencies and acquiring local market knowledge from their local partners (Hitt *et al*., 2005). Following this introduction, is an extensive coverage of the literature on strategic alliances (including types of alliance, success factors of strategic alliance, and phases of strategic alliance). After, the theories underpinning the study are elaborated on, and then the research gaps are highlighted.

2.2 Nigeria’s Ethnic Diversity and Weak Governance Institutions

Nigeria is a federal republic with an estimated population of around 190 million people and 36 federating sub-national entities. Also, Nigeria operates an administrative geopolitical zoning system, where the 36 sub-national entities are grouped into six geopolitical clusters that reflect historical and ethnic affinities. The six geopolitical zones are dominated by different ethnic nationalities- the southwest, by Yoruba speaking ethnic groups, the Southeast by Igbo, the South-South, by an amalgam of Ijaw, Ogoni, Urhobo groups, North-West, Hausa-Fulani, North-East, Kanuri and North-Central Zone, Hausa, Nupe, Tiv groups (NPC and ICF Macro, 2009).

Essentially, Nigeria is a widely diverse state, with multiple ethnic groups, multiple languages, multiple religious and multiple cultural identities. With an estimated count of over 250 distinct ethnic groups, the nation presents a mosaic of identities. Ogoanah (2012) noted that these ethnicities interlink through approximately 400 languages originating from the Niger-Congo, Nilo-Sahara, and Afro-Asiatic language families. Socioeconomic development varies across the regions, with wealth concentrated in southern part of the country.

Although the Nigerian constitution has historically enjoined religious neutrality, the governing practices implemented by successive governments cultivate an impression of a nation where the government prioritizes respect for Islamic and Christian views in public life. This demonstrably preferential treatment accorded to these two faiths has resulted in the emergence of a powerful and well-defined elite group that has significant influence over economics, politics and social life in the country (Magbadelo, 2003). Public policy deference to religious sentiments is critical factors for business forming alliances and expanding into new regions.

This complex ethnic and religious diversity is compounded by weak governance institution evidenced by Nigeria's poor performance on all quantitative governance indexes. Nigeria has consistently performed poorly on all anti-corruption indexes and ranks 145 out of 180 polled countries in the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2023). According to the 2021 Legatum Prosperity Index, Nigeria ranked 143rd out of 167 countries on the safety and security sub-index (Legatum Institute, 2021). Similarly, the World Bank's 2020 Worldwide Governance Indicators placed Nigeria's score at 4.72 out of 100 on the political stability and absence of violence component (World Bank, 2020). Furthermore, analysis of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index of African Governance indicates a decline in Nigeria's Security and Rule of Law score over the past decade (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2020). These grim performance paint a picture of a country with governance challenges.

Studies have established the negative impact of weak institutional environment on market and accounting-based performance of non-financial firms in Nigeria, which could be traced to the inappropriate regulatory system in such institution Ojeka et al, 2019; Ojeka et al, 2019. Nigeria's weak institutional environment, often result in ambiguous and sometimes inconsistently applied legal and regulatory frameworks. This results in uncertainty for businesses regarding compliance requirements, contracts, property rights, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Poor institutional environment in Nigerian means that business firms additionally bear burdens of limited access to finance, infrastructure challenges, insecurity, high level of corruption, bureaucratic red tape and diminished investor confidence (Ozegbe and Kelikume, 2022).

For a diverse state as Nigeria with poor performing governance institutions, firms must deploy their resources in effective ways (Greer et al., 2017), there is a need for more understanding of how MNCs can enable dynamic capabilities by exploiting their resources so that they can continue to penetrate the market, across the respective regions and ethnicities, and sustain alliances in an emerging economy and developing markets setting.

Multiple studies have established that Nigeria's endemic public corruption negatively impacts business enterprises and discourage entrance into businesses in Nigeria (Fodol, 2023; Asiedu and Freeman, 2009; Okolo and Raymond, 2014). It has also been found that public and private corruption can be attributed to the inherent institutional deficiencies characteristic of developing economies, such as inefficiencies in public administration and a weakened rule of law system (Ola et al 2014).

2.3 Greenfield Investment vs. Strategic Alliance: A Comparison for Multinationals in weak Institutional Countries

Multinational corporations (MNCs) seeking entry into developing economies or Countries with weak Institutional context face a critical decision: pursue a greenfield investment or forge a strategic alliance with a local Corporate partner. Both approaches offer distinct advantages and disadvantages, and the optimal choice hinges on various factors specific to the goals of the MNC in the target market environment.

Greenfield Investment; This entails establishing a wholly-owned subsidiary in a new market and starting operations afresh (Buckley & Casson, 1976). Such greenfield investments enables replicate their established business model and brand image without compromise (Rugman, 1981) and gives the MNC complete control over operations, strategy, and intellectual property (Kumar & Ganesh, 2000). This approach signals a long-term commitment to the market, potentially fostering trust with local stakeholders (Luo, 2001). However, there could be market entry challenges, as understanding local consumer preferences, regulations, and distribution channels can be a time-consuming and expensive endeavor (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009). Misunderstanding cultural nuances can also lead to marketing blunders and operational inefficiencies (Cavusgil, Knight, & Riesenberger, 2016). Greenfield investments require significant upfront capital expenditure for infrastructure, staffing, and brand establishment (Contractor & Kundu, 1998).

Critical success factors to consider for Greenfield Investments in Developing Economies includes institutional Weaknesses such as weak legal framework and contract enforcement mechanisms in such economies can pose significant challenges for greenfield investments (McMillan & Sheng, 2004). MNCs may struggle to protect intellectual property rights and enforce contractual obligations. Corruption risk can significantly increase the costs and risks associated with greenfield investments. MNCs need to implement robust anti-corruption measures and conduct thorough due diligence before establishing operations (Feinberg, 1988). Infrastructure Deficiencies could impact the decision greatly as developing economies often grapple with inadequate infrastructure, such as unreliable power grid and poor transportation network. These deficiencies can create logistical hurdles and disrupt greenfield operations (Buckley, Devinney, & Peng, 2017).

Strategic Alliance, on the other hand is more of a collaborative agreement between two or more firms to share resources, knowledge, and expertise to achieve mutually beneficial goals (Gulati, 1998). Partnering with a local firm could allow the MNC to leverage the partner's existing infrastructure, distribution network, market knowledge (Dyer & Singh, 1988) and navigate Institutional Weaknesses, complex regulations and bureaucratic processes in such environment (McMillan & Sheng, 2004).

Several factors influence the choice between greenfield investments and strategic alliances. Firms may choose greenfield investments when uncertainty about the foreign market is low and transaction costs associated with managing an alliance are high (Hennart & Reddy 1998). On the other hand, alliance may become more attractive when market uncertainty is high, and the costs of coordinating and controlling an alliance are relatively lower, (Ghemawat & Khanna 2005). When asset specificity is high, and governance complexity is low, greenfield investments might be preferred to maintain control. However, in situations with high asset specificity and high governance complexity, alliances offer a way to share risks and leverage partner expertise.

While the core advantages and disadvantages of greenfield investments and strategic alliances offer a valuable starting point, a deeper understanding of these entry modes requires delving into the complexities of developing economiesThe decision between greenfield investment and strategic alliance is not a one-size-fits-all proposition, the optimal entry mode might vary depending on the industry. For instance, resource-intensive industries like mining might favor greenfield investments for greater control, while knowledge-intensive industries like technology might benefit from alliances to access local talent.

Exploring hybrid entry modes and remaining adaptable to a dynamic environment can significantly increase the chances of success for MNCs venturing into developing economies. Some developing economies might incentivise or restrict certain entry modes through policies. MNCs should carefully consider their specific goals, resource constraints, in the specific context of the economy and select the entry mode that best positions them for long-term success.

2.4 Strategic Alliances Management Framework

It is widely acknowledged that globalisation and competitive forces have influenced the shift from a highly independent structure to a more disaggregated organisational structure able to work with many different partners to achieve corporate targets (Stadtler and Lin, 2017). These disaggregated structures are often based on alliances. Alliances can, as bilateral or multilateral arrangements with aim to improve mutual results, engender growth and profitability in many industries (Li, 2018). Furthermore, the need to do more with the available resources increases the need for partnerships and alliance formation (Hendrikse *et al*., 2017; Morcillo-Bellido, 2019).

Worldwide, the need for alliances is exacerbated by different factors including economic and social crisis (Kale *et al*., 2009). For example, the world was recently in crisis and an unprecedented economic lockdown experienced as COVID-19 took its toll not only on societies (Pedersen, Ritter & Di Benedetto, 2020) but also on firms that were not managed appropriately (Cortez and Johnston, 2020; Obal and Gao, 2020; Zafari, Biggemann and Garry, 2020). This kind of situation escalates the importance of dynamism and strategic alliances for strategy implementation. Several studies have investigated factors that encourage alliances such as *market globalisation* and *fast technological development* (Porter and Fuller, 1986), *higher level of uncertainty*, which leads companies to find ways to reduce risk through collaboration (Dickson and Weaver, 1997), *need to meet new customer requirements* (Ohmae, 1989), *difficulty to be competitive throughout the whole value chain* (García-Ochoa, 2003), *resources limitation* (Williamson, 1985; Cobianchi, 1994), and *need to enter new markets through new products or geographical areas* (García-Canal, 2004). Nevertheless, strategy implementation still fails in spite of alliances (Hu, 2017; Elmuti and Kathawala, 2001). Hence, there is a need to *identify and understand specific factors that support alliance success rate, (Morcillo-Bellido, 2019) especially in developing countries where there is vulnerability to external shocks (Yeniaras, Kaya and Dayan, 2020)*. Moreover, in these business environments, alliances are key to business strategy (Morcillo-Bellido, 2019), hence, it is very important to unlock the set of specific alliance resources/capabilities necessary for successful partnerships strategy implementation (O'Dwyer and Gilmore, 2018).

The effectiveness of strategic alliances is dependent on adept management across various phases of their lifecycle. These phases, namely formation, development, and maturity, denote a progression marked by evolving goals, implementation strategies, and adjustments based on accrued experiences or shifting partner intents (Arino and De La Torre, 1998; Child and Faulkner, 1998; Kale and Singh, 2000). Advancement to subsequent stages depends on meeting established success benchmarks from the preceding phases (Russo, 2016; Kale and Singh, 2000). The initial formation phase involves partner selection and determining the most suitable cooperation model for the alliance governance framework (Russo, 2016). Partner selection, a key activity during formation, requires careful consideration of factors such as complementarity, congruent goals, compatibility, commitment, partner reputation, and prior ties (Das et al., 1997; Speckman et al., 1998; Kale and Singh, 1998; Jiang et al., 2008; Das and Teng, 2001; Gulati, 1995). Complementarity in resources and capabilities fosters synergies, while congruent goals and partner compatibility facilitate integration and mitigate conflicts (Ireland & Miller, 2001; Speckman et al., 1998). Moreover, partners' commitment, bolstered by reputations and prior ties, engenders trust and reduces transaction costs, contributing to long-term alliance viability (Kale and Singh, 2009; Das and Teng, 2001; Gulati, 1995).

Furthermore, resource advantages of MNCs may only have continuous rents if the environments that the firms operate in are stable (Ambrosini and Bowman, 2009) or understood. Hence, MNCs strive to utilise their knowledge to generate new insights and apply dynamism to local context governance mechanisms (Verreynne *et al*., 2016). In this regard, studies (e.g Kale and Singh, 2007; Schreiner *et al*., 2009; Lewis *et al*., 2017) recommend that firms should implement governance processes to identify practices, learn, accumulate and use knowledge generated in their future endeavours. This study will reveal the dynamism MNCs incorporate into their market penetration strategies as well as strategic governance alliances undertaken to thrive in weak institutional contexts. In particular, we need to better understand MNCs and their willingness to collaborate which can promote more effective strategy implementation (Greer *et al*., 2017).

Strategic alliances while potentially rewarding, requires a delicate balancing act between surrendering strategic autonomy and achieving operational synergy (Kanter, 1995). This initial hurdle informs the inherent reluctance of organizations to relinquish control over their strategic resources. This poses a significant barrier to effective collaboration. Further complicating matters are cultural discrepancies, which can impede the achieve the goals of the alliances. This highlights the importance of maintaining focus on external threats and opportunities – competition and market dynamics, rather than succumbing to internal friction. Additionally, the nature of international organizational politics can further hinder the successful implementation of the alliance.

2.4.1 Advantages and Limitations of Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances contribute to value creation through various means such as economies of scale, risk mitigation, and learning from partners (Kogut, 1988; Teece, 1992). Successful alliances

generate synergistic benefits for all partners, enhancing their competitive positions and creating new value together (Vaidya, 2011). This value creation encompasses strategic, learning, and financial aspects, enabling firms to strengthen their competitive advantages and achieve economic benefits (Das and Teng, 2001; Ireland et al., 2002). Ultimately, strategic alliances could serve as a source of competitive advantage in dynamic global markets, enabling firms to adapt, innovate, and thrive amidst uncertainty (Das and Teng, 2001; Ireland et al., 2002).
The immense financial, brand and organizational benefits to the formation of strategic alliances are apparently well noted in the preceding sections of the study, the concept is not without various conceptual and implantation challenges requiring managerial depth to navigate these huddles which sometimes determines the success or otherwise of the joint enterprise.

Across literature, the following potential management landmines have been identified. Firstly, the apprehension surrounding relinquishing autonomy over strategic assets poses a substantial challenge in the management of any strategic alliance (Chi, 1994; Abdouv and Kliche, 2004) Secondly, there is the tricky challenge of achieving operational cohesion within complex and diverse social and cultural systems, this calls for clear management framework to address emergent issues before it threatens the alliance (Agarwalv and Ramaswami, 1992). Thirdly, external factors such as competition, political environment and local customs have extensive effect on the successes of strategic alliances and constant threat in all multicultural operating environments (Akio, 2004). Fourthly, internal organizational politics and organizational culture can impede strategic alliance execution (A1 Khalifa and Peterson, 2004). Fifthly, there remains the constant challenge of sustaining organizational Vigor over time, alongside fostering a culture of receptivity to learning, persists (Allio and Pekar, 1994). Finally, the presence of individuals who, despite their involvement, become bottlenecks in alliance implementation underscores a critical challenge. Balancing these multifaceted issues while nurturing a value-enhancing partnership poses a formidable task (Kanter, 1995).

There exists a threshold beyond which companies should resist altering their operational system to accommodate alliance demands. The prospective value of a relationship must be carefully weighed against the totality of the company's short- and long-term goals, which concurrently exert demands on its resources, including executive time and energy (Barney, 2001). Even when relationships hold significant value, an organization's capacity to manage them becomes finite, eventually leading to conflicts in resource allocation and investment requirements. Occasionally, companies confront the necessity of terminating alliances due to various reasons, such as misalignment of partner suitability, emergent managerial priorities, or shifts in business landscape or strategy. Effectively concluding a partnership demands adeptness and tact, ensuring partners are fully informed and treated with integrity (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1991). Effectively managing relationships to build collaborative advantage requires varied managerial capability in navigating political, cultural, organizational, and human dynamics (Beamish, 1985).

In today's global economic world, a company's reputation is sometimes shaped by its affiliations and partnerships. Intercompany relationships represent pivotal business assets, and adeptness in nurturing them is an indispensable managerial skill. It is not merely the transaction itself that engenders value, but rather the partners' capacity to dynamically manoeuvre alliances through an array of uncertainties, evolving priorities, organizational frictions, and competitive disruptions. Partner relationships are inherently nebulous, with today's ally potentially metamorphosing into tomorrow's rival. Consequently, delineating the boundaries between spheres of competition and collaboration remains a nebulous space (Khanna et al, 1998). Furthermore, as alliances proliferate, managing even rudimentary bilateral partnerships necessitates consideration of the broader network of relationships in which partners are enmeshed. Any alliance may instigate unforeseen operational or strategic interdependencies with other alliances involving one or both partners.

2.4.2 Types of Strategic Alliances

Alliances can be in different forms ranging from equity alliances to non-equity alliances (Brondoni, 2003).

Strategic Equity Alliances are collaborative agreements, which are based on participation in Venture capital, where cooperative contracts are supplemented by equity investments. Equity alliances are characterised by a high level of interdependence and integration, where partners in the long-term share risks and benefits (Russo, 2016). The ownership aspect implies direct control and reduces the risk of opportunistic behaviours. Equity participation could be represented by a minority, majority or equal share. Minority equity implies less control but also less risks, while majority participation implies more control and responsibility on alliance management but more investments and more risks.

International Joint Venture: These refers to collaborative agreements between two or more firms to establish a new and legally independent business concern to engage in specific project. All partners have equity stakes in the individual business and shares revenues, expenses and profits. Hennart (1988) defined Joint Venture (JV) as a distinct corporate entity, in which partners commit to agreed resources and in which each of them participates with equity. It is time consuming, and usually requires financial resources. Also, there is the need to design coordination while flexibility is minimal and exit requires efforts and costs for firms involved. However, the risk of opportunistic behaviour is less than in the other forms of alliance because of "mutual hostage" that encourages the alignment of partners' interests, since neither want to lose their investments in specific assets (Teece, 1987; Kogut, 1988). Furthermore, JVs allow for transparent costs and profit sharing, monitoring, control, and long-term incentives.

Strategic Non-equity Alliances are arranged through alliance contracts, without equity transfer between partners (Pisano, 1989). Non-equity Alliance, on the one hand, presents the advantage of not requiring a high level of integration such that partners can dissolve the relationship with minimal costs. However, on the other hand, partners have less protection against the risk of opportunistic behaviours. Non-Equity Alliances are not based on shareholdings and provide several forms of contractual arrangements (Brondoni, 2003). Some are discussed below;

Research and Development Partnerships: These are agreements where firms pool together specific skills, capabilities and resources to share the cost of a particularly expensive research project, in order to introduce or develop innovations (Brondoni, 2003). Often, this kind of alliance regards a specific project and is preferred when the costs for researching innovations and the pressure of the short life cycle of the products are high. Through resource sharing, partners reduce costs and time for joint-project development. This kind of alliance allows partners access to professional and specific skills and avoids cost duplication.

Supply-Chain Partnership: A lot of MNCs set up long-term collaborative relationships with a select number of suppliers. Through this kind of tie, firms obtain a lot of benefits gained from just-in-time inventory management systems, which eliminates extensive stock holding by closely coordinating production times and supplier delivery times (Russo, 2016).

Co-production Alliance: In this alliance set up, firms partner with the purpose to realise a specific product. Each partner is specialised in producing specific parts of an asset or in developing processes that minimise costs. The outcome of joint production should be a product with superior features (Russo, 2016).

Cooperative Marketing: This alliance allows firms to enter into national markets, without making direct investments. Joint marketing strategies allow firms, from different countries, to introduce a product on a specific market for a given period of time (Brondoni, 2003).

Outsourcing: These are external supply agreements adopted by firms in order to use other firms to perform several stages of its production process. These agreements were initially aimed at simply reducing production costs. In more recent times, however, they are also becoming a competition-related factor, involving suppliers, R&D capacities and expanding the operational framework to a network level.

Franchising: The franchisor provides to a franchisee, through a contract, the possibility to use its own trademark, its sales system and other proprietary rights, in exchange for a return on sales (Brondoni, 2003). Franchisor allows franchisees to use its own brand name identity in a specific geographic area, but preserves control on price, marketing and service. The franchising contract is set for a specific period of time where the franchisee covers specific activities such as production, sale, instead franchisor is responsible for brand and marketing and training. The franchisee receives the franchisor's sale system, assistance, equipment and advertising company, in turn pays a royalty for the buying rights. The franchisor’s advantage is developing quickly its sale over a wide territory; instead, franchises can operate with the brand name of a large organisation (Pellicelli, 2003).

Licensing: Through licensing contracts, a firm allows another one to use patented technologies or production processes in turn for royalties or fee. This type of alliance is an agreement that allows firms to enter new markets without substantial investments, to test foreign markets with a new product or acquiring specific know-how (Brondoni, 2003). The advantage behind licensing contracts is the fact that a firm with limited resources can enhance its own presence on multiple markets and recuperate capital investment quickly (Pellicelli, 2003). However, licensing entails some risks such as the licensee may become a competitor. The main risk is represented by the loss of control over the technology; to avoid this situation firms could create a cross-licensing agreement, in which each partner exchanges technology and expertise mutually.

Overall, in non-equity alliances partners share only skills, competences and resources without equity participation. These kinds of strategic alliances are less rigid than equity alliances as it is easier to revise and reorganise when facing different circumstances. As a result, partners involved have less protection against the risks of opportunistic behaviour. The choice of alliance governance form depends on the level of control and risk that partners desire on their joint activity. The formation of strategic alliances by firms is driven by both external market factors and internal resource constraints considerations. External factors include market competition and regulatory barriers which sometimes compel collaboration to access critical resources and capabilities quickly and cost-effectively (Faulkner, 2010; Brondoni, 2005).

2.4.3 Importance of Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances are becoming more prominent in the global economy (Li, 2018). This particular study seeks to understand how these strategic alliances are actually implemented, a phenomenon that is less investigated in developing countries. Furthermore, the dynamism required to maintain or adapt strategic alliance in weak institutional environments is also a focus for this study.

The external and internal conditions of a firm can influence the need for strategic alliance. In fact, more and more firms use cooperative strategies because the external market conditions show a lack of internal resources and skills that they need to preserve their competitive position in the marketplace (Faulkner, 2010). Therefore, one of the main reasons behind the alliance formation, is the need to fill the gap of resources, capabilities and skills that firms are not able to develop internally in a faster and less costly manner, and perhaps cannot be bought due to its intangibility (Contactor and Lorange, 1988). This lack of access to critical resources/capabilities is the main, but not the only reason for alliances. Other motivations behind the formation of strategic alliances by MNCs include reduction of costs through pooling of resources, entry to new markets, meeting government regulations to operate in a new host market, reduction of uncertainty etc., (Brondoni, 2005).

Strategic alliances is atimes required inorder to address the need to bridge resource gaps that cannot be adequately developed internally, offering benefits such as market entry facilitation and risk reduction (Contactor and Lorange, 1988; Harrigan, 1986). Notably, alliances serve multiple purposes beyond resource acquisition, including cost reduction, market expansion, and regulatory compliance (Brondoni, 2005). A primary motivator for firms is the potential to facilitate market entry and expansion, especially in global markets where time is a critical factor (Brondoni, 2005). By partnering with local firms, multinational corporations (MNCs) can overcome entry barriers such as legal and regulatory challenges, leveraging their partners' knowledge of the local environment (Harrigan, 1986). Additionally, alliances can raise entry barriers through strengthened capabilities and shared resources, deterring potential competitors (Varadarajan and Cunninghan, 1995). Furthermore, alliances enable risk-sharing and control of market uncertainty by leveraging partners' expertise and market familiarity (Contractor and Lorange, 1988).

Successful alliance formation unequivocally demands a nuanced understanding of partner organisational and operations dynamics, emphasizing the significance of complementary resources, congruent goals, and partner compatibility. Complementarity ensures the leveraging of diverse strengths, fostering innovation and competitive advantage (Kale and Singh, 1998; Lambe et al., 2002). Strategically aligning with partner interests, reducing the likelihood of conflicts and enhancing alliance coherence is fundamental (Speckman et al., 1998; Russo, 2016). Partner compatibility, encompassing cultural and organizational fit, facilitates effective collaboration by harmonizing differences and streamlining operational synergies (Child et al., 2005; Park and Ungson, 1997). Additionally, partners' commitment, reputation, and prior ties contribute to alliance stability and longevity by cultivating trust, mitigating risks, and fostering relational capital (Jiang et al., 2008; Das and Teng, 2001; Gulati, 1995). Irrefutably, the success of strategic alliance depends on the careful selection of partners guided by resource complementarity, congruent goals, compatibility, and a commitment to fostering enduring relationships built on trust and mutual benefit.

In the operational phase of strategic alliances, success is dependent on several critical factors. Coordination emerges as a primary factor, essential for managing interdependence and realizing alliance benefits (Gulati & Singh, 1998). Successful coordination depends on well-structured organizational systems, clear task guidelines (programming), and effective feedback mechanisms (Das & Teng, 2002). Trust and commitment represent the cornerstone of relational capital, fostering effective collaboration and mitigating conflicts (Coleman, 1990). Trust, comprising rational (credibility) and emotional (benevolence) dimensions, acts as a governance mechanism, reducing the risk of opportunistic behaviour (Das & Teng, 1998). Furthermore, control mechanisms are important for balancing power dynamics and ensuring resource utilization toward achieving alliance objectives (Leifer & Mills, 1996).

Communication serves is a *sine qua non* for effective collaboration, facilitating information sharing and conflict resolution (Cummings, 1984). Open and transparent communication systems promote cohesion and mutual benefits (Buchel et al., 1998). Conflicts, inherent in alliance relationships, is a natural product of organizational differences and asymmetrical contributions, requiring effective conflict management strategies (Das & Teng, 1998). Conflict resolution mechanisms, emphasizing joint problem-solving and persuasion over domination, are important in alliance success (Mohr & Spekman, 1994).

In the evaluation phase, alliance performance evaluation assumes significance in gauging progress and identifying areas for improvement (Anderson, 1990). Performance metrics encompass economic, strategic, operational, learning, and relational dimensions, reflecting diverse alliance objectives and dynamics (Kale et al., 2002). Further alliance development, a crucial aspect of the evaluation phase, encompasses options such as natural end, extension or expansion, premature termination, structural changes, and partner takeovers (Dussauge & Garrett, 1998). These decisions are informed by performance assessments and aim to ensure alignment with evolving strategic objectives and market dynamics.

Strategic alliances are dimensioned in two ways: Horizontal and Vertical. Horizontal alliances connect partners within the same industry, aiming to reduce competition through collaboration (Albers et al., 2016; Ozdemir et al., 2017). Conversely, vertical alliances link firms across different points in the supply chain, strengthening their competitive position by fostering deeper relationships with customers, suppliers, and distributors (Ozdemir et al., 2017; Albers et al., 2016). For both types of alliances, success depends on strong foundation built on shared goals, clear governance mechanisms, and open information exchange (Wang & Rajagopalan, 2015). This foundation allows firms to navigate market uncertainty, adapt to changing competitive landscapes, and minimize transaction costs, ultimately enhancing their competitive advantage (Ireland et al., 2002, p.434). While prior research has examined alliance governance, contracts, and partner fit, this study's primary focus is on implementation of strategic alliances within a multi-ethnic context. Furthermore, it builds upon existing research on alliance capabilities by exploring the dynamic capabilities required for successful implementation in such complex environments.

2.5 Strategic Alliances in Developed Economies with Strong Institutional contexts

Strong institutional contexts, often found in developed economies, provide fertile ground for strategic alliances (Dunning, 2001). These economies with fairly well-established legal framework, regulatory bodies, and business practices, offer stability and predictability for implementation of strategic alliance and formation (Özgen & Benito, 2009). The suitability and specific forms of these alliances are demonstrably influenced by both the organizational objectives and these prevailing environmental conditions. In essence, the prevalence of strategic alliances in these established economies can be attributed to the presence of a well-developed institutional framework and strong business firms (Rondinelli and Behrman, 2000). In the developed economies of Europe, North America etc, strategic alliances show common characteristics noted below that are a product of their robust market systems, political, and technological landscapes (Oliver, 1990);

- Clear Legal Framework: The well-defined legal system allows for establishing a clear legal framework for the alliance. (Blythe, 2012). Choose from options like joint ventures, equity stakes, or non-equity agreements, ensuring alignment with collaboration depth and regulatory requirements (Özgen & Benito, 2009).
- Effective Governance: Strong institutional contexts typically emphasize robust governance structures. Establish clear decision-making processes, conflict resolution mechanisms, and performance measurement tools that comply with relevant regulations (Özgen & Benito, 2009).
- Compliance with Standards: Ensure the alliance structure adheres to all relevant industry standards and regulatory requirements to avoid legal complications and maintain a positive reputation (Blythe, 2012).
- Leveraging Established Networks and Infrastructure: Strong institutional contexts often boast robust professional and industry associations. These network helps to identify potential partners with a proven track record and cultural compatibility (Dunning, 2001).

- Regulatory Efficiency: Streamlined regulatory processes can expedite alliance formation and approval compared to weaker institutional contexts (Özgen & Benito, 2009). Strong institutions can provide a more predictable environment for alliances.
- Enforcement of Contracts: Strong institutions ensure the enforceability of contracts, providing a sense of security and predictability for alliance partners (Özgen & Benito, 2009).
- Access to Resources: Well-developed institutions often offer access to resources like funding, skilled labor, and technological infrastructure that can benefit the alliance (Özgen & Benito, 2009).

Strategic alliances in such environment, with strong Institutional contexts can be highly successful. A study done by Coopers and Lybrand (1997) reviewed the dominant strategic alliances type across developed are joint marketing and promotion, joint selling and distribution, production, design collaboration, technology licensing, research and development contracts, outsourcing etc. In the highly regulated pharmaceutical industry, companies in strong institutional contexts may partner for R&D efforts, leveraging streamlined regulatory pathways for clinical trials and faster drug development, In the Financial Services Alliances: Strong institutional contexts could create a secure environment for financial services alliances, while still adhering to the strict financial regulations. It is critical to carefully navigate the legal framework, leverage established infrastructure and harness the benefits of such alliance to achieve strategic goals. However, navigating such institutions presents specific considerations such as **Bureaucracy:** While regulations offer stability, navigating complex bureaucratic procedures can cause delays during alliance formation (Özgen & Benito, 2009). **Potential for Antitrust Concerns:** Regulatory bodies in strong institutional contexts may scrutinize alliances to prevent anti-competitive practices Blythe (2012). **Cultural Nuances:** Even within strong institutional contexts, cultural differences between partners can pose challenges. It might be critical to invest in cross-cultural training and communication strategies.

2.6 Strategic Alliance in Weak Institutional Context in a multi ethnic environment

Despite the well-documented advantages of strategic alliances in literature, which eminently includes the facilitation of competitive advantage, risk mitigation, market expansion, and cost reduction, the realization of these advantages is not guaranteed. Gonzalez (2001) reports a failure rate of 70% for strategic alliances, while Klein and Dev (1997) suggest that 70% of joint ventures either underperform or dissolve. Remarkably, another study indicates that while the top 15 successful alliances led to a US$ 72 billion increase in shareholder value, the bottom 15 resulted in a US$ 43 billion decrease in market capitalization (Gonzalez, 2001). This underscores the crucial role of institutions in managing these often-precarious alliances, as firms' perceptions of institutional efficacy contribute to alliance failures (Vöge, 2010).

Analysing emerging markets, Cavusgil (1998) argues that their rapid growth compared to post-industrial economies presents promising opportunities for the future. This assertion is further emphasized by De Mattos et al (2002), stating that the growing importance of major emerging markets like China, Brazil, Turkey, India, and Mexico on the global economic stage. De Mattos et al (2002) forecast a shift in the world's economic centre of gravity towards these emerging economies over the next two decades. The World Economic Forum further supports this trend, projecting declines in the European Union and Japan's global output shares by 2050 and highlighting the imperative for developed countries to establish more ventures in developing nations (European Intelligence Wire, 2004). This is particularly relevant as firms increasingly form partnerships with foreign counterparts amidst more attractive global markets and sluggish domestic ones. Unlike their counterparts in developed countries, it can be argued that businesses in developing nations in Africa and Asia exhibits conducts that cannot solely be explained by competition (Peng, 2002), suggesting that the relationship between companies and their institutional environment shapes strategic behaviours (Scott, 2014). In Africa particularly, governance institutions comprise two dimensions - formal and informal. Formal governance institutions mirror Western structures, including political, regulatory, and judicial systems with codified rules, while informal institutions consist of customs, traditions, and unwritten conventions. These informal institutions, including ethnic associations, trade guilds, traditional leaderships, and religious groups, significantly influence the business environment and consequently play important role in structuring and organizing companies' strategic alliances (Hansen et al., 2018). Essentially, many developing countries contend with two competing governance systems. For instance, it has been argued that African institutional frameworks vary in form and function from one country to another and even within the same country, as companies situated in the same state may interpret institutional functioning differently (Fafchamps, 2004). In terms of business practices in Africa, economic actors adopt specific behaviours based on their perceptions of institutional effectiveness (Dadzie et al , 2012). Additionally, instances of failed strategic alliances in Africa may be attributed to institutional dysfunctionality (Hansen et al., 2018).

It has been contended that across Africa there are four unique categorization of informal institutions and how they impact on the governance system (Nkakleu and Biboum, 2019). Firstly, in states where formal institutional structures show ineffectiveness and where the objectives of actors within formal and informal setups align, African informal institutions function in a substitutive manner. Secondly, in environments characterized by ineffective formal institutions and conflicting goals between actors in formal and informal settings, African informal institutions operate in a competitive capacity. Thirdly, within nations boasting effective formal institutions and where the goals of actors within formal and informal systems are congruent, African informal institutions serve a complementary role. Lastly, in nations with effective formal institutions but where conflicting goals persist between actors in both formal and informal sectors, African informal institutions take on an accommodating role. The authors postulate that the classification of African informal institutions plays a pivotal role in determining the appropriate governance mechanisms for intercompany alliances (Nkakleu and Biboum, 2019). In the African institutional landscape, the success of strategic alliances strongly depends on nuanced interactions among contract agreements, institutional trust, interpersonal relationships, knowledge of the local terrain and inter-organizational trust.

Nkakleu and Biboum (2019) argue that within an institutional environment characterized by ineffective formal structures and conflicting objectives among formal and informal actors, a dynamic interplay of competing informal institutions ensues. These informal entities often clash with their formal counterparts, driven by divergent agendas. Conflict arises from the proliferation of competing informal institutions, including corrupt networks such as organized crime syndicates, extortion rings, and arbitrary interventions by Clans or ethnic factions in trade regulations. The governance framework governing these competing informal Institutions, is rooted in tacit norms, contrasting with bureaucratic systems governed by explicit procedures and codified regulations (Kan et al, 2015). Consequently, instilling confidence among potential collaborators, whether domestic or foreign entities, regarding equitable terms of engagement becomes challenging.

Principally, disparities in economic performance across African states, as well as the outcomes of intercompany alliances within the continent, can be attributed to the efficacy of regulatory frameworks in either facilitating or hindering business practices (Shrestha et al, 2008). The success or failure of such alliances depends on the quality of judicial system and their ability to safeguard investments and expedite resolution of commercial or partnership disputes. Formal regulatory mechanisms rely on contractual arrangements, while informal regulation thrives on interpersonal, inter-organizational, or institutional trust (Kafigi, 2015). Success in forming and managing strategic alliances in weak institutional environments with multi-ethnicity requires a deeper understanding of the complexities involved.

Institutional Voids and Informal Mechanisms: Weak institutional environments create "voids" where formal rules and regulations are inadequate to govern business interactions (North, 1990). These voids necessitate reliance on informal mechanisms to manage cooperation and mitigate risks. Strategic alliances can leverage these informal mechanisms, such as:

- Social Networks: Building relationships with key individuals within partner organizations and the broader community can provide valuable information and facilitate problem-solving.
- Reputation and Reciprocity: Cultivating a strong reputation for trustworthiness and honoring commitments becomes essential. Reciprocating favors and demonstrating a long-term commitment can foster trust and cooperation.
- Third-Party Endorsements: Utilizing endorsements from respected local institutions or community leaders can enhance the credibility of the alliance and its partners.

Managing Cultural Diversity: Cultural differences can manifest in communication styles, decision-making processes, and risk tolerance. However, navigating such peculiarities might require;

- Effective Communication: Utilize a combination of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, being mindful of cultural nuances in body language and tone. Invest in translation services and cultural sensitivity training to ensure clear understanding.
- Conflict Resolution: Develop culturally appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms that emphasize dialogue, respect, and finding win-win solutions.
- Leveraging Diversity: Recognize that cultural diversity can be a source of strength. Encourage knowledge sharing and brainstorming sessions that tap into the unique perspectives of each partner's workforce.

Building Trust in a Multi-Ethnic Context: Shared ethnicity can sometimes facilitate initial trust, relying solely on ethnic ties can be limiting. It might be important to build trust across ethnicities through:

- Focus on Shared Goals: Emphasize the shared goals and benefits of the alliance, fostering a sense of "we're in this together."
- Transparency and Open Communication: Maintain complete transparency in all aspects of the alliance operation. Encourage open communication and address concerns promptly.
- Joint Decision-Making: Incorporate representatives from all ethnicities into key decision-making processes. This fosters a sense of ownership and reduces feelings of marginalization.
- Social Interaction: Promote informal interaction between personnel from different ethnicities. This allows for personal connections to develop, building trust beyond business transactions.

The institutional landscape of developing countries, particularly in Nigeria with multi ethnicity and multi tribes might require a plethora of strategy and customisation governing business relations.

2.6.1 Strategic Alliances in Multi-Ethnic Environments*

Strategic alliances are essential for organizational growth and competitiveness. However, navigating such alliance without factoring in diversity in multi-ethnic environments and the impact of ethnic diversity, cultural differences etc, on organizational performance might present challenges. As individuals categorize themselves and others into groups, influencing intergroup relations Tajfel and Turner (1979), it becomes more evident that the diversity and cultural difference is a key factor in alliance governance (Park and Ungson, 1997) in addition to the importance of managing cultural diversity for organizational competitiveness (Cox and Blake, 1991). Various researchers have attempted to highlight the positive relationship between diversity and financial performance (Richard et al. (2004), that cultural distance between partners might indeed affect alliance performance (Lavie and Miller, 2008) if not well managed, and that ethnic diversity most likely enhances organizational innovation (Lee and Park (2006) (Krishnan et al. (2016). However, the task of investigating industry-specific differences in multi-ethnic alliances needs to be covered in more detail.

2.6.2 Benefits and Costs of Strategic Alliances in Weak Institutional Countries

Strategic alliances can be a powerful tool for firms operating in weak institutional countries, but they come with both significant benefits and potential drawbacks. The benefits and costs of alliances can also be industry-specific, for example, alliances in sectors like infrastructure development, might require a greater emphasis on navigating regulatory hurdles compared to alliances in consumer goods.

Benefits; Overcoming Resource Constraints: Weak institutional environments often limits access to resources such as capital, technology, and skilled labor. Strategic alliances could create opportunities for firms to pool resources and expertise, fostering innovation and growth. Beyond resource pooling, successful alliances can foster a culture of joint innovation by drawing on the diverse knowledge base and perspective of each partner. Market Access and Distribution Networks: Partnership or alliance, with a local company can provide valuable access to established distribution channels, and customer networks thus accelerating market entry and expansion. Political Risk Mitigation: Partnering with a well-connected local firm can provide a buffer against unpredictable political shifts or intervention. The local partner's established relationships with government officials and familiarity with the political landscape can help navigate potential disruptions. Navigating Regulatory Hurdles: Local partners with experience navigating complex regulations and bureaucratic processes can significantly ease the burden on MNCs and perhaps spread the financial burden of compliance initiatives required by a complex regulatory landscape. Alliance could also allow firms to share risks associated with operating in a weak institutional environment, e.g. Partners can collaborate on security measures to counter physical theft or corruption. Building Legitimacy and Reputation: Partnering with a reputable local company can enhance the foreign firm's legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of local stakeholders, such as Customers and Government officials (Suchman, 1995). Skill Development and Knowledge Transfer: Alliances could facilitate knowledge transfer, and skill development within employees. Local firms can contribute their understanding of the local market and business practices, while foreign firms can share expertise.

Costs; The cons and costs of strategic alliance in such an environment could vary depending on the nature of the institutional weaknesses in the country. Firstly, identifying a trustworthy and reliable partner in a weak institutional environment can be challenging. Extensive due diligence and careful partner selection are crucial. Weak institutional environments may create circumstances where partners engage in opportunistic behaviour (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994), prioritizing short-term gains over long-term alliance success. Building trust through transparent communication, joint goal setting, and performance monitoring might deter such behaviour. Secondly, integrating different organizational cultures, management styles, and operational processes can be a complex and time-consuming endeavor. Managing cultural differences can also lead to communication breakdown and misunderstanding (Brewer & Shapiro, 2008). In fact, building trust and fostering effective communication across cultures requires ongoing effort. Investing in cultural sensitivity training and joint process development workshops can ease the integration process.

Thirdly, Unequal resource distribution or expertise can create power imbalances within the alliance (Park & Ungson, 2001).. Unequal access to information or reluctance to share proprietary knowledge can hinder collaboration and limit the alliance's potential (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994).. Ensuring clear agreements and transparent decision-making processes is critical. Establishing clear boundaries around knowledge sharing and implementing safeguards to protect intellectual property are crucial. Also, mitigating strategies like clear performance metrics and profit-sharing mechanisms are necessary must also be clearly spelt out. Fourthly, knowing that weak institutions could make exiting a failing alliance difficult, and legal recourse uncertain. Weak contract enforcement might necessitate more detailed and specific agreements. Rigid contracts and limited alternative partners can create lock-in situations where a firm is stuck in an underperforming alliance. Negotiating flexible contracts with built-in exit clauses can mitigate this risk. It is important to carefully curate and craft exit strategies with alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

Strategic alliances in weak institutional Countries offer a strategic advantage for firms seeking to overcome resource constraints, access new markets, and navigate complex environments. However, the potential benefits must be weighed against the additional challenges associated to achieve sustainable success in these dynamic markets.

Quantifying the Costs and Benefits

While the qualitative aspects of costs and benefits are crucial, whenever possible, attempt to quantify the impact of the alliance on the firm, In terms of the contribution of the alliance to increased Market Share Measure, quantify the cost savings achieved through resource pooling and shared expertise, estimate the additional revenue generated as a result of the alliance or does the alliance lead to the development of new products or services, track the time and resources expended on identifying and selecting a suitable alliance partner, quantify the investment made in training personnel on cultural sensitivity to enhance communication and collaboration during the alliance.

Strategic alliances in weak institutional countries present a complex cost-benefit equation. It is important to carefully weigh the potential for enhanced market access, innovation, and risk mitigation against the challenges of partner selection, cultural integration, and potential opportunism. By proactively addressing these costs and maximizing the benefits, firms can leverage strategic alliances as a springboard for success in these challenging, but potentially rewarding markets.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. This study relied on **Institutional theory, Institutional distance theory** and **Dynamic capabilities theory**.

2.7.1 Institutional Theory

The rate of alliance formation in recent years has increased significantly (Leischnig *et al*., 2014) especially as businesses are more interdependent nowadays. This alliance formation affects the firms' ability to create and capture value (Hannah, 2016; O'Dwyer and Gilmore, 2018). However, firms encounter problems in the management of their strategic alliances and in ensuring sufficient success from them (Bleeke and Ernst, 1995). Also, according to Gulati (1999), a firm's strategic actions are influenced by the social context in which it is embedded. In developing countries, alliances are an even more critical management tool because they help to improve firm competitiveness in uncertain, dynamic, weak institutional environments (Hoffmann and Schlosser, 2001). In such environments, institutional theory can help unravel how strategic alliances are implemented.

Institutional theory is a well-developed theory in management studies that presupposes that firms are not just concerned or affected by their internal environment but also by their external regulatory, normative and cognitive institutional environment (Scott, 1995). Institutional theory emphasizes the importance of formal and informal institutions in shaping business practices (Scott, 2008). Weak institutional environments are characterized by a lack of effective legal frameworks, contract enforcement mechanisms, and reliable dispute resolution channels. This presents significant challenges for strategic alliances, as trust and cooperation become paramount in the absence of strong institutional safeguards (McMillan & Sheng, 2004).

Institutional theory posits that firms are shaped by the formal and informal institutions within their environment (Scott, 2008). These institutions encompass laws, regulations, cultural norms, and social expectations that influence business practices. Formal institutions consist of codified laws, regulations, and property rights enforced by the government (North, 1990). Weak institutional environments are characterized by a lack of effective legal frameworks, weak contract enforcement mechanisms, and high levels of bureaucracy. Informal institutions are unwritten rules, norms, and social networks that guide behavior within a society (Hodgson, 2006). In weak institutional environments, informal networks and social ties often become crucial substitutes for formal institutions. Trust becomes a vital component of business transactions, as written contracts may offer limited guarantees.

Institutionalism assumes that organisations conform to accepted standards of behaviour in an effort to enhance their survivability by gaining legitimacy with other external organisations. Leading from this, the institutional theory is based upon the idea that much of what shapes organisational structures and behaviours are a reflection of patterns that have evolved from doing things over a period. As a result, the prediction of organisational practices and their explanations can be arrived at by examining industry traditions and patterns (Eisenhardt, 1988; Judge and Zeithaml, 1992).

2.7.2 Institutional distance theory

International business scholars have long recognized the importance of national context and contextual embeddedness of organisations (Westney, 1993), and have studied the impact of institutional distance on firms’ strategies, management practices, and organisational outcomes (e.g., Johanson and Vahlne, 1977; Kogut and Singh, 1988; Kostova and Zaheer, 1999).

Considering that MNCs conduct business across borders, one can conclude that ‘‘essentially, International management is management of distance’’ (Zaheer *et al*., 2012, p.19). Researchers have examined different types of distance, including cultural (e.g. Beugelsdijk *et al*., 2018b; Kogut & Singh, 1988), psychic (e.g., Dow & Karunaratna, 2006), geographic (e.g., Beugelsdijk and Mudambi, 2013; Hakanson and Ambos, 2010), and economic (e.g., Ghemawat, 2001).

Introduced in the literature in the 1990s (Kostova, 1996; 1997), the construct of Institutional distance is prominent in international business research (e.g., Aguilera and Grøgaard, 2019; Fortwengel, 2017; Jackson and Deeg, 2019). Institutional distance can be defined as the difference between the institutional profiles of two countries (i.e. the home and the host country of an MNC (Kostova, 1996). The construct of institutional distance is rooted in the notion of contextual embeddedness of firms and recognises the “embeddedness of economic activity in wider social structures” (Dacin, Ventresca, and Beal, 1999, p.318). According to Granovetter (1985), “all market processes are amenable to sociological analysis and such analysis reveals central, not peripheral features of these processes’’ (Granovetter, 1985, p.505). Institutional theory studies the embeddedness of firms in institutional environments (Jackson and Deeg, 2019; North, 1990; Scott, 1995; 2014). Institutions and institutional embeddedness operate at different levels of analysis (i.e. from global, to field, to organisation, to industry, to interpersonal (Scott, 1995; 2014). But, in international business research, it is primarily utilised contextually (Kostova *et al*., 2020).

International distance theory posits that cultural, geographic, institutional, and economic differences between countries create challenges for international business activities (Dowling, Rugman, & Benito, 2019). These dimensions become particularly relevant when analyzing strategic alliances in weak institutional environments. The extent of such differences between home and host countries of MNCs determines the specific challenges faced under different sets of conditions. The extent of this institutional distance affects firms’ strategic and managerial decisions and actions (Kostova *et al*., 2020). The main explanation of why institutional distance matters is that different countries have different institutions and, therefore, what might be considered legitimate in one context, might not be in another. When MNCs do business across borders, they face a challenge to not only learn new ways of conducting certain functions but also to satisfy multiple, different, and possibly conflicting, legitimacy requirements and expectations. This creates tensions externally, between the firm and its external legitimating environment, and internally, between firm units as well as its home institutions (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999). Furthermore, organisational institutionalism emphasises the legitimacy mechanism whereby, MNCs for example, understand the existing institutional order in their own home countries and can more easily comply with the legitimacy requirements and expectations. Whereas, in unfamiliar, particularly ‘‘distant’’, weak institutional environments, they might have limited knowledge and understanding of how things are and should be done to establish and maintain an effective and legitimate operation (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999). There is also the risk of internal tensions between MNC head office operations and operations in the weak institutional country (Kostova and Roth, 2002). Also, overcoming the issue of liability of foreignness is an additional difficulty (Mezias, 2002). Ultimately, differences in institutions between home country of MNC and its host country leads to higher costs and risks because of lack of understanding of the institutional order, inability to simultaneously adjust to institutional requirements, challenges in establishing legitimacy within the context, and increased internal and external complexity (Kostova *et al*., 2020).

Institutional theory can also concern itself with economics such that Institutions are defined as ‘‘the humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction’’ and are categorised into formal (rules, laws, constitutions) and informal (norms of behaviour, conventions, and self-imposed codes of conduct) (North, 1990, p.3). *Formal institutions determine the rules that govern economic activity and thus reduce uncertainty, risk, and transaction costs. Informal institutions, too, help coordinate economic action and become particularly important in the absence of strong formal market institutions*. In this case of institutional economics, emphasis is not on legitimacy, liability of foreignness, or adaptation, but on the differences of institutional environments between countries, and on the different degree to which the existing institutions in a given country support effective economic activity and coordination between economic actors (Kostova *et al*., 2020). Thus, transaction cost increase depends not only on home and host countries' differences but also on the direction of MNC foreign expansion. In less developed formal institutions such as those in weak institutional environments, transaction costs increase due to the ineffectiveness of market mechanisms of economic coordination. In these environments, the institutional rules are unstable and opaque, such that it is difficult to make sense of and follow (Khanna and Palepu, 2000). MNCs operating in less developed host countries require new understanding of the role of informal institutions and learning new strategies and tactics for functioning under such conditions. Strategic alliances thus provide a means to navigate the terrain.

This study explored the impact of mainly the institutional theory view on strategic alliance implementation and how it evolves in weak institutions in such an environment. Peng *et al*. (2008) noted that an Institution-based view of internalisation strategy, could shed significant light on the strategy to be adopted in such emerging markets vis-a-vis Corporate performance. Institutions differ from country to country, because of differing cultural and historical lineages (Young *et al*., 2014). Therefore, the theory is important when considering social environmental underpinnings that might affect the implementation of strategy in a developing country (Scott, 2014, Young *et al*., 2014). Many new firms seem not to be able to translate their success in mature economies to emerging economies and that there is a need for researchers to develop methodologies and codify strategies needed by new entrants in emerging markets.

In the Nigerian setting, not much research has been done to localise strategic and marketing management issues. As such, there is indeed a research gap in the study of strategic implementation in the Nigerian market. *In this study, I aim to analyse the implementation of corporate strategy in Nigeria with a focus on market penetration strategies and specifically strategic alliance implementation adopted by key Multinational Companies (MNC) in the Food and Beverage Industry in Nigeria*. By doing so, my research will contribute to business research literature and guide business leaders, entrepreneurs and strategists on how firms can grow market share, by utilising proper strategies to penetrate and form alliances in emerging markets. However, as pointed out by Kostova *et al*. (2020), some researchers have criticised institutional theory and institutional distance discussions as being too broad an approach, hence this present study has integrated the **dynamic capabilities** theoretical mechanism to provide a context specific understanding of strategic alliance implementation.

2.7.3 Dynamic Capabilities

Day (1999) argues that firms that possess superior market performance are those that are more market-oriented than their competitors. These firms are market-driven and possess a combination of three capabilities:

- An externally oriented culture with a focus on the customer and the continual quest for new sources of advantage.

- Distinctive capabilities in market sensing, market relating and anticipatory strategic thinking.
- A configuration that enables the entire organisation to continually anticipate and respond to changing customer requirements and market conditions.

Dynamic capability theory emphasizes a firm's ability to sense, seize, and reconfigure its resources and capabilities to adapt to changing environments (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). The dynamic capabilities framework endeavor to capture the key variables and relationships that need to be 'manipulated' to create, protect, and leverage intangible assets so as to achieve superior enterprise performance (Teece, 2007). In weak institutional environments, this ability becomes particularly crucial for firms to navigate uncertainty and overcome institutional voids.

Sensing: Firms need to develop capabilities to identify and anticipate changes in the institutional environment, such as shifts in government regulations or evolving social norms. Seizing: Firms must be able to exploit emerging opportunities arising from institutional weaknesses. This might involve developing innovative business models or forging strategic alliances to overcome resource constraints. Reconfiguring: Firms require the flexibility to adapt their existing resources and capabilities in response to changes in the institutional environment and maintain a competitive advantage despite institutional shortcomings.

The combination of these capabilities allow firms to realise a value proposition superior to their competitors. Invariably, market-driven firms know more about their markets and are better able to form close relationships with key Partners. In the same vein, alliance orientation, according to Kandemir, Yaprak and Cavusgil (2006), is a combination of three firm capabilities, the combination of these alliance management capabilities allow firms to obtain alliance performance superior to competition (Day, 2000) and achieve superior performance (Lambe, 2002).

- **Alliance scanning**: firm’s superior capabilities in identifying best partnering opportunities. Firms, which possess these superior capabilities, can achieve first-mover advantages in choosing the best partner (Day, 1995). Superior scan capabilities allow firms to identify skilful partners with complementary resources and strategic compatibilities (Lambe *et al.*, 2002).
- **Alliance coordination**: firm’s superior capabilities in coordinating alliance activities and in combining respective partner’s resources for generating new capabilities. Superior coordination capabilities enhance a firm's ability to share information, opportunities and

activities. These kinds of capabilities help firms to have more integrated strategies and more synchronised alliance activities (Dwyer *et al*., 1987).

- **Alliance learning**: firm's superior abilities to learn from its own previous experience. Alliance management is a complex process, it is important for firms learning by its prior or ongoing alliance experience (Anand and Khanna, 2000).

In complex and weak institutional environments, practically no firm has all the resources needed to compete effectively hence, to fill this gap, strategic alliance formation is critical (Russo, 2016). A review of the literature reveals that between 30%-70% of alliances fail (Das and Teng, 1997; Parkhe, 1998; Kale and Singh, 2001). This high failure rate highlights organisations' difficulties in meeting alliance goals or in reaching strategic benefits that the alliance aims to provide. It is pertinent for MNCs to avoid destruction of value of their firms based on the strategic alliances they enter into (Kale, Dyer, and Sing, 2002). The extant literature posits that MNCs may find it easier to circumvent and/or exploit possible threats and opportunities through the use of formal approaches (Hutzschenreuter and Kleindienst, 2006) since they have access to capital, equity, credit and other resources. In this regard Barney (1991) suggests that resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable (VRIN) provide these firms with competitive advantage. However, although Barney's RBV continues to be influential, it suffers criticism. One of such is by Priem and Butler (2001) who argues that merely possessing VRIN resources is insufficient to produce a competitive advantage or to create value. Indeed, in developing countries, MNCs resources must be managed in ways that create value for (and sometimes with) customers and gain an advantage over competitors (local and foreign). Creating this value in weak institutional contexts requires that the resources and capabilities derived from resources are deployed to implement the firm's strategy dynamically. In this regard, Teece *et al*., (1997) posit that for firms to maintain their competitive advantage and remain relevant, they must possess the ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences to address rapidly changing environments.

Dynamic capabilities are heterogeneously distributed across firms and involve high managerial and operational costs, in addition to high levels of managerial involvement (Ambrosini and Bowman, 2009). Gulati (1998) emphasizes the dynamic capabilities perspective on alliances. He argues that successful alliances require the ability to manage knowledge sharing, resolve conflict effectively, and adapt to changing environmental conditions, all of which are particularly critical in weak institutional environments. Against this backdrop, success of MNCs in weak institutional areas depends not only on their legitimacy with the institutions, but it will be determined to a large extent on how they are capable to purposefully create, extend or modify their resource bases (Helfat *et al*., 2007) especially their dynamic capabilities (Eikelenboom and Jong, 2018). *The need for multiple sources of competitive advantages means firms build collaborative relationships with competitors, customers, suppliers, governments, etc.* In order to strengthen or hold on to their position, MNCs have to create and deploy their intangible resources/capabilities and sometimes combine them with the assets of the other firms or stakeholders. Consequently, strategic alliances are cooperative arrangements which allows MNCs to improve their competitive positioning (Hitt, 2000). This becomes critical for survival in a competitive and uncertain business world.

Strategic alliance is the choice firms make when they decide to work with other stakeholders on a specific joint project for a defined period of time, in order to achieve mutually beneficial goals (Mockler, 1998). Through strategic alliances, two or more stakeholders pool together their resources, knowledge and capabilities in order to achieve common goals, which might be difficult to obtain individually. Unlike merger or acquisitions, strategic alliances do not imply the emergence of a new combined entity; in fact, each partner, involved in the alliance, preserves their individual identity but has decided to ally as a unified business force (Russo, 2016). Given the importance of alliances for the implementation of strategy, firms must manage (leverage) their resources in effective ways (Greer *et al*., 2017). Thus, firms need to attract, develop and strategically implement the right alliances in effective ways that create superior value for customers and thus build a competitive advantage for the MNCs. As such, there is a need for more understanding of whether and how MNCs can enable dynamic capabilities by exploiting their resources so that they can continue to penetrate the market and sustain alliances in an emerging economy and developing markets setting.

2.7.4 Integration of the Framework

Examining weak institutional environments through the lens of both institutional theory with dynamic capability theory could provide a richer understanding and insight on how firms can navigate weak institutional environments. Understanding the institutional environment and possessing strong dynamic capabilities, in order to navigate challenges, exploit opportunities could lead to sustainable success in such complex markets. The impact of weak institutions can vary depending on the industry e.g industries reliant on intellectual property rights might face greater challenges in environments with weak legal frameworks. Cultural norms and values can influence how firms perceive and respond to institutional weaknesses. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing effective strategies. MNCs must develop capabilities to identify and anticipate challenges arising from weak formal institutions, such as unreliable legal systems or inefficient bureaucracies. MNCs can leverage the strength of informal institutions by building trust-based relationships and utilizing social network to access resources and navigate complex business environments. Firms must be able to dynamically reconfigure, continuously adapt their business models and resource allocation strategies in response to evolving institutional conditions.

By conducting further research, we will gain a comprehensive understanding of how firms in the FMCG sector in Nigeria, navigate the complexities of the weak institutional environment, despite the multi ethnicity/multi tribe and still achieve competitive advantage.

2.8 Research Gaps

Consequently, the gaps in this study are summarised below:

- First, most of the previous studies have focused on stages of the strategic decision-making process, but there is little available literature concerning how successful strategies are implemented (Koseoglu *et al*., 2018) in emerging markets with weak Institutional structure, or indeed have investigated the factors affecting the implementation stage of companies' strategy (Miller *et al*., 2004; Hrebiniak, 2006).
- Second, previous studies have largely overlooked the importance of local in-country factors and the impact of managing cultural differences and ethnic diversity experience in in strategic alliance implementation. Literature has also paid less attention to the impact of multi tribe, intra and inter regional difference in strategic alliance (Schneider and De Meyer 1991), whereas, this information is critical for MNCs in future investments abroad (Bany-Ariffin, *et al*., 2016). This study will close this gap by investigating the composition of successful strategic alliance implementation by MNCs in Nigeria, a developing country of note (IMF, 2018), while factoring in the multi tribes and multi-ethnic environment.
- Third, there are several factors that could lead to the collapse of a well-planned strategy. If not well implemented, more so in in an economy with weak Institutional structure, heterogeneity of contractual supports for alliances suggest that formal governance mechanisms vary a great deal within such economy, and that it is plausible that some

alliances may in fact falter at the point of implementation, if some terms are not aligned and agreed during the planning stage.

2.9 Conclusion

Strategy implementation is one of the most challenging activities for management (Greer *et al*., 2017). Accordingly, broader paradigms are needed to provide improved conceptual integration (Powell, Lovallo, and Fox, 2011). Although the work on strategy implementation is less substantial, some traditional theoretical frameworks have been used by researchers. This has drawn criticism from researchers such as Powell *et al*., 2011; Greer *et al*., 2017. This study explores strategy implementation from the perspective of strategic alliance in weak institutional contexts with cultural diversity, taking into consideration relational capital and human capital resources (as relationships are especially important in developing contexts) and the development, bundling, and deployment of these resources needed to maintain and fulfil strategic alliance are dynamic. In this research, discussions of implementation are unique, in that the study explains how Strategic alliance is implemented, and how dynamism is maintained in the presence of Institutional distance between the MNCs Home and Host country with multi-ethnic consideration. It explains how strategic alliance implementation is facilitated in the context of interdependencies, business ecosystems, and interactions across organisational boundaries in a developing country context with multi tribe and ethnicity. Thus, in order to broaden understanding of Strategic implementation of alliances in weak Institutional contexts, this study employs a qualitative adoption methodology, which is underpinned on Institutional theory, Institutional distance and Dynamic capability. The thesis will analyze real-world examples of successful strategic alliances formed in weak institutional environments with multi-ethnic workforces. Each case study will delve into the specific challenges encountered and the strategies employed to overcome them. This in-depth analysis will reveal crucial insights into factors influencing alliance success in these contexts. The next chapter discusses the Research Methodology.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Bryman (2015) emphasizes the importance of a rigorous methodological approach for successful research. Recognizing gaps in existing theory and literature as iterated in chapter 2, this study adopts an interpretive approach (Creswell & Clark, 2011) and adoption of thematic analysis of data obtained (Clarke & Braun, 2013). It employs case study method, documentary sources and semi structured Interviews. This methodological combination allows for the investigation of "why" and "how" questions surrounding strategic alliance implementation in Nigeria (Creswell & Clark, 2011). This chapter presents, discusses, and justifies the decision the researcher had to make to interact with the study population, collect data, analyse it, and interpret it to satisfy the aims and objectives of the study. The aim of this study is to investigate strategic alliance implementation in Nigeria, a country with weak governance institutions and multiple ethnic nationalities.

3.1.1 Nigerian Food and Beverage Business Environment

Currently, the Nigerian business environment is perceived to be complex, turbulent and rapidly changing; thus, all firms (large or small) that operate in Nigeria are expected to pay attention to the local environment dynamics, when formulating and implementing policies or strategies (Otokiti and Awodun, 2003). The environmental challenges have led to lack of proper integration and coordination of various corporate strategies of firms operating in Nigeria resulting in the failure to achieve the stated goals and objectives (Adeoye and Elegunde, 2012).

Food and Beverage remains one of the largest sectors in the industry; its aggregate output is valued at about $20.55 billion, equivalent to 4.6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Flanders Investment and Trade Market Survey, 2020). The sector generated $6.6 trillion in total global consumer expenditure in 2017 (Gateway Marketing Consultants, 2020).

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in 2019, the sum of ₦22.8 trillion ($63 billion) was spent on food and beverage by consumers in Nigeria. The Food and Beverage industry is one of the most vibrant and competitive sectors in the Nigerian economy. As at 2015, the sector represented 22.5% of Nigeria’s manufacturing industry and 66% of total consumer expenditure (Ringier, 2015). The bulk of the companies in the segment, estimated at about 85%, are Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that absorb only 10% of total sales volume. About 90% of sales go to big Food and Beverage market players, which makes up 15% of the supplier population (Ringier, 2015). Across the different manufacturing groups, the industry generates more than 1.5 million jobs in Nigeria, employing 5% of the local workforce (Ringier, 2015). It is expected that the sector will continue to experience growing demand, just as the population continually expands, estimated population size by 2050 is in excess of 350 million (NBS, 2019).

The nature of competition in this industry, the type of generic strategies employed, the strategic drivers of cost leadership or differentiation employed and the effects of these on firms’ sustainable competitive advantage have not been established among the Nigerian Food and Beverage firms. Previous studies have endeavoured to explore the implementation of strategies in the entire manufacturing sector (Adeoye and Elegunde, 2012), but not for any particular sub-sector of the manufacturing industry. They have also not narrowed on the actual drivers of the generic strategies employed.

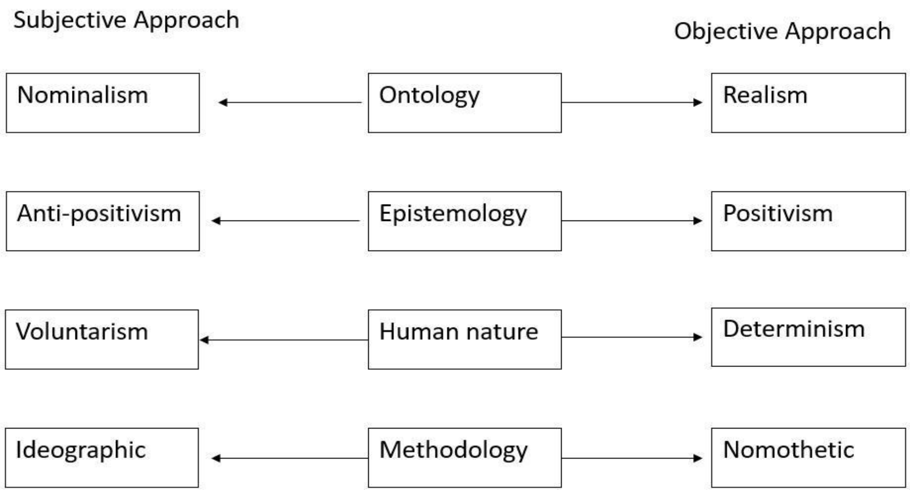
Considering that performance is a crucial objective of firms, it is generally accepted that the structure and decision making in firms are influenced by environmental complexity and volatility (Miles and Snow, 1978; May *et al*., 2000). Furthermore, firms that align their strategies with their environment outperform those firms that fail to achieve such alignment (Venkatraman and Prescott, 1990).

3.2 Research Philosophy

The research design process is a product of a series of interconnected choices that influence the overall research strategy (Saunders et al., 2003). Within the social sciences, these choices are fundamentally informed by four key philosophical assumptions: ontology, human nature, epistemology, and methodology (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). These assumptions, in turn, draw upon broader philosophical perspectives of objectivism and subjectivism.

Ontology explains the nature of social reality, questioning what constitutes its essence (Blaikie, 2000). The ontological choice of a researcher revolves around questions like: Does the social world exist independently of the researcher's perception (Greener, 2011), or is it subjective and multifaceted, shaped by the experiences of participants (Collins & Hussey, 2009).

Figure 1. A scheme for analysing assumptions about the nature of social science



Source: Burrell & Morgan (1979 p.3). Burrell, G., & Morgan, G. (1979). Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis. Heinemann: London.

3.3 Study Qualitative Methodology

Van Maanen (1983 p.9) defined qualitative methods as "an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques, which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world." There are many different types of qualitative methods such as ethnography, interviews, case studies, and observations which can be applied to collect data. According to Bryman (2012), there are three main steps to conducting qualitative research, viz: determination of the research problem and identify the research questions, selection of an appropriate data collection method and thirdly, analysis and interpretation using selected data analysis techniques.

The study adopts a qualitative methodology, primarily utilizing a Case study approach, supplemented by semi-structured interviews. The case study focused on six companies in the Nigerian Food and Beverage sector and a total of 22 in depth interviews was conducted with key actors in the industry. The justification for this methodological selection is threefold. Firstly, there is an acknowledged recognition within qualitative research that a singular method is largely insufficient to comprehensively address all research inquiries (Bryman, 2012). Secondly, qualitative research departs from the hypothesis-testing approach prevalent in quantitative studies, instead favouring an inductive approach to theory generation (Bryman, 2012). Thirdly, qualitative research prioritizes in-depth exploration of social phenomena over the collection of large-scale samples (Lichtman, 2013). Consequently, qualitative methods enable a nuanced understanding of a limited number of cases and emergent themes, rather than seeking broad generalizations based on extensive samples.

3.3.1 Case Study

Case studies are criticised on the grounds that their findings are not generalizable to other settings because of the small sample (Gerring 2007; Hillebrand *et al*., 2001; Mohr, 1985; Smith, 1975). For example, Smith (1975, p.88) argues that Case studies have a shortcoming because 'the goal of science is to be able to generalise findings to diverse populations and times'. Also, Mintzberg (2005, p.361) states that in Management research, 'If there is no generalising beyond the data, no theory. No theory, no insight. And if no insight, why do research?' Some studies in strategic alliance seem to support this notion. For example, Rond and Bouchikhi (2004) investigated the dialectics of strategic alliances based on a longitudinal Case study of an alliance in Biotechnology. They concluded that "case studies do not lend themselves easily to generalisation" (Rond and Bouchikhi, 2004, p.68). Nevertheless, building theory from Case studies has been well covered in the literature (e.g., Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2009) and there are ways to enhance the generalizability of case findings (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Schofield, 1990).

This study follows Yin's (2009) definition of Case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 2009, p.18). As a case study usually involves intensively investigating a single case or a small number of cases in their naturalistic contexts (Piekkari *et al*., 2009), it is likely that there will be more variables of interest than data points. For example, Mohr (1985, p.66) posits that case studies "generally provide a better opportunity than large-sample research, to hunt around for ideas and hypotheses in a new area – the **exploratory-research** function". While Case study results may be less generalizable than those of quantitative methods, in terms of within the population from which the case or cases are selected, there is simply no reason why case study results should be inherently less generalizable. *Case study methods provide extensive and useful information in terms of* *generalising to theory and identifying or disconfirming cases.* The case study for this research focused on Corporates within the Nigerian Food and Beverage sector.

Focusing on a single country like Nigeria, instead of an international panel of countries, is relevant for a number of reasons. First, the country's opening to multinational chains is well documented considering the country was a colony of the British. Nigeria, located in West Africa is the most populous country in Africa with an estimated population of about 223.8 million (UNFPA, 2023), composed of 250 tribes, and could be the world’s third largest population by 2050 (UNFPA, 2023). The country has a GDP of $477.38 billion (IMF, 2022) making it Africa’s largest economy (US State Department, 2023). Hence, the analysis in this study covers emergence from scratch to present in the now largest market in Africa by GDP size. Second, using **cross-regional** data from multiple regions in a single country, instead of single cross-country data, provides novel insights on implementation challenges faced in a multi ethnic country. Third, the large size of the country and the differences in institutional dynamics of the different regions and cities provide substantial institutional variations that this study exploits to identify how implementation of strategic alliance occurs.

Considering the growing importance of Nigeria in the global world, it is surprising that relatively little scholarly work on strategy implementation has been conducted, whereas researchers have argued that the intricacies of strategy implementation processes have been misunderstood (Martin and Eisenhardt, 2010) and on the average firms achieve only 63% of the results expected from strategic plans (Wharton, 2005).

For the purpose of this case study, focus was on the 3 Multinational Companies and 3 Local Corporates in the table below.

Multinational Companies	**Local Corporates**
Kelloggs International (FA2)	Tolaram Group (LA2)
Coca-Cola International (FA1)	Chi Nigeria Ltd. (LA1)
Olam International Limited/Crown Flour Mill (FA3)	Dangote Nigeria Ltd./Tiger Brand (LA3)

3.3.2 The 3 Companies studied

Kelloggs International

Kellogg Company, the largest breakfast Cereal maker in the USA, **is a company headquartered in the USA** and listed on the NYSE. Net sales in 2020 was reported at $13.8 billion, Kellogg has successfully built brands that are synonymous principally with snacks and convenience food It's portfolio is in excess of 1600 categories, such as cereal and frozen foods, noodles etc. Kellogg is the world's leading cereal company; second largest producer of cookies, crackers and savoury snacks; and a leading North American frozen foods company.

Kellogg began exploring emerging markets for growth opportunities after the shifting tastes and demands in the USA and other developed markets resulted in consumers turning away from breakfast cereals. One of the key markets eyed by Kellogg for expansion has been Africa, a region experiencing explosive growth, with a population in excess of 1.2 billion people and an economy that is expected to more than double over the next 10 years; Sub-Saharan Africa in particular portends tremendous opportunity. The real opportunity was in the growing wealth in Africa, especially the middle class and the changing lifestyles that made snacks and cereal quite attractive to consumers.

Kellogg commenced its strategic journey to mine the potential in the Nigerian market in 2015, with a long-term partnership with leading food company Tolaram Africa, thus significantly increasing Kellogg's presence in the growing African market and advancing the company's breakfast, snacks and emerging market strategies to drive future growth. Kellogg's alliance with Tolaram Africa was a JV deal in 2015 designed to develop snacks, breakfast foods, and noodles for the West African market.

<u>Financial Details of the Transaction</u>

Kellogg Company paid *circa* $450 million for a 50% stake in Tolaram-Multipro with the option to purchase a stake in Tolaram Africa Foods.

Tolaram Africa

Tolaram Africa is a market leader in the Nigerian Market. The company has built a highly successful Consumer products business and is arguably one of the largest Food companies in Nigeria. Tolaram has a great track record of building beloved consumer brands, including the market leading noodles brand; Indomie noodles, and fueling their growth. Tolaram Group successfully creates new product categories independently or in partnership with other Multinational companies and strives to become the market leader in that Industry. Tolaram Group entered into a Joint Venture between its Multipro brand and Kellogg's Corporation in 2015 to produce and market Kellogg's food products in Nigeria. Other global brands that Tolaram have strategic alliances with include: Indofood, Arla, Colgate-Palmolive, and Kimberly-Clark.

Details of the business alliance:

- The business alliance was a Joint Venture between Kellogg Company and Tolaram Africa foods, to develop Snacks and Breakfast food for the West African market, *via* a JV company incorporated as Kellogg Tolaram Nigeria Limited (KTNL).
- Kellogg's well-known and iconic brands, their research and development expertise, combined with Tolaram's strong local sales, marketing, supply chain and distribution capabilities, positioned the business alliance to strategically become a Breakfast and Snacks leader in the thriving Nigerian market. According to Kellogg, the strategic alliance was an excellent strategic fit for Kellogg.
- The KTNL JV was a complex business alliance that entailed Kellogg Company paying *circa* $450 million in 2015 for an equity strategic alliance that covered:
    - The acquisition of 50% of Multipro, a premier sales and distribution company in Nigeria and Ghana.
    - The option to acquire a stake in Tolaram Africa Foods (which owns 49% of Dufil Prima) in the future. Dufil Prima manufactures and markets several leading food brands, including Indomie noodles, which are often consumed at breakfast, as well as Minimie snacks, Power oil and Power pasta.
    - By acquiring a 50% equity stake in Multipro’s holding company, Tolaram Africa Foods, Kellogg has secured a stake in Dufil Prima. Dufil Prima is a leading manufacturer and marketer of packaged foods in Nigeria and Ghana.

Financial Details of the Transaction

The purchase price represented a multiple of the average of 2014's actual and 2015's expected total earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) of approximately 15 times; it represented a multiple of approximately 13 times 2015's expected EBITDA.

In 2018, Kellogg further increased its investment in West Africa to further capitalise on the enormous growth opportunity in the region by exercising its option to acquire a stake in the packaged food manufacturer Tolaram Africa Foods, a subsidiary of Tolaram Group for $420 million, as the company strategically decided to expand its presence in the African market.

Olam International Limited

Olam International with headquarters in Singapore and listed on the Singapore Stock exchange, is a leading global integrated Supply chain manager and processor of agricultural products and food ingredients with direct presence in 60 countries and supplying them to over 10,600 customers. Olam has built a global leadership position in many of its businesses, including Cocoa, Coffee, Cashew, Sesame, Rice, Cotton and Wood products. Olam currently ranks among the top 40 largest listed companies in Singapore in terms of market capitalization.

Olam International has undertaken a series of strategic business alliances in Nigeria, and with its strong footprint in the distribution of food staples such as Rice, Sugar, Dairy and Packaged foods, it strategically set out to extract significant synergies arising from Customer, Channel and cost sharing. Notable strategic alliances in Nigeria are listed below:

- The strategic decision to penetrate the wheat milling operations in Sub-Saharan Africa has been a front burner for Olam International in order to achieve this aspiration and gain a significant share of the market. The plan of Olam International was to scale their business to its full potential by leveraging its origination and global wheat sourcing and freight management capabilities: Olam International embarked on a series of strategic alliance with different entities existing in the Wheat Milling business since 2010 when it acquired Crown Flour Mills (CFM) in Nigeria. Since then, Olam has expanded its capacity *via* some key inorganic strategic equity alliances listed below, across corporates, across value chain, across regions, across tribes and across different jurisdictions such as Ghana, Senegal and Cameroon.

Coca Cola International

The Coca-Cola Company is an American Multinational beverage Corporation founded in 1892, best known as the producer of Coca-Cola, offering over 500 brands and 2800 products in more than 200 countries and territories. Over 225 bottling partners across 900 bottling plants make up the Coca-Cola system. The Coca-Cola Company manufactures, sells, and markets other non-alcoholic beverage concentrates and syrups, and alcoholic beverages. Coca-Cola is the largest beverage manufacturer and distributor in the world and one of the largest corporations in the United States. **Headquarters are in Atlanta, Georgia**. The company's stock is listed on the NYSE and is part of the DJIA and the S&P 500 and S&P 100 indexes. In addition to the company's Coca-Cola brands, the company has operated a franchised distribution system since 1889. The company largely produces syrup concentrate, which is then sold to various bottlers throughout the world who hold exclusive territories. The company owns its anchor bottler in North America, Coca-Cola Refreshments.

In general, the Coca-Cola Company and its subsidiaries only produce syrup concentrate, which is then sold to various bottlers throughout the world who hold a local Coca-Cola franchise. Coca-Cola bottlers, **who hold territorially exclusive contracts** with the company, produce the finished product in cans and bottles from the concentrate, in combination with filtered water and sweeteners. The bottlers then sell, distribute, and merchandise the Coca-Cola product.

Chi Nigeria Ltd

Chi is recognized in West Africa as an innovative, fast-growing leader in expanding beverage categories, including juices, value-added dairy and iced tea. The company was founded in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1980, and produces juice under the Chivita brand and value-added dairy under the Hollandia brand, among many other products. Juices and value-added dairy categories rank among the fastest-growing beverage segments in Nigeria and Africa. *The low cost operating model of Chi Limited that has enabled it to consistently offer quality beverages in a wide array of pack sizes at affordable price points* would offer the Coca-Cola Company a better positioning to access Africa's growing market. Coca-Cola entered a Strategic alliance with Chi Nigeria Ltd. by acquiring a 40%

stake in Chi in 2016 from Tropical General Investments Group (TGI), the holding company for Chi Ltd. The Coca-Cola Company and Tropical General Investments Group (TGI Group) – the holding company of Chi Ltd., Nigeria's leading dairy and juice company, entered a Strategic Alliance for the acquisition of a minority equity interest in Chi Ltd. The agreement created a strategic relationship between two Beverage industry leaders within Africa's largest economy that together serve Nigeria's most popular sparkling soft drinks, juices, value-added dairy and water beverage brands.

The investment in Chi Nig Ltd. further expanded the Coca-Cola Company's West African portfolio of still beverages while establishing Coca-Cola's presence in Africa's high-growth value-added dairy category. This alliance enabled the two companies to leverage their respective investments and expertise to further drive innovation, optimise efficiency and strengthen route-to-market to accelerate growth and increase consumer availability and choice (Vanguard, 2019). TGI Group's relationship with the Coca-Cola Company also helped Chi Ltd., to achieve its ambitious growth plans through access to Coca-Cola's broad product portfolio and integration into global best practices in production, distribution and brand-building. Coca-Cola is continuing to evolve as a total beverage company, and Chi's diverse range of beverages perfectly complemented the existing portfolio; this enabled them to accelerate expansion into new categories and grow their business in Africa. The business alliance was quite successful and in 2019, Coca-Cola completed a full acquisition of the remaining 60% stake for an undisclosed amount.

3.4 Semi Structured Interviews and Instrument Development

An interview is a research method to obtain data and life narratives, through the experiences and perceptions of groups or individuals (Scott and Garner, 2013). It helps the researcher to gather **validity** and **consistency** that are relevant to research questions (Saunders *et al*., 2007). To do interviews properly, the researcher must possess the skill to be able to obtain responses from the interviewee without allowing self-bias to intervene in the process (Kamel, 2006).

Based on the critical literature review, semi structured interview questionnaires were developed. However, different questions were developed for the respective **Executive** and **Manager** cadre. The research was designed to enable the researcher to dig deep into the strategy implementation phenomena in a weak institutional context like Nigeria. The questions were divided into four major sections: The first section was to understand the role of the Interviewer in the Strategic alliance, assess the knowledge level and have a clear understanding of the approach to strategic alliance with emphasis on the Institutional structures in Nigeria;

The second part delved deeper into the success factor or otherwise during the Operational phase of the Alliance with special emphasis on Responsibilities, Accountability, Conflict and challenges encountered, coupled with Dispute Resolution;

The third part focused on general questions structured to get the views of the Interviewees on Relationship between both parties in the alliance, Changes in practice, systems and process, Performance measurement metrics such as Return on Investment, Growth and Performance returns relating to the Alliance;

The fourth part was centred around the impact of Institutional distance, Culture, Multi-regions, Multi-tribes, multi-language etc., and an elaborate discussion on the impact of the weak Institutional structures on the Implementation of strategic alliance.

The interviews were conducted in English as Nigeria is an English-speaking country.

Interview surveys can either be non-standardised or standardised (Healey, 1991), structured/semi-structured/unstructured (Saunders *et al*., 2007). Structured interviews are designed to be used with a specified set of research questions (Bryman, 2012). In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has a list of questions, with the flexibility to pursue other topics that arise during the interview (Collins and Hussey, 2009). Such interviews are not limited to the prepared questions and as such, allows the researcher to ask follow up questions during the interview (Collins and Hussey, 2009). This makes semi-structured interview the most appropriate type of interview technique for exploring opinions on strategic alliance implementation in a weak institutional environment. Semi-structured interview provides a deep understanding of social phenomena (Bence *et al*., 1995; Hussey and Hussey, 1997) and are good for explaining and understanding events, patterns, and forms of behaviour as well as providing a more accurate picture of interviewees' positions (Bryman and Bell, 2003). In essence, deep and various questions were asked and discussed during the semi-structured interviews. Interviewees were able to express their opinions clearly according to their **experiences** and **knowledge** (Saunders *et al*., 2007).

3.4.1 Designing the Interview Guide

An interview guide is used to organise the research questions in semi-structured interviews (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Bryman (2012) suggests that an interview guide for semi-structured interviews should be a brief list of questions that address the research problem. This study follows Gilbert (2008) in designing the interview guide, following three steps:

- First, the framework of the interview guide which is derived from the research problem was determined. The guide was designed to clearly identify the themes to be used in analysing the interview data.
- Second, formulation of the interview questions. The questions were designed to-
    - i. demonstrate knowledge of the individuals;
    - ii. reveal the views of the interviewee;
    - iii. explore the interviewee's emotional responses, and
    - iv. reveal interviewees' personal experiences (Lichtman, 2013).

The questions asked during the interview were of three types;

- i. opening questions that started the discussion;
- ii. intermediate questions that investigated the issues in detail; and
- iii. concluding questions that assisted in obtaining advice and recommendations (as cited by Bryman, 2004).

A number of considerations were taken into account when formulating the questions;

- i. First, the researcher formulated the interview questions in a manner that helped elicit more accurate answers (Bryman, 2004).
- ii. Second, the questions were not too narrow, so that follow up questions or clarifications were not limited.
- iii. Third, the questions were ordered, to ensure a reasonable flow so that the research issues could be discussed properly (Bryman, 2004).

All interviews were conducted and transcribed in English, as Nigeria is an English-speaking country.

3.4.2. Selection of Interviewees

Participants were drawn from senior management of 3 Multinational Corporates and their strategic partners, all of whom are experienced and understand the Nigerian Food and Beverage business environment. They included Managing Directors, Chief Strategy officers, Chief Financial Officers, Middle managers and regional managers, each with over 10 years working experience. All these Executives were familiar with the strategy implementation of the respective organisations. The researcher obtained data from various staff of each organisation in the case studies to have a total of 27 in depth interviews (12 MNC staff and 15 from the local alliance partners). Interviewees were selected based on their presumed information domain (Welch and Piekkari, 2017) i.e., participants that were involved in the business alliance and with know-how about the company's strategic alliance implementation process and expertise in Nigerian regions.

A researcher should, therefore, aim to satisfy himself/herself that he/she has learned, and understands the phenomenon, enough to enable knowledge generation. Given that the researcher has substantial Corporate experience in Nigeria, the study participants with the requisite profile were contacted through personal contacts, Executive nomination, personally via emails, social media, and telephone calls, outlining the research agenda. After exhausting personal contacts, the snowballing technique was very beneficial in gaining access to high-calibre respondents (Stigliani and Ravasi, 2012).

3.4.3. Semi-structured Interviews: Process

Building on the above discussion, this section addresses the procedure of conducting the interviews. Specifically, it discusses the type of interviews and the stages in which they were conducted. In this study, one-to-one interviews, instead of a focus group, were employed for three reason;

- First, the interview questions sought information about the Interviewee’s personal experiences. *Focus groups interviews conflict with the confidentiality that may be required by interviewees* (Saunders *et al*., 2007).
- Second, one-to-one interviews allowed interviewees to be able to freely express themselves without restrictions that could have been imposed by the presence of third parties that may be associated with focus groups (Bryman, 2004). In other words, interviewees were able to expand on issues they see as important.

- Third, there are practical difficulties with gathering interviewees in one place at one time, due to the tight schedules associated with their high job profiles. As a result of the restrictions of COVID-19, most of the research interviews were conducted *via* online interface such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, while just a few were face-to-face interviews and telephone calls. Despite the medium of communication:
    i. the body language and facial expressions, which are important in dialogue were still well captured, (Bryman, 2004); and
    ii. face-to-face interviews with the video conferencing option still created the avenue to develop an atmosphere of ease and trust between interviewer and interviewees (Bryman, 2004).

3.4.4 Interview Participants Selection

Participants were drawn from Senior management of 3 MNCs and their strategic partners, all of whom are experienced and understand the Nigerian food and beverage business environment. They included Managing Directors, Chief Strategy Officers, Chief Financial Officers and Senior regional managers, each with over 10 years working experience. All these Executives are familiar with the strategy implementation of their respective organisations. Data was obtained from staff of each organisation in the case studies to have a total of 22in depth interviews (10 MNC staff and 12 from alliance partners). Interviewees were selected based on their presumed information domains (Welch and Piekkari, 2017), as participants selected were those with know-how about the company's strategic alliance implementation process and expertise in Nigerian regions.

3.4.5 Ethical Issues Related to the Interviews

Ethical issues are important to consider in a qualitative approach where interviewer and interviewees interact (Bryman, 2012). Research ethics were considered at all stages; (i) before conducting the interviews; (ii) during the data collection; and (iii) after conducting the interviews (Saunders *et al*., 2007).

The first stage involved accessibility to organisations, data sources, and participants. This started with exploration of the organisational contexts and providing interviewees with an understanding of the issues surrounding the research problem (Liedtka, 1992; Saunders *et al*., 2007).

In the second stage, research ethics were considered during data collection, informed by the principle of informed consent. Bryman (2012) suggests that interviewees should be informed about: (i) what the research is about; (ii) its objectives; (iii) who is sponsoring it; (iv) the nature of their participation in the research; and (v) their right to withdraw from the interview at any time. The third stage, after conducting the interviews, considered research ethics during the data analysis and results reporting; for example, maintaining the confidentiality of data during analysis and interpretation of the results. The interviewees had a reasonable expectation that the information provided will be treated confidentially (Lichtman, 2013). One of the Companies requested for a non-disclosure agreement to be signed, the clauses inserted restricted the use of the data for open research. Thus, the beginning of an intense discussion with the Executive legal counsel leading to a delay in the interview session. Critical at this point, was the task of ensuring that the interviewees' privacy will not be violated, such as by revealing their identity in this thesis or any other later publication (Bryman, 2012) and convincing them of the prudent use of information obtained.

- Commitment to ethics makes for better research. Also, ethics are considered in accurately reflecting the interviewees' viewpoints when results are reported and coded (Liedtka, 1992). One of the companies actually insisted on seeing the output of the interview transcribed and coded before publishing, in order to control the information published and ensure that interview response was not misinterpreted or misquoted.
- Lichtman (2013) suggests some other ethical considerations during the interviews, such as behaving appropriately and avoiding questions about interviewees' personal lives. This was a major point noted during all interviews.

3.5 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis approach was adopted in analysing the qualitative data, manual coding technique was adopted to identify key themes and insights from the interview transcripts. The coding process was subsumed into following stages (Bailey and Peck, 2013) (Clarke & Braun, 2013):

- Data familiarization: The researcher read through all interview transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content and identify recurring topics and ideas;
- Initial coding: During the initial coding stage, the researcher assigned preliminary codes to segments of text that represent significant concepts, experiences, or opinions expressed by the interviewees. These codes were pre-determined based on the following research objectives- market penetration strategies, formation and maintenance of strategic alliances,

institutional factors and dynamic capabilities, operational adjustments for cultural and economic differences and strategic decision-making processes;

- Refining the codes: After assigning initial codes, the researcher reviewed and refined the coding scheme, to ensure consistency and capture all the nuances of the data;
- Axial coding: In this stage, the researcher established relationships between different codes;
- Developing themes: Through axial coding, the researcher aggregated major themes that emerged from the data. These themes represent overarching patterns and insights that contribute to understanding strategic alliance implementation in a weak institutional context like Nigeria.
- Analysis Outputs: The manual coding process resulted in the following outputs: a coded transcript for each interview, with a thematic analysis that identified the themes across participant's response.

The manual coding offers the benefit of a more in-depth engagement with the interview data, potentially leading to richer insights and provided opportunity for greater flexibility in adapting the coding scheme as new themes or concepts emerge during the analysis. Interviews with staff of MNCs and their partners occurred over a period and simultaneously in some instances. Using thematic analysis in this study helped explore, in depth, how strategic alliances are implemented in weak Institutional with multi-ethnic environments.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research philosophy, design, methods and approach. Specifically, this study employed an interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm will be used due to their suitability for the researcher's worldview, the research questions, the nature of the research problem, and the researcher's psychological attributes. Furthermore, the interview of different level of management across a number of companies provided impetus for a more detailed understanding of the research problem and it helped to improve the reliability of the findings on how strategic alliance is implemented in weak institutional environments, as it examined the behaviour of individuals and firms alike.

Chapter 4.

Data Analysis and Presentation

4.1 Data Analysis Framework

This chapter outlines the data analysis framework employed in this qualitative research study, combining Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun's thematic analysis approach with Dennis Gioia's (2012) methodology. This integrated framework provides a systematic and transparent method for identifying, coding, and analyzing themes within the data.

The selected methodology satisfies the study's need for qualitative rigor, a crucial element in inductive research, by providing a structured and systematic approach to concept development. This analytical frame ensures that research questions are scientifically addressed by integrating the different responses into themes, interpreting and refining the themes, thereby enhancing the study's potential to make significant contributions to the field of organizational studies. The methodology centres around social construction of knowledge and the importance of understanding the informants' experiences based on the information provided. It relies on the use of semi-structured interview tools to gather data and involves the systematic analysis of data with two focal lenses- 1st-order category (informant-centric), which is focus on the informants' experiences and the 2nd-order themes (researcher-centric) which addresses the researchers' own biases, assumptions and perspectives (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The phased process ensures that the findings are trustworthy, credible, and contribute meaningfully to the existing literature

Furthermore, the methodology argues for a nuanced approach to qualitative research, emphasizing primary focus on theoretical, rather than merely methodological analysis of data. It advocates for reviewing interview transcripts and notes as more than just raw data, suggesting that creating a data structure is not dependent on capturing the relationships among second-order themes initially. Rather, this is based on achieving a higher level of abstraction, balancing the requirements for detailed perspective of the informant with the broader theoretical insights needed for standard academic publication (Gioia et al, 2012).

Based on the iterations in earlier paragraphs, the study will follow this path for analysing responses from interviews: identification of key themes from transcripts of interviews with earlier identified respondent. The focus of this section will be informant-centric, focusing on respondent's experiences. The second level of analysis will x-ray the study objectives and research questions in light of the highlighted key themes from respondents' findings and thirdly the two earlier key findings sections will be reviewed in light of literature.

Table 1. Participants Details

ALLIANCE CASE STUDY 1 - PARTICIPANT DETAILS (CocaCola/Chi)					
Foreign Partner					
Company code	**Participant code**	**Position in company**	**Role in the Alliance**	**Gender**	**Years of experience**
FA1	FA1TM1	Finance Executive	Executive decision making – Finance	Male	>20 years
FA1	FA1MM1	Finance Officer	Responsible for data collation during alliance process, part of implementation in Finance	Male	10-20 years
Local Partner					
LA1	LA1TM1	Managing Director	Executive in charge of the decision to sell	Male	<20
LA1	LA1TM2	Finance Executive	Strategic implementation- Finance	Male	<20
ALLIANCE CASE STUDY 2 - PARTICIPANT DETAILS (Kellogs/Tolaram)					
Company code	**Participant code**	**Position in company**	**Role in the Alliance**	**Gender**	**Years of experience**
FA2	FA2TM1	Finance Executive	Executive decision making – Finance	Male	>20 years
FA2	FA2TM2	Legal Executive	Strategic participant-Review of legal documentation, contracts, and agreement	Male	>20 years
Local Partner					
LA2	LA2TM1	Finance Executive	Executive management in charge of alliance	Male	>20 years
LA2	LA2TM2	Head of Sales and Operations	Strategic participation - Sales and Operations	Male	>20 years
LA2	LA2MM1	Finance Manager	Finance, tracking cash flow and financial planning	Male	>20 years
LA2	LA2MM2	Sales Manager	Supportive in coordinating the sales and marketing strategies	Female	10-20 years
LA2	LA2RM1	Sales Manager- Region	Provided feedback on market scenario, product acceptance, consumption pattern/taste, consumer survey, branding strategy etc.	Female	10-20 years
LA2	LA2RM2	Sales Manager- North Regional	Sales and Distribution strategy	Male	10-20 years
ALLIANCE CASE STUDY 3 PARTICIPANT DETAILS (Olam/Crownflour Mill)					
FA3	FA3TM1	Treasury & Finance	Core committee member in the Alliance, Worked on the strategic intent	Male	>20 years
FA3	FA3TM2	Operations - Productions	Worked along in the implementation of the alliance (participated at strategic level)	Male	>20 years
FA3	FA3MM1	Finance reporting and control	Financial analysis and data collation	Male	10-20 years
FA3	FA3MM2	Operations – Productions	Collating the operations process, procedure	Male	10-20 years
Local Partner					
LA3	LA3TM1	Chief Finance Officer	Provide financial information for valuation and negotiation decisions	Male	>20 years
LA3	LA3MM1	Support the Commercial Finance Manager Salesperson in South Region	Manage relationships with Customers, Vendors with regards to the new development i.e. the Strategic partnership	Male	10-20 years
LA3	LA3RM1	Sales Manager - North region sales	Responsible for integration of Design For Manufacturing (DFM) and OLAM KDs	Male	10-20 years
LA3	LA3RM2	Sales Manager – Eastern region	manage key distributors and provide day-to-day operational support to Store Manager	Male	10-20 years

4.2 Highlight of Key Themes from Interview Transcripts

This section highlights some of the key themes from the responses of stakeholders

i. Nature, Drivers and Implementational Framework of Alliances

- Major Forms of strategic alliances: respondents identified Joint Ventures (JVs) and Franchise models as the most dominant forms of strategic alliances in the Food sector in Nigeria. According to FA1, some JVs transform into full acquisitions after an initial period, indicating a phased approach to alliances in the sector. According to respondents, alliances typically involved formal, written agreements, ensuring legal clarity and structured roles.
- **Drivers:** alliances are driven by three key considerations, namely: value proposition and alignment, with partners aligning based on value propositions, impact on society, and credibility of partners; secondly, market expansion and revenue growth, which is aimed at expanding market depth, conserving capital, increasing customer base, and growing revenue and thirdly, brand value and leadership, ensuring that brand value and leveraging alliances for leadership in the market. Buttressing this point, one of the key respondents, a manger in a multinational stated that *'value proposition, Impact on society, credible partners, valuable brand with track record, complies to local laws and values, ownership is considered too, one that will not jeopardise the brand.'*
- **Primary Considerations in Alliances:** Across respondents in the Sector, market depth and growth were a significant factor for initiating engagement and inaddition the willingness of the alliance partner to cooperate, was considered pivotal.

ii. Success Factors in Alliance Operational Phase

- **Minimal incidences of conflict:** Generally, respondents reported minimal conflicts, attributing this to the Partner's experience and regulatory environment**.** According to a respondent, *'we have done a number of business alliances (numerous alliances) in many countries, JV, M&A, Franchise model – sell concentrate, share market activities, common goals. Ghana – partnership with one of the anchor bottlers CCBA; Panama – JV with an anchor bottler*. Also, another partner states that *'our partner's experience as a local* *partner was of tremendous help in preventing any major conflict before and after implementation'*

- **Joint Decision Making and Implementation:** Senior Executives from both partners were deeply involved in the strategic decision-making process and participants highlighted the role of negotiations, financial due diligence, and operational oversight in successful implantation. Both MNCs and local partners were responsible for the implementation, with local partners playing a crucial role due to their understanding of the local environment.
- **Timeframe:** While some alliances were planned for shorter periods, implementation often took longer than anticipated (maximum noticed time is 48 months). According to one respondent *'alliance was planned for 12 months but took 18-20 months. FX challenges in the country; buyer needed to do some further check, discussion and get some further consensus; time to obtain regulatory approval was prolonged - SEC approval, FCCPC approval'.* According to another respondents *'12 months but took 18-20 months'*
- **Flexibility and adaptation**: Most respondents identified the requirement for flexibility and adaptability to accommodate local context and realities as a sine qua non for success

iii. Implementation Across Regions

- **Local adaptation:** Previous experience in similar markets helped in the seamless implementation of alliances in Nigeria and modifications to suit the local environment and flexible approaches were crucial for success.
- **Regional Differences**: According to respondents, Northern Nigeria posed more significant challenges due to security concerns and logistics, while the South was more manageable. Marketing and distribution strategies had to be tailored to the specific cultural and regional differences.

iv. Crosscutting Challenges

- Across most interviewed respondents, regulatory approval and staff integration were the biggest challenges identified as facing strategic alliance in the sector;
- Nigeria's weak institutional and governance systems, particularly regarding ethical practices were identified by respondents from MNC as a primary impediment to

success of strategic alliance compared to their partners operating in Nigeria. According to a respondent in a MNC '*ethical issues was easy to handle knowing fully that Coca-Cola is an ethical facility. Regulator understood that later on and conformed. Penalties for underpayment fines. Initially, series of engagement was done with regulator to settle all issues ethically. No compromise on ethics. Customs (no corruption/bribery)/FIRS/Govt official. Seizure of trucks/cars by agencies too. No compromise, just settle fines. This stance initially impacted the whole implementation process*'.

4.3 Extended Review of Findings in Light of Literature

In general, respondents held that their collaborations were successful despite the institutional distance of the MNCs to the Local firms. This may be an indication that the influence of formal and informal institutional distance is not always significant (Kostova, Beugelsdijk, Scott, *et al*., 2020) if the parties involved collaborate and communicate well. Viewed from Rational Choice theory, firms would have assigned particular weights to the variables regarding their decision to collaborate and assign a modest or low value to this form of distance. On the other hand, it could be an indication of the 'collapsing' of institutional distance due to the growing influence of globalisation and the experience of MNCs from their previous forays into developing countries (Depperu, Galavotti and Baraldi, 2022). These factors would have different effect for MNCs entering developing countries (and *vice versa*) and for formal and informal institutional distance (Li, *et al*., 2020).

From the data gathered, the reasons given by MNCs for the initiation of the Strategic Alliance were different from those given by local partners. MNCs stated improvement of brand value, revenue growth, expansion of market depth and investment, cheap production costs and technical capability and buying up competitor capacity as their main motivations. Local Partners majorly cited business continuity, divestment into another product line, revenue growth, brand strength, creation of an African brand and willingness of the MNC to cooperate. On the nature of the Strategic Alliance, most respondents stated that the Joint Venture was the mode within which the Alliance was structured.

In terms of Strategic Alliance initiation, the first move was generally made by the Local Partner. This could be an indication that Nigerian businesses comprehend the special position of foreign firms. But this is not discountenancing that, Local firms are also aware of *their* own knowledge of the Nigerian market and economy which places them in a corresponding *special position*. Regarding respondent involvement in the Alliance (and due to the fact that the entire crop of respondents were of Managerial level), majority were either of Executive level (Finance, Strategy, Operations, Legal, etc.) or Middle Level (Regional Management, Finance, Sales and Operations). Though, there were a handful of support staff. The firms under review generally shared similar time frame, in terms of Strategic Alliance negotiation to implementation: the average time for the 3 Strategic Alliances studied, was 12 months to 18 months. It should be noted that for the Alliances not seeking full acquisition (of the Local Partner), as of the time of data gathering, the Alliance was still ongoing. However, ***FA1*** Middle Management claimed the process was long (4 years) but this included the commencement of the Alliance, all the way to the full acquisition. The Top Management and Middle Management of ***FA3*** held that the Alliance delayed in commencement and implementation due to challenges with obtaining regulatory approval, issues with access to foreign exchange and reaching consensus on whether to go for a full acquisition.

The firms under review generally experienced minimal conflict, restricted to Human Resource/Staff issues, rejection of new recipes by consumers and obtaining of regulatory approval. However, the ***FA3/LA3*** Alliance experienced serious Staff challenges (which affected operations), and lay-offs which resulted in an industrial action by Staff. The reason for minimal conflict among the firms under review can be linked to the use of experienced advisors, frequent communication, broad experience of the partners and true alignment of goals by the Alliance partners. In addition to this, ***FA3*** Middle Management reported some friction, held to be due to re-organisation of sales activities, redistribution of sales targets, and acceptance by Distributors of apparently ‘new’ products. Other challenges between the Head Office and the Northern region were as a result of differences in religion, strength of union and sheer number of people.

In terms of role prominence, the depth of role performance depended on which firm was being interviewed. For the ***FA1/LA1*** Alliance, while Top Management did not see much difference in terms of role prominence, ***FA1*** Middle Management reported that the Local partner’s role was more significant and prominent, as it (i.e., the Local partner) also handled recruitment. The Foreign partner handled the production processes. For the ***FA2/LA2*** Strategic Alliance, Top Management reported that the Foreign partner brought in the technology, Research and Development (R&D) and the product recipe. While the Local partner was more prominent in implementation, as it had more local knowledge. ***FA2*** was more in charge of Factory Operations and production, while ***LA2*** was more in charge of the Strategic Alliance's general operations. However, in the ***FA3/LA3*** Alliance, the foreign partner took on the dominant role of being in charge of the Alliance's general operations (Managing Director, Chief Financial Officer, etc.) because its main intention was full acquisition of the Local partner.

In terms of responsibility for the success of the Strategic Alliance, the general response was that both Foreign and Local entities were responsible, as they both brought different strengths and resources vital to the collaboration. While ***FA1*** Top Management reported that they were more 'active' due to their intention to acquire fully, its Middle Management was of the view that the Local partner was more significant, since it was involved in implementation of the Alliance. For the ***FA2/LA2*** Alliance, one Top Management, each of both the Foreign partner and the Local partner, held that the Local partner's role was more significant, in terms of implementation of Alliance. For the ***FA3/LA3*** Alliance, the Top Management and Middle Management of the Foreign partner took the view that it was more responsible for the success of the Alliance, since its intention was to fully acquire the Local Partner. Even the Top Management of the Local Partner believed that the Foreign partner's role was more significant because it had 'more at stake' as it wanted to fully acquire.

The structure of the collaborators roles generally depended on the extent of initial commitment or shareholding. For instance, for the first phase ***FA1*** was initially only responsible for finance and some operations (it only had a ***40%*** shareholding) according to its Top Management. But after acquiring ***100%*** of the shares, during the second phase, it became responsible for the entire management. A Middle Manager with ***LA1*** stated that following full takeover by the foreign partner, ***LA1*** moved out of the premises. For the ***FA2/LA2*** Alliance, according to the foreign partner's Top Management, the parties agreed on a well-defined management team that reported to a Board consisting of both firm's Executives. However, ***LA2*** was granted autonomy to drive the implementation of the Alliance due to its local expertise with the market. The ***FA3/LA3*** Alliance was structured by ***FA3's*** existing (and customisable) Alliance template, which was held by ***FA3*** Top and Middle Management to have worked well in other jurisdictions.

With respect to the challenges faced by the alliance partners, we see a range of issues. ***FA1*** Top Management reported that Regulatory requirements and supply chain issues, coupled with the foreign exchange challenges were somewhat significant. One Top Manager held that challenges were generally minimal until full acquisition, as ***FA1*** strove to retain talent and improve work culture. ***LA1*** Top Management did not perceive any challenges as such, since to them, they shared common goals with their collaborators. ***FA1*** Middle Management stated that the migration of staff from ***FA1*** to ***LA1's*** holding company, due to the latter's better welfare package was a challenge. This was in addition to issues of government regulation and staff integration. ***FA1*** Regional Management did report challenges, as one mentioned some apprehension among staff due to the Alliance and the temporary suspension in the production of some older products. Another Regional Manager mentioned that a delay in communicating with Staff on their future with the firm, led to several resignations. Top management at ***FA2*** noted that challenges ranged from Nigeria simply being an extremely unique market requiring backward integration, to currency volatility due to supply of foreign exchange, Supply chain challenges, regulatory approval and regulatory stability, attracting and maintaining good talent, etc.
However, one Top Management official stated that ***FA2*** had less internal challenges because the value system of ***LA2*** aligned with ***FA2's***. However, Middle Managers in ***FA2*** stated that communication from Top Management on business changes could have been better managed. ***LA2*** Top Management, Middle Management and Regional Management, stated its main challenge (though it was later reversed) involved consumer resistance to a new recipe implemented by the Foreign partner, which caused sales to fall. One ***LA2*** Middle Manager cited alignment of Alliance Sales and Marketing strategy was an initial challenge. Other ***LA2*** Middle Managers mentioned challenges with regulatory authority and valuation of shares, Staff coordination (especially with getting staff to start selling the ***FA2*** brands) and hitches in the manufacturing process. An ***LA2*** Regional Manager stated that one challenge (due to the recipe change) was for their Sales team to receive continuous training, sensitisation and product familiarisation, following market feedback. Another ***LA2*** Regional Manager stated that the communication problem was actually between the firm and Consumers, as there were acute differences due to religion and culture. Top Management

in ***FA3*** mentioned that some challenges for them included Staff apprehension due to introduction of new partners and government regulatory issues (concerning corporate listing and competition/consumer protection requirements). Top and Middle Management officials in ***LA3*** stated that from their perspective, challenges stemmed from the integration of production processes, workforce integration and engagements with suppliers and distributors as a result of the Alliance. Regional and Middle Managers in ***LA3*** and Regional Managers in ***FA3*** mentioned the following: infrequent communication from top management; delay in acquiring regulatory approvals; Sales Personnel overlap (due to the Alliance involving the Staff of 2 firms) leading to Staff resignation following personnel streamlining; market acceptability/speculation (Northerners in Nigeria were observed to be emotionally attached to ***LA3*** brand); cultural differences and cultural alignment challenges (even involving Head office and Regional offices); Staff prejudice about Alliance (leading to mass resignation); temporary drop in sales; and volatility of South-south regional operations due to cultural orientations to the range of competitive products.

The matter of frequency of discussion on Alliance outcomes and implementation challenges between Alliance partners, had similar differing responses. Top Management at ***LA1*** experienced frequent (though not regular) discussions that included Financial and Legal advisors. ***LA2's*** Top Management reported that discussions were frequent, periodic (though at times *ad hoc*) and the Boards of both firms met quarterly. Top Management of ***LA3*** stated that they discussed at all levels, extremely often in both formal and informal settings.

On the question of the type of Alliance partner preferred (i.e., an existing Local partner or MNC or MNC from emerging market or developed market), responses were generally similar. Top Management and Middle Management at ***FA1*** stated that preference for partners would depend on the nature of the market and the ultimate goal of the Alliance but a flexible approach was better. There are advantages to partnering with Local firms and with MNCs (Local firms understand the business environment and can help 'jumpstart' business). This response was similar to Top Management at ***LA1*** who highlighted the need to take the context and ultimate aims of the firm into consideration. Top Management at ***FA2*** stated that Business Alliances were better done with Local firms as the later's knowledge of the market made implementation of the Alliance easier. Top Management at ***LA2*** held that all types of firms have their advantages, and it would depend on the strategy of the firm and its end goal. However, the acceptance of the product is a critical variable. Top and Middle Management at ***FA3*** had an identical view to Top Management at ***FA2***, regarding dealing with Local partners and the benefit they bring. While Top Management at ***LA3*** took the view identical to the Top Management at ***LA1*** above (i.e., the need to take context and the final aims of the Alliance into consideration) but believed that having experienced financial and legal advisers to assist in structuring agreements and the general process, was necessary.

Regarding the question of which partner was responsible for the implementation and formation of the Strategic Alliance, responses were generally situated between both parties being responsible to one partner taking charge. For instance, Top Management at ***FA1*** took the position that while both parties were generally responsible, a bulk of the duty was on the Local partner. This was because the latter (in the circumstances) aimed for full acquisition and understood the local market better. Middle Management at ***FA1*** claimed both firms were responsible but that ***LA1*** holding company TGI, played a prominent role during the implementation (before full acquisition). Top Management at ***LA1*** stated that both partners were responsible but one Top Manager held that the Foreign partner had more at stake in the implementation. Top Management at ***FA2*** mentioned that the Local partner was more responsible for implementation, general operations and management. Top Management at ***LA2*** was of the opinion that they were more responsible for the formation and implementation of the Strategic Alliance. Top and Middle Management at ***FA3*** were of the view that they were (because the aim was full acquisition) more responsible for implementation of the Alliance. Top Management of ***LA3***, however, believed both parties were responsible for the implementation of the Alliance but it was incumbent on the Foreign partner to get good value for their investment.

On the nature of changes in practice due to the implementation and operation of the Alliance, respondents had differing views. Top Management at ***FA1*** stated they had to streamline some of their global practice processes (audit, finance, Enterprise Resource Planning, Human Resource and Personnel management and Employee culture etc.) and align their local production and products to their established style. ***FA1*** Middle Management concurred with this and stated that the change in business practice was positive. Middle Managers reported increased savings and reduced cost on the strength of the Alliance (in the form of better supplier and vendor negotiation; renegotiation of loan pricing, fees and terms with bankers; reduction in expatriate salary; and use of more local staff by ***FA1*** post-acquisition). Regional Managers reported changes, relating to the synchronisation of customer accounts and even the adoption of ***LA1*** practices. Top Management at ***LA1*** observed no changes in implementation of the Alliance at the initial stage but did observe some after acquisition (i.e., the decision of what products to take to the market). Top Management of ***FA2*** mentioned that there were minimal changes, but this was only because the values of the two firms were similar. Middle Management at ***FA2*** took the position that there were significant policy changes in production process, procurement strategy, risk management, reporting, Human resources and accounting. Top Management at ***LA2*** agreed that changes were minimal but this was as a result of ***LA2's*** style being successful (especially in Sales and Operations). Middle Management at ***LA2*** explained there were modifications in production processes, realignment of existing staff and recruitment of new ones. Middle Management also stated there were noticeable changes in firm policies, production processes (one which had a noteworthy impact), marketing and distribution strategies and human resources policy. Regional Managers at ***LA2*** noted changes in business practice of a slightly different flavour. In addition to a growth in sales, they reported a change in advertising and marketing as a result of the introduction of new products and flavours for the goods. They saw that the introduction of new products necessitated learning of new skills by the Sales Teams. Top and Middle Management at ***FA3*** held that there were consequential changes in production processes (such as automation), procurement, risk management, reporting and Human Resources. Regional Management at ***FA3*** were more elaborate and noted changes in: Management and Departmental structure, Human Resources, Product segmentation, Operations, Supply and Logistics, Partnership structure with Distributors and Suppliers and changes in perception of customers. The Regional Managers observed that the Northern clientele were initially sceptical of the Alliance, as they saw it as a transformation of ***LA3*** from being a 'Family Business' into something different and suspicious.

The question of quantifying performance returns, from the Strategic Alliance, was put before the respondents. The Top Management of ***FA1*** noted performance returns, in terms of improved sales and revenue (connected to access to cheaper and higher levels of finance) as well as improvement in general efficiency within the first year of operations. Middle Management reported performance returns within the first year as well and stated it was due to the strength of the Alliance and peculiar strengths of ***FA1*** (lower expatriate salaries, better terms with bankers, use of more local staff, among others). ***FA1*** Regional Managers agreed with the time taken to see returns and this was as a result of new product development. But, they also revealed that they saw improvement in sales, as early as 6 months into the Alliance. ***FA2*** Top Management observed that their improved efficiency brought double digit revenue growth 2 years into the Alliance. Regional Management at ***LA2*** held that it took a while for performance returns to show, as a result of having to construct a new factory for production and the 're-set' of the product recipe. Top, Middle and Regional Management at ***FA23*** saw performance returns and profitability, between one to two years into the Alliance. In their view, this was due to the synergy of the Alliance, product development, increase in production volumes, marketing, distribution and business efficiency. Middle Management at ***LA3*** recalled that performance returns took "longer than expected" due to new product development. However, one Regional Manager held that increases in sales figures arrived after 6 months of the commencement of the Alliance.

The method of Alliance implementation, in the context of International Distance between the partners (in terms of culture, norms and practice), is a pertinent issue and one of the focal points of this research. ***FA1*** Top Management claimed that its success in implementation was due to a number of reasons. One was its vast Alliance experience in many different emerging markets, the second was that its Local partner understood ***FA1's*** value and reputation and the third was that it had an independent team of Mergers and Acquisitions consultants, financial advisers, legal counsel, agreements and MOUs etc. ***FA1*** Middle Management agreed that previous Alliance experience helped. Also, more specifically, that the adoption of their own global: Reporting structure; Compliance and Ethics; Human Resources and Labour practices; Procurement methods; Health, Safety and Environment policy; and Whistle blower policy were significant in implementation success and in collaborating with a Local firm. ***LA1*** Top Management were of the view that their experience with another ongoing Alliance, grasp of MNC values and operations, in addition to managerial autonomy (granted them over aspects of the Alliance), aided the implementation of the Alliance. ***FA2*** Top Management noted that they ensured proper legal documentation was in place, understood how Alliances work, and how to navigate the current Alliance to attain their wants. Also, their very competent Management team (responsible for a number of high-level tasks) was given a meaningful level of autonomy within defined parameters. ***LA2*** Top Management explained that they were able to implement well with an MNC because they understood how MNCs functioned and how to work together to get their results (they had recent experience with another foreign firm). They also had comprehensive contracts and role assignment; this was in addition to the autonomy given to their management team (though operating according to an SOP from their Foreign collaborator firm). ***FA3*** Top and Middle Management mentioned that their wide range of experience over the years, with Alliances in different countries within Africa (including Nigeria) guaranteed that they would have little difficulty in implementation with a Local firm. They also emphasised adopting a flexible approach in the Alliance that suit the circumstances. ***LA3*** stated that their foreign partner firm's experience with doing business in Nigeria provided them with requisite understanding of the Local market. In addition, they noted that they had a well drafted agreement with clear assignment of roles and responsibilities. Hence, the differences were barely significant.

On whether there was difficulty in implementing across the different regions, ***FA1*** Top Management recorded little difficulty but admitted that, depending on the region, security could be a great concern. In addition, due to the differences in language, advertising had to be connected to the major ethnicity of the particular region. The goals of the Alliance (i.e., to increase market share), led to the reworking of distribution, advertising and sales strategies that had to be aligned to capture more regions. Middle Management at ***FA1*** held that implementation within the regions was not difficult because of their clear distribution chain, conversion of Local partner workers and general presence in the Nigerian market. ***FA1*** Regional Management observed that there was a bit of implementation difficulty across the regions, because of changes needed for Human Resources, some business policies and corporate mindset. The slight difficulty was offset by the embrace and adoption of the Foreign partner by the Local partner. Top Management at ***LA1*** noted that there was little difficulty in implementation across the regions, due to the existence of their established regional presence across the regions.

Top Management at ***FA2*** held that there was a quantum of strategy amendment and change in practice in some of the regions due to their culture, religion and way of life. This also resulted in the deployment of Sales Teams to Distributors in specific regions regarding the operation of Credit Facilities. Top Management at ***LA2*** observed that there was not much difference in implementation across the regions due to their already established presence (specifically in

Lagos, South-South, Abuja and the South-West). However the Northern region required an amendment of product sales strategy and a higher volume of advertising for specific product brands. ***LA2*** Middle Management reported that despite the introduction of new products (which had an effect on sales and market dynamics), implementation was not difficult but the North presented some challenges. This was aided by branding, advertising and campaigns taken to schools. Regional Management held that the differences in the regions posed some challenges (implementation, product acceptance and security in the North) but they were able to amend strategy accordingly.

FA2 Middle Management claimed it was not difficult implementing, as the Local partner had the required experience and spread. ***LA3*** Top Management reported slight challenges, especially with Staff integration and business operations of new depots (for instance number and size of Distributors). However, implementation was made easier by tone-setting communication from Top Management. Middle Management at ***LA3*** stated that there was a bit of difficulty requiring change in policies, mindset and personnel as a result of difference in culture and this made implementation across the region a bit technical and difficult. ***LA3*** Regional Management held that there were initial difficulties that required a change in policies but once the tone was set from Top Management, implementation became smoother. Middle Management at ***FA3*** mentioned that there was some difficulty in aligning depot processes and Staff, due to the distance and culture that slowed down implementation. The Staff alignment problem was solved by directing Line Managers to take charge (following an industrial action). ***FA3's*** Regional Managers reported similar experiences with implementation, stating there was a bit of difficulty requiring change in policies, mindset and personnel. The latter (i.e., personnel) went through significant change, as territorial management had to be either merged or divided.

FA2 Top Management tapped into their experience in implementing Alliances in emerging markets, utilisation of clear and well-drafted agreements and made use of their competent team. ***LA2*** Top Management reported that the success in implementation was due to their grasp of how MNCs operate, use of experience from an ongoing Alliance, quality of legal documentation and managerial autonomy granted them from ***FA2***. Regional Managers at ***LA2*** claimed that regional differences in culture, values and even language affected marketing and advertising (including Social Media adverts), mainly in the Northern part of the country. ***FA3*** Top and Middle Management explained that how they were able to implement with a Local firm under the conditions of regional differences, was as a result of their experiences with Alliances in other countries and emerging markets, general business experience in Nigeria and ability to develop a flexible approach.

Regional Management at ***FA3*** stated that the differences in culture had a significant impact on the appreciation of the product and quality. The operation of the Alliance was affected, as business practices and norms needed to be changed to follow international best practices and due process. However, one Regional Manager reported that due to the homogeneity of customs within their region, there was little impact on implementation. Top Management at ***LA3*** stated that ***FA3's*** understanding of the local market, well drafted agreements and role assignment were how the Alliance was able to implement. ***LA3*** Middle Management explained that the differences in culture, values and language affected the perception of the product quality and customer sales. In particular, Northern Distributors were committed to the 'old' brand and having them take up the new one was demanding. In addition, difficulty stemmed from the change in business practice regarding Credit limits during implementation of the Alliance. Regional Managers at ***LA3*** stated that the distinctions in culture and practice were prominent initially, in the acceptance of products, in some regions (due to local preference for existing products and an emotional attachment to the brand). In addition, because Distributors and Sales teams were already used to existing products and specific way of doing business (i.e., such as coverage areas, credit facility model etc.) there was a present, though minimal effect on implementation. It bears mentioning that one Top Manager at ***FA3***-in relative detail-explained how a previous alliance with a foreign firm did not succeed. Ranging from a perceived lack of sufficient due diligence to the poor management of costs, to unsubstantiated profit expectations and then to poor Flour Milling industry market dynamics. But it was held that the lack of understanding of the local market, the inordinate length of time to adjust to the culture and attitude of the typical Nigerian consumer and the fragmented nature of the Nigerian distributor scheme that caused the alliance to fail.

On the question of the nature of the significance of differences between the regions and their impact, ***FA1*** Top Management had the view that the differences (in coverage, language and culture) between the regions were quite significant. Each region had its peculiarities and they had to align their strategies to the peculiarities. For instance, the Northern part of the country was more geographically spread out; hence, it needed stronger logistics in terms of distribution and supply chains. This was in contrast with the Southern part of the country that was less spread out and as such required less intense coverage. Middle Management took the position that despite differences, implementation of the Alliance was not difficult, because the Local firm's staff were well acquainted with the various regional differences and because they (as the Foreign firm) had notable experience with the Nigerian market and context. ***FA2*** Top Management mentioned that the differences in the regions was not significant and this was partly because the regional entities were still being managed by the Local firm. In other words their local and effective structure remained. Middle Management felt the regional differences were significant but were offset by the Local firm's structures and experience. ***LA2*** Middle Management stated that though they, as the Local firm had the experience, there were consequential regional differences, which led to a change in marketing, sales and distribution strategy. Regional Managers explained that while Sales strategy generally differed in the regions, the regional differences were less pronounced in metropolitan areas (Lagos and Abuja). Product acceptance was more difficult in the North due to its physical characteristics (i.e., sheer size) and this also meant challenging logistics, in that the region required more sales people, more vehicles and higher fuel consumption. Top and Middle Management at ***FA3*** held that the differences (for instance in language) in the regions affected their notions of business processes and reporting lines. However, as soon as Top Management took up their leadership position in terms of firm decision-making, cooperation and alignment ensued. ***LA3*** Middle Management expressed that the differences in ethnicity, region and even population were significant, between the regions and the Head Office but also between the regions themselves.

On the development of a region-specific strategy, ***FA1*** Top Management noted that they had to develop sales strategy and advertising content to connect with the people and match the various regions. Middle Management said that regional strategies were adopted for increased sales and market penetration. One ***LA1*** Top Management official observed that while the Alliance subsisted, the regular business strategy was maintained, while another Top Manager remarked that region-specific strategies were developed, based on culture, religion and way of life of the region. Some regional Distributors had special Sales teams (to provide Credit Facilities) attached to them. ***FA2*** Top and Middle Management held that the change in regional strategy was very minimal and they adopted the effective and existing framework of the Local Partner firm. ***LA2*** Top Management had conflicting views. One Top Manager stated that there was no specific region penetration strategy.

While another Top Manager (whose view had concurrence with Middle Management) explained that there were different strategies for different regions, based on the latter's culture and religion. Furthermore, Sales teams that provided Credit Facilities were dispatched to Distributors in some regions, as a result of the differences. ***FA3*** Top Management explained that they did not have to develop a region specific penetration strategy. Middle Management, however, stated that they had to develop a different region penetration strategy in marketing and distribution, for instance in the North. ***LA3*** Top Management mentioned that they did have to develop different product offerings for the regions. Also, while Distributor penetration in the North was larger, the South had more Distributors but they were smaller and more fragmented.

On how the Alliance was impacted by the local custom/culture in the regions and the role of prior knowledge (of the local environment) in the mitigation of implementation risk and Alliance effectiveness, the responses were varied. Top Management at ***FA1***, noted that local staff of the regions were employed more, in addition to having the advertising and sales strategies refined to reflect the local culture. There was also input from the Local Partner firm, that assisted in attracting new Distributors and routes to market, through their experience and knowledge. Middle Management mentioned that their knowledge of the local and international contexts ensured they reduced risk and ensured the Alliance was implemented well. Regional Managers were of the opinion that the combined experience of the Alliance partners helped reduce the impact to minimal levels. ***LA1*** Top Management stated that prior knowledge of the local environment was extremely useful in reducing political risk, especially with the modifications in Distribution and Sales strategies and Advertising plans. Top Management at ***FA2*** remarked that the useful knowledge and business and operational models of the Local firm were adopted across the regions with little adjustments. It was emphasised that regional presence was mainly focused on Sales, Distribution and Advertising. Top Management at ***LA2*** commented that knowledge of the local environment was useful in reducing risks and surmounting challenges, specifically in the Distribution and Sales strategies and the Advertising campaigns. Regional Managers explained that there were infrastructural and operational challenges and differences in Consumer behaviour in some regions.

However, the high return-on-investment meant that the partners would have to be innovative in beating the obstacles and amend strategy to suit the regions. ***FA3*** Top and Middle Management held that due to their past experience in Nigeria and current presence in the country's regions (along with their manufacturing plants and Distribution outlets), they were more effective, the political risks were reduced and the general difficulty was muted. Their approach also went through modifications to suit the region. ***LA3*** Top Management explained that their experience, in conjunction with that of their Foreign Partner firm was useful in reducing the implementation risk profile. Middle Management took the view that local customs had minimal impact due to their existing market knowledge. To them, the regions had their peculiar characteristics (the Southeastern region was business friendly, while the Southwestern region was more 'liberal') and this impacted the Financial Performance indices. In addition, the differences in the regions also impacted their position on Cost of Debt (KD) financing. Regional Managers had distinct experiences, as one mentioned that there was significant impact from local custom along a number of processes, another stated that the 'Family approach' to doing business in the Northern region was significant, while the last Regional Manager noted that the impact on the Alliance was minimal as the cultures in each region were very similar.

On the question of whether there was any region that was more difficult within which to operate or implement, Top Management at ***FA1*** expressed that the Northern region was the most difficult (which severely affected marketing strategies) due to security concerns, literacy and the wide area of coverage. ***LA1*** was of the view that implementation strategies for the regions were slightly different and the North stood out due to its peculiar characteristics. Middle Management held that the difficulties were not much but became more pronounced once one went further 'up North' and as a result of this, strategies had to undergo some modification. ***FA2*** Top and Middle Management noted that because the existing business model was adopted, difficulty was not really obvious but the Northern Sales and Marketing strategy was markedly different from the other regions. The business environment in the Southern part of the country, as opposed to the North, was driven mainly by Traders. Top and Middle Management at ***LA2*** mentioned that the regions were quite different, with the North having its peculiar marketing, branding and advert campaigns to ensure alignment of religion, gender, and perception (for the advertising of some of the products, special attention was paid to children and their Mothers). A Subsidiary Advertising firm was used in some instances, according to Middle Management. The Southern part of the country was less difficult and the growth of the market came from product acceptability and competitive brands. Also, the business context and environment had female Traders exert considerable influence, as opposed to other regions. Implementation strategy was more flexible the further one went away from the Head office. ***FA3*** Top and Middle Management noted that implementation was less difficult close to the Head office than was in the Southern part of the country, but the other regions were not very tough though the North stood out. ***LA3*** Top Management held that the Northern region was quite different and slightly difficult to implement but the prior knowledge of the Foreign Partner firm and market dominance of the Local Partner firm was extremely useful.

The final question was the view of the Respondents on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how it influences Strategic Alliances and its implementation. ***FA1*** Top Management observed that an understanding of the market was key, for instance Supply Chains were less efficient, power supply was low, purchasing power was low, cash reigned as opposed to credit, taxes were less and regulation could be 'dynamic'. Institutions were generally weak, despite the need to follow due process, which the Foreign Partner consistently did. Regulators initially resisted this unwavering ethical stance and even seized the Foreign Partner firm machinery, but they eventually understood the Foreign Partner firm's position and comported themselves. Flowing from this, the Local partner firm had to be relied on to navigate negative influence, to keep the integrity and survival of the Alliance.

Top Management observed a noticeable difference between ethical principles of Nigeria, as compared to its home country and as a result, a Joint Venture would be recommended for businesses interested in new market entry. ***LA1*** Top Management stated that Nigeria was a great market if one knew the terrain and dynamics of the market. Where one could understand it, one could reap the benefits, though the institutional structure could be strengthened to improve the ease of doing business. ***FA2*** Top Management remarked that the population of the country created a large market with the potential for good returns and as a result, it was critical for one to understand market structure and peculiarities to aid the efficiency of business implementation. It would be difficult for a sole partner to penetrate without help from a Local Partner firm that has knowledge of the market. However, the weak institutional structure could do with strengthening to improve the ease of doing business. Top Management at ***LA2*** noted that the country was a large market with sizable potential but one had to carry out feasibility studies and due diligence to comprehend the legal framework, regulatory authority and economic peculiarities. There was also a role for firm values and ethics that would ensure that country corrupt practices did not undermine its business operations. In addition, strengthening the weak institutional environment would greatly improve the ease of doing business and encourage investment by firms. They advise proper study of the market to determine acceptability of potential products. Also, they recommended Alliances with Local firms that knew the market and had capacity for backward and forward integration and not just manufacturing. While agreeing with the position of Top Management, Middle Managers emphasised keeping a high ethical standard and noting how the weak institutional structure affected how they strategize. ***FA3*** Top Management observed less implementation of rules and more overregulation by the government, which hampered business activity but, as they carried the government along, they had minimal challenges. Generally, doing business, due to the weak institutional structure (i.e., poor legal framework and weak regulatory authority) was challenging, could discourage investors and potential Alliance partners, but it was worthwhile to participate due to the significant ROI the Nigerian market offers. ***LA3*** Top Management noted that every market had its peculiarities and challenges (i.e., the economy, specific industry, consumers, value chain, etc.) and the idea was for investors to understand the market and deploy risk mitigation strategies when they choose to invest, especially where the ROI was worth it.

4.4 Alignment of Researching Findings with Research Objectives and Research questions

The study findings align closely with the research objectives and questions outlined in chapter 1 of thesis. Detailed below are key themes and insights from the primary data relating to each objective and question:

Research Objectives

a. Identification of Strategies for Market Penetration in Context of Nigeria's Multi-Ethnicity and Weak Institutional Realities:

The findings show that MNCs and local partners primarily adopt Joint Ventures (JVs) and franchise models to penetrate different regional markets, which aligns with the objective of understanding how these strategies account for Nigeria's diverse cultural and institutional landscape. The phased approach to alliances, moving from JVs to full acquisitions, also reflects a peculiar strategic adaptation to local context.

b. The Factors Influencing Strategic Alliances in the Industry

The study finds that the primary factors driving alliances—value proposition alignment, market expansion, revenue expansion, and brand value—correspond well with the objective of identifying and analysing what influences the formation and maintenance of alliances. The emphasis on formal agreements and credible partners validates this objective.

c. The Role of Institutional Factors and Context Dynamics

The study reported minimal incidences of conflicts and the centrality of regulatory approvals highlight the impact of Nigeria's weak institutional structures on alliances. The need for flexibility and adaptation accentuates the role of dynamic capabilities in sustaining these alliances within a challenging and largely unpredictable institutional environment.

d. Operational Adjustments Across Regional and Cultural Divides

The differences in challenges faced in the North versus the South of Nigeria, along with tailored marketing and distribution strategies, demonstrate how MNCs and their partners adjust their operations to fit regional and cultural contexts. This directly aligns with the objective of understanding operational adjustments for strategic alliances.

e. Strategic Decision-Making Processes

Joint decision-making and the involvement of senior executives from both partners in the strategic process reflect the strategic decision-making dynamics within alliance partners in the sector. The importance of negotiations, financial due diligence, and operational oversight also supports this objective.

Research Questions

a. Effect of Weak Institutional Structures on Alliances

The findings show that weak institutional structures were considered impactful by respondents particularly affecting regulatory approvals, staff integration, and the overall implementation timeline of strategic alliances and also weak institutions create challenges of managing ethical dilemmas. This aligns with the question of how these structures affect the formation, implementation, and performance of alliances.

b. Effective Strategies for Managing Cultural Differences and Regional Variations:

The study highlights the importance of local partner experience, regional adaptation, and tailored marketing strategies as effective approaches to managing cultural and regional differences. The minimal conflict attributed to local partner experience supports this question's focus on managing potential conflicts. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of experience, clear communication, and flexibility to address cultural variations

c. Advantages of Strategic Alliances Over Traditional Partnerships

The emphasis on brand value, market depth, and revenue growth as drivers for strategic alliances suggests that these alliances offer significant advantages over traditional partnerships. The mutual benefits cited by both MNCs and local partners, such as business continuity and technical capability, further answers this question.

d. Challenges to Sustainability and Mitigation Strategies

Regulatory approval, staff integration, and ethical practices are identified as key challenges to the sustainability of alliances. The use of experienced advisors, frequent communication, and alignment of goals are mentioned as mitigation strategies, which answers the research question.

4.5 Conclusion, Limitations And Implications for Further Research

Strategic Alliances will continue to be an efficient and effective method for businesses to expand, grow their revenue, leverage their skills and technology and favourably compete with their rivals (Isoraite, 2009). The increasing 'bank of experience' in favour of Multinational Corporations (MNC) engaging in Joint Ventures, Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A) and Franchises, means that the strategies, experience and knowledge gained by these firms can be applied in different contexts and countries. These MNCs, through collaboration with firms in emerging markets, can broaden the scope of their operations and grow their firms and interests even further, by partnering with locally-based firms. The local firms also get the opportunity to work with these MNCs and avail themselves of the knowledge and resources of the Foreign firm. This relationship allows for collaborators to exploit their joint strengths in environments where one acting as a single unit, may have found it challenging. Due to the fact that the countries with the fastest growing populations are in the developing world (World Population Review, 2023), MNCs will have to utilise the most practical and feasible means to exploit these markets and grow their businesses and broaden their share of the market. Strategic Alliances, where the context permits, meet this requirement. Strategic Alliances work in both ways, however, as they grant *both* firms the means to gain benefits and optimise their strengths that create the opportunity for gain. This is because there is no new firm created (unlike an M&A) but two firms acting together. This advantage puts the firms in a stronger position competitively and financially. But, as positive as the obvious gains from Strategic Alliances are, the issue of how Alliances are implemented is of serious importance (Bamberger *et al*., 2014; Howsley *et al*., 2015; Koseoglu *et al*., 2018).

This study has explored the concept and theory of Strategic Alliances and also its practical application in a developing country context. It has considered the functions, characteristics, types, importance, success factors (at various stages) and implementation efforts, among other things. It adopted Institutional theory, Institutional distance theory and Dynamic capabilities theory as the frameworks with which to analyse Strategic Alliances. In terms of methodology, the study adopted a Case study method. The techniques for data collection used on this study were documentary sources and semi-structured interviews. This research followed an abductive approach.

The study paid close attention to the operation of Strategic Alliances in the Nigerian Food and Beverage sector in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). The study focused on 3 MNCs coded as: ***FA1*** (Coca-Cola International), ***FA2*** (Kellogs International) and ***FA3*** (Olam International Limited). It also considered 3 Local Corporations, coded as ***LA1*** (Chi Nigeria Limited), ***LA2*** (Tolaram Group) and ***LA3*** (Crown Flour Mill Dangote Nigeria Limited/Tiger Brand). This provided 3 Strategic Alliances for review, which resulted in 22 interviews in total. These interviews were restricted to Top Management, Middle Management and Regional Management. While the study would have benefitted in terms of richness of perspective, from interviews with Line Managers and lower level staff, the exigencies of time and resources had the interviews in this manner. The gender disaggregation was predominantly male, with only **9.1%** (2 out of the 22 total respondents) being female. That creates room for further investigation into the gender diversity at Managerial level in the Food and Beverage industry.

In general, Nigeria has been characterised as a developing (or emerging market) Country, with weak institutions. One of the motivations of this study is that, generally, weak Institutions has significant effect on the operation of Strategic Alliances in developing country contexts. The Nigerian business environment has been characterised by observers as experiencing high level of insecurity, poor quality public institutions (the institutions themselves plagued by corruption, inefficiency and lack of technological dynamism), inefficient infrastructure, among others (Orjiakor, 2022 and the World Bank, 2022). The African Development Bank notes that in the Nigerian economy, Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth fell from **3.6%** in 2021 to **3.3%** in 2022, principally due to a decline in Crude-oil production. As a result, the Oil and Gas Industry contribution (as a major sector) shrank by **5%**, although this was counterbalanced by expansion in Services (**7%**) and Agriculture (**2%**). On the demand side, poor GDP growth was caused by a shrinking of public consumption (**2.5%**) and net exports (**80%**) (African Development Bank, 2023). These and other issues serve as a challenge for local and international firms, as they both have to navigate the often difficult and unpredictable economic and political landscape of the Country. In fact, in their empirical study on the impact of the Ease of Doing Business parameters to Return on Investment (ROI) for private sector firms in Nigeria, Babatunde, Ajape, Isa, *et al*., (2023) found significant negative correlation between Government policy continuity and ROI. Government's restrictive policy on Foreign exchange, import bans and battle with security are serious issues that if resolved, can significantly improve business and attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (World Bank, 2022). However, while emerging markets like Nigeria pose challenges, they also have numerous opportunities. With its status as the largest economy in the African sub-region, Nigeria also presents a land full of potential for many businesses. This was recognised by a number of the respondents in the firms under review.

Nigeria is a land with numerous opportunities but also *threats*: firms engaged in Strategic Alliances must be able to manoeuvre within this environment and maximise their market operations. They must be able to 'think' and make strategic decisions as a business and in collaboration with their chosen partners (Costanzo and Di Domenico, 2015; Ibrahim *et al*., 2015; Kotler *et al*., 2016; Parayitam and Papenhausen, 2016). Firms involved in Strategic Alliances have to innovate, anticipate and develop tactics to give them, if not, the advantage in any situation, then a level playing field. One core interest of this study was to understand how firms implemented Strategic

Alliances in the context of a developing country. The implementation of the Alliance concerns how the firms make decisions about how to handle the personnel issues, finance, legal requirements, production decisions, supply chain matters, marketing and advertising, Foreign exchange supply, energy and their other collaborators. The different types of decisions, their decision-context and their impact is placed against a backdrop of uncertainty and flux, common in developing countries. This brings a dimension to firm decision-making that is fundamentally different from decisions made by the firm *qua* firm. Howe (1986), explains the numerous characteristics of strategic decisions, which heightens their importance, such as:

i.) They involve the allocation of resources across the firm as a whole and thus have an impact upon the total organisation;

ii.) Strategic decisions involve choosing from among a number of possible courses of action, and by deciding upon one particular strategy, a firm is denying itself the opportunity of taking up other possibilities, at least in the medium term;

iii.) Such decisions will therefore commit the business to a particular strategic direction for some time into the future and are normally reversible only at considerable cost;

iv.) Strategic decisions involving a specific commitment of the firm's resources are usually made relatively infrequently, and each decision must be regarded as unique. It is therefore not easy to learn from one's previous experience in this area; and

v.) Strategic decisions have to be made under conditions of partial ignorance of some important variables and the outcomes are correspondingly *uncertain*.

It needs to be re-emphasised that firms in the Nigerian FMCG space have a unique context within which they operate, as the products they offer are those with distinctive branding, marketing and consumers. The task of balancing the distinctiveness of the brand and its centrality among similar products within its class, is non-trivial. This is because the decisions the firm makes, influences not only how the brand is perceived, but how much of it is sold, what its price will be and its eventual profitability (Dawar and Bagga, 2015). This means that advertising, marketing, distribution and customer relations require purpose-built strategies to ensure optimal engagement and efficient use of resources. Some of the firms studied hereunder, innovatively engaged with the issue of branding, marketing, and advertising. In some instances, their advertising campaigns had to be conversant and sensitive to the values and worldview of the customers in a particular region of the country. It was noted by the same respondents that Nigeria's commercial and administrative capital were simple to operate in, as their populations had a more global perspective and hence different tastes.

Due to Nigeria's peculiar social and political history, the country is geographically divided amongst relatively distinct ethnic regions, with their general culture and worldviews. Hence, businesses that intend to operate and sell their goods must take these contrasts into consideration. These differences have to be contemplated alongside the weak institutional environment that brings to closer relief, the low level of trust and possible opportunism that firms may potentially face. How firms surmount these challenges is a pertinent question in this study: would the incentives to defect be the same for all types of firms or would there be tangible differences across the spectrum of firms? Hence, respondents from both Multinational Corporations (MNC) and Local Corporations were approached. In particular, Top Management Executives (Managing Directors, Finance Executives, Legal Executives, Strategy Executives and Operations Executives) were interviewed. This quality of evidence provided perspectives that were more long-term oriented, as the concerns of Top Management would likely diverge from other levels in the context of a Strategic Alliance. However, input from Middle Managers was also sought, as they provide a perspective that articulates the actual day-to-day implementation of the strategic direction. In many ways, the Middle Managers are the conduit, linking the vision and goals from Top Management to the actions of Lower Management/Staff. This positioning provides them a vantage point that looks in both directions. Regional Managers were also interviewed, and their standpoint is taken to be similar to that of the Middle Managers. The contribution of Regional Managers to the data is noteworthy, as their insight directly covers the research question of how regional differences affect the implementation of the Strategic Alliance.

Chapter 5

The Results and Findings of the Thesis

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The previous chapter of this thesis provided empirical qualitative data on how Strategic Alliances are implemented in the multi-ethnic, weak institutional context of Nigeria. The findings showed how Managers in the respondent firms (3 foreign firms and 3 Nigerian firms) navigated the Strategic Alliance environment and not only implemented their strategic plans but *optimised* the collaborations to achieve growth. Chapter II, raised the noticeable differences between Strategic Alliances/Joint Ventures on one hand and Mergers and Acquisitions on the other (PwC, 2014). The distinction drawn between them aids in understanding the inner workings of Strategic Alliances, in contrast to other similar forms and helps to ground the characteristics of Alliances as a result of that contrast. From respondent evidence, it is confirmed that the implementation of Strategic Alliances gives primacy to collaboration and co-creation. Regarding the negotiation of agreements, Alliances pursue a flexible position; the duration of the Alliance tends to be finite; the benefit and risk allocation is shared between the partners; Alliance governance at times involves different management teams; the culture of the Alliance is different from that of the Local partner (though one of the cases under review had a similar culture to the Foreign firm); and the alignment of the partner's interests is regularly reviewed (PwC, 2014).

A major point of investigation for this thesis was the implementation of the Alliance within the different regions of Nigeria. Geographically, Nigeria can be loosely divided into a predominantly *Muslim* Northern part of the country and a predominantly *Christian* (and minority *Animist*) Southern part. In terms of language, though English is the *lingua franca*, the Northern part predominantly adopts the use of Hausa in informal communications, while the South adopts Yoruba, Igbo and Pidgin English (the intensity of language use will generally depend on the region within which one operates). As a result of these language and religious differences, the norms and values of the nation are also roughly divided (Campbell, 2011). Demographic data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), shows that poverty is predominant more, in the Northern part of the country while the Southern part enjoys a much lower rate (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). In terms of the business environment, the country has been characterised as being subject to foreign exchange restrictions; corruption; mandates on local content; difficulties with the

Intellectual property regime; and regional insecurity, among others (International Trade Administration, 2023). These regional differences and political-economic context had a very significant effect on the operation of the Alliances under review.

The variations in social orientation, norms and worldview have an impact on consumption and this means that businesses intending to operate in Nigeria must engage with these noticeable differences. In addition, the several political, governance and economic challenges mean that businesses must ensure to operate and function within the ambit of laws, while maintaining efficiency and exploiting the market. This was a critical issue, as the firms under review are FMCG companies and as such, their key line of business involves the sales of goods. The manner in which goods are sold is influenced by the sales territory context because the latter will determine the structure of distribution, supply, marketing and advertising, credit arrangements, logistics and personnel. Challenges in regional sales (within the context of international business), range from: Managing globally distributed teams; Language barriers; Inflation and Currency exchange issues; Variations in norms and culture; Supply chain risks; Personnel and Talent Acquisition/Onboarding; and Compliance, among other things. All the foregoing were distinct and tangible issues faced by the firms under review and they were confronted with a predictable set of approaches. The internal management structure, flexibility in the handling of operational matters and the use of Consultants, Financial Advisors, Solicitors, along with the experience of the Local partner, were some of the critical success factors thrown up by the weak institutional context and distinct regions. As mentioned above, Nigeria presents an environment that has been described by some observers to be risky for businesses (Government of the United Kingdom, 2023). Despite these risks, the Alliance partners, from inception, understood the significance of certain qualities in a partner and its impact on the implementation of the Alliance. During implementation, the partners, through a mix of learning, effective management and regular communication made sure that the regional differences did not rise to pose a serious threat. It is unclear how the Alliance partners were able to overcome the security challenges in the Northern part of the country. However, it was clear that the religious and cultural differences were addressed by specific and targeted advertising campaigns and marketing. Supply chain issues, on the other hand, being more of a logistical matter, were solved but there was insufficient detail as to how this was done. Again the challenge of low purchasing power of Nigerians, especially in the ***FA1/LA1*** and the ***FA2/LA2*** Strategic Alliances, was handled by the review of Credit Facilities provided.

Be that as it may, the firms under review were able to set up their Alliances, implement and develop them. The firms, *per* the evidence provided, reported 2 main forms of challenges. The first revolved around legitimacy requirements of doing business. As mentioned previously in this thesis, the challenge of Multinational firms in doing business in a new country context, is to learn novel ways of implementing their business in environments they are not used to. In many instances, there are several competing and even conflicting expectations from government regulators, consumers and even Alliance partners. The result of this is tension between the firm and the environment, tension within the firm and tension between the firm and its partners (Kostova and Zaheer, 1999). These tensions and competing interests were exemplified in the handling of the weak institutional environment. The second challenge was that respondent data majorly highlighted having “an understanding of the market”, “maintaining strong ethical principles” and “relying on the knowledge of the Local partner to overcome corruption”. This represents the manifestation of Dynamic Capabilities of Alliance Scanning, Coordination and Learning. Alliance *scanning* is demonstrated in the fact that the Foreign firms chose partners they knew had the requisite experience, in not only dealing with the market but being able to successfully manage their business and grow it. *Coordination* is inferred through the manner in which the firms as partners integrate their activities and share information relating to the penetration of the market and growth of the Alliance. *Learning* is represented in the use of the firm’s previous experiential knowledge (in combination with partner knowledge) to surmount the obstacles thrown up by the Nigerian context. The Institutional environment presented a set of problems the firms had to resolve, while contending with how to produce, distribute and make a profit. All the foregoing dynamic capabilities came into play in this regard.

The centrepiece of this study was the operation of the Alliances in the various regions. Respondents generally alluded to the stark differences in culture, literacy, coverage and language (Management at ***FA2*** reported that religion was also significant), which led them to develop region-*specific* approaches to Alliance implementation. However Top Management at ***FA1*** reported that they did not need to amend their regional penetration strategy in any meaningful way, as they already had operations in the country. In the main, the differences did not create serious difficulty, as Respondents reported that the structure of the Alliance, their own and their partner experience in the country, brand visibility/awareness, superior legal documentation and other managerial arrangements ensured that the difficulties did not become detrimental. In addition, as stated by the respondents, the reputation of the Alliance partner and prior times they may have had in the past were credible sources of Alliance success (Das and Teng, 2001; Kim and Inkpen, 2005). However, for some of the Alliances, differences in the regions meant that distribution, advertising and marketing had to be reshaped and aligned with the outlook and values within the region. In particular, Regional Managers in ***LA2*** mentioned that they carried out extensive market research and developed culturally sensitive marketing campaigns for the Northern region. In some instances, special Sales Teams had to be deployed along with reworked Credit Facilities for the regions. Respondent data was generally in agreement that the Northern part of the country presented the most difficulty, due to its size, culture and security concerns. It can be noted that the experience of both partners was principal to the success of the Alliance. While the Alliance structure, communication and flexibility were also very critical, the dominant theme in the respondent's evidence was how previous and ongoing Alliance experience helped with navigating the murky waters of the Nigerian institutional environment. This speaks to the manner in which successful Alliances are carried out, in the sense that the use of experience, regular communication, commitment, trust and learning provide the Alliance partners key resources for growth (Das and Teng, 2003; Kim and Inkpen, 2005; Spekman *et al*., 1998; Gulati, 1995).

It bears repeating that, firms have specific motivations for why they implement Strategic Alliances. While the obvious reasons are that firms aim to achieve higher growth and to weaken their competition, this research has shown that the manner in which this is done, is revealing about the ability of the humans 'behind the veil' (i.e., the Managers and Directors) to coalesce together and act in unison. They intend to achieve growth but also to overcome the competition that arises as a result of forging alliances with other firms. The construction of the aims of their firm, understanding of the context, their implementation of the Strategic Alliance framework and engagement with the Alliance, depict the variables of interest that is key to the Case study/qualitative approach (Steinhilber, 2008). It is pertinent to restate that the intent of this research was *exploratory*: to study and determine the nature of the problem to provide clearer and more nuanced understanding. The aim was not to provide prediction (though it can be predicted that firms in weak Institutional contexts will adopt flexible approaches). *The general finding is* *that while institutions were hypothesised to have a significant effect on the implementation of the Strategic Alliance, the effects may have been more muted*. The concept of Partner compatibility is a weighty variable in the success of the Strategic Alliances and in this study, it contributed to the success of the Alliance. The dual concepts of *cultural fit* and *organisational fit* were depicted in the qualitative data gathered, specifically in the responses that pointed out the salience of values, cultural orientations and alignments of firm organisational culture. The categories of respondents that provided deeper insight into how the Strategic Alliance was implemented in the face of the cultural and ethnic issues were the Regional Managers and Middle Managers.

While it is obvious that the day-to-day work of implementation of the alliance is executed by Middle and Line Managers, the evidence gathered demonstrates that Top (Senior) Management is fully concerned with Alliance *management*. Top Management's involvement in Alliance execution focuses on broad financial, operational and strategic decisions. One implication for further research is for data gathering to focus more on Middle Managers and Managers involved in Sales, Supply Chain, Operations and Human Resources. This is because Middle Managers have been observed to be not only key to general implementation and strategy implementation but also to other aspects of Corporate management. Rensberg, Davis and Venter (2014), in their empirical study identified: advocacy, improving operational performance, managing performance and driving compliance (for subsequent downward compliance) to Middle Managers. Middle Managers have a better grasp and awareness of the routine and even the *irregular* as a result of their own "distance" (i.e., closeness) to the implementation of business practices. Their more consistent interaction with business employees and their observation of changes in operational policy grant them this vantage that is not enjoyed by Top Management. In general, their experiences take on a heightened sense of significance in Strategic Alliances, for Foreign partner Middle Managers in developing country environments and Local partner Middle Managers. These conclusions also apply to the experience of Regional Managers, as though they are similarly positioned as non-regional Managers, they undergo a qualitatively different engagement with business operations and Strategic Alliance implementation. This is not unconnected with the fact that there is often substantial physical distance between them and the Head Office. If communication is not regular and swift, it will have an impact on decision-making in the regions, as was depicted in the ***FA3*/*LA3*** Alliance.

The role of Institutions in the formation, operation and implementation of the Strategic Alliance is also prominent. The success of the Alliances under review, despite being under a strained institutional environment, may have been *in spite* of the weak Nigerian Institutional environment. The MNCs had an added advantage, however, as they had the experience and track-record of having dealt in other similar jurisdictions. Though the Institutions in the countries where they had operated and Nigeria were clearly not identical, there was a level of comprehension, business intelligence, experience with other Local partner alliances and resolve they utilised that ensured they obeyed regulations and kept within the law. This issue of various challenges or 'distance' between the Foreign firm and the Local firm brings the weakness of Nigerian Institutions into focus. This weakness of Institutions will surely have an effect on the performance of the Strategic Alliance, because of the differences in regulatory distance, normative distance, cognitive distance and formal and informal distance (Kostova, Beugelsdijk, Scott, *et al*., 2020). Collaborating firms, aware of these many forms and types of distance, will ensure to operate and conduct themselves with a minimal level of conflict. Intra-firm risk and uncertainty would be less debilitating on the performance of the Alliance because the firms would have agreed on the various forms, levels and modes of disclosure. Reaching agreement on the types of disclosure is attained through the capacity and skill of advisors, (which pertains to the quality of legal, accounting and managerial arrangements, mentioned above) constant communication, broad experience of the partners and true alignment of goals by the Alliance partners. This means the firms can squarely 'face' the market and regulatory institutions. This is not to say that the Alliance partners will not experience conflict between themselves (delays in communication of Human Resources decisions and Staff apprehension due to introduction of new Partners, as seen in the respondent evidence herein). But it is in facing the market that the weakness of Institutions becomes apparent, and this can result in 3 different types of effects. The first is the effect of *direct regulation* of a legal or illegal kind on business activity by the government of the weak Institutional environment (for instance relating to obtaining permits and approvals). This type of effect moves directly from the government to the business and creates a situation where the business has limited choices. Secondly, it can relate to the *poor regulation of the broader macroeconomy* by the government (Nigeria at the time of this study had multiple exchange rates, resulting in 'Multiple currency practices; International Monetary Fund, 2019). In addition, the challenge in the forex regime was very prominent in the respondent evidence. This type of effect does not manifest between the government and the business in a *dyadic* fashion but it is as a result of government inefficiency or ineffectiveness or failure. This creates a situation where the firm again has limited choices and this kind of effect can impair the long-term sustainability of the business where the situation does not improve. Thirdly, it can relate to a *hybrid effect* from challenges in Supply Chain management, that themselves are as a result of government regulation, indirect government action and the Local country normative environment (Kato and Manchidi, 2022). This kind of effect has varying impacts on the implementation of the Alliance and the operation of the business that are similar to the first and second types of effect.

It has been noted that Strategic Alliances have a high failure rate. According to Lehene and Borza (2018), Strategic Alliances fail nearly half of the time. Therefore, the question of why other Strategic Alliances succeed, especially in developing country contexts, is paramount in understanding more about this species of business type. From the data gathered, it can be observed that several reasons serve to ensure that the Strategic Alliances under observation succeeded. *Firstly*, the collaborations involved existing and experienced large businesses. Where a Strategic Alliance involves one business that is well established and another business that has not had some level of experience or track-record; the probability of the Alliance succeeding might be lower. Though it is unclear just how many years is an *optimal* amount, the businesses should have at least been in existence for more than 10 years. This is not a rule but more like a proposition. It should be pointed out that this necessary, experience should include the ability to understand the market, the ability to understand and comprehend the culture and attitude of the country's customer base and the distributor scheme. These last 3 elements, among several others, were prominent in the testimony of the Top Managers. They demonstrated that the matrix of experiences should cut across previous experience in other countries and the expectations the firm has for the new country within which it is operating. The failure of the Alliance (referred to by the ***FA3*** Top Manager) was because the Foreign partner did not pay close attention to these issues, which led to a drop in sales, which led to a pull out by the firm's Institutional investors. But the changes in market dynamics-albeit unforeseen-could have been highly impactful as well.

Secondly, the collaborations involved businesses that were diversified. It appears that where the businesses have portfolios that cut across different products, it can serve to positively benefit the Alliance. This might be due to the fact that the firm has had experience in developing and selling different forms of products. These goods would all come with their own different entry points, marketing and advertising protocols, human resource requirements, finance requirements and government regulation. All of these components serve to boost the experiential profile of the business and hence, improve the likelihood of succeeding with other businesses.

Thirdly, the free flow of communication between the collaborators is a critical point for Strategic Alliance success. This is because the day-to-day management and the periodic reporting (at whatever level), require the free flow of information. It should be restated that firms aim to surmount information asymmetries within themselves by ensuring communication of decisions, plans, change in business practices, human resource changes, among other things. This means that communication must take a heightened relevance when dealing with a different organisation. In addition to the necessary communication among Top Management of the progress of the Strategic Alliance (during the Alliance Operational phase), communication during periods of conflict is extremely crucial. This is because the prosperity of a Strategic Alliance is determined by the level of trust and commitment (Gulati, 1995 and Kanagaretnam and Thevaranjan, 2021) between the collaborators. It therefore means that gestures that demonstrate trust and commitment (i.e., the provision of important information on actions taken and the reasons for those actions) and measures that reduce the perception of opportunism will work positively to influence the parties belief in the viability of the Strategic Alliance.

Fourthly, the emergence of a dominant partner in the Strategic Alliance appears to be a significant factor for its success. This may be connected to the notion that the decision on key executive and finance issues may be more efficiently handled by one firm. This, again in the Alliance operational phase, is where the element of control as a success factor comes in. Control has been argued to be a complement to trust, as it aids in the provision of interf-firm assurances and the function of coordination (Sklavounos, Rotosios and Hadjidimitriou, 2015; Reurer and Arino, 2007). It is the agreed upon rules and standard procedures guiding communication, decision-making and planning that serve as bi-directional control mechanisms. The firms under review demonstrated this in the formulation of protocols that led their Alliances and the means through which challenges were handled. This control may have also been mediated by the overarching knowledge that there was an end goal to the Alliance and the understanding that the firms were essentially interconnected due to the purchase of shares and/or equity. In any case, this dominant partner would have also amassed considerable *influence* due to the acquisition of the company's shares. This means that by operation of law, the bulk of decision-making could go to that dominant partner. In addition, because the dominant partner has more 'at stake' in the business, this partner would be better suited to taking responsibility for decisions that would impact its bottom line. Though, the ultimate intention of the parties is fundamental in determining the level of engagement (even if one party has more shares than the other). For instance, in the case of Strategic Alliances that intend to last for a very specific time period or region of operation, the need for a dominant party may never even arise. While for Strategic Alliances that intend to result in full acquisition, the actions of the dominant partner will be more self-preserving.

Fifthly, the nature of role allocation/structuring was key to the triumph of the Strategic Alliances under review. This meant that the partners, at all times, knew what they were supposed to do in the Alliance. This certainly provided the needed clarity and predictability to the implementation of the Alliance. Where the partners know what to do, they can dedicate their resources, skills and strengths to the specific tasks they are meant to carry out. The clarity in communication of role allocation (what can be referred to as the "programming" function) serves as a coordination mechanism that allocates the respective firms to their duties.

Sixthly, the choice of country collaborator is noted to be of importance. All the respondents in the study indicated that the Strategic Alliance succeeded because a Local partner with knowledge and experience of the country terrain was chosen. It would be difficult to judge the potential success of a Strategic Alliance of two *foreign* firms in a new country, but it would not be unreasonable to hold that a Local firm would understand the local context better and utilise its experience and networks in an optimal manner.

5.2 The Implication for Theory

Strategic Alliance studies generally emphasise that strategic alliances are devices that firms use, to not only bridge internal weaknesses but also to cope with the complexity of the business environment (Russo and Cesarani, 2017). From the data gathered and analysed above, it can be observed that firms involved in Strategic Alliances in Nigeria, did so essentially for business growth. The Alliance aided this process of growth by surmounting the limitations of its own internal weaknesses, clearly demonstrated by the sharing of costs, resources, knowledge and competencies. Drawn up in the firm's agreement, the manner in which resources, costs, knowledge and competencies (employees of managerial level) were allocated, was the device used by the Alliance partners to cross (or bridge) their own weaknesses, lack of resources or inadequacy. This '*bridge*' was the same path through which information asymmetries were reduced, or put differently, the *costs* of information reduced. This reduction in information asymmetry was further manifested in the impact of the existing network and supply chains, customer base and experience of the Local Alliance partner, for the Foreign Alliance. This affected the transaction costs that would have arisen as a result of definite complexities and uncertainties of the Nigerian market, the challenging multi-ethnic context and the nature of institutions. Looking closely at the Alliances under review and their interview data, there is correspondence with the observed motivations for Foreign and Local firms, as provided in the literature. Hitt and colleagues (2000) explain that: companies from emerging economies seek out financial and technical resources, in addition to intangible ones (managerial experience and technology). However, companies from developed markets have their sights set on the knowledge and experience of the Local partner within the local market. It is this knowledge that is used as a critical capital resource by the Foreign firm (Hitt, Dacin, *et al*., 2000). Both the Local and Foreign firms under review cited market penetration, revenue growth, the development of an African presence and market dominance as their chief motivations.

Data on Partner selection was also attuned to theory, as the evidence from the firms under review shows. Gulati, and Gulati and colleagues (Gulati, 1995; Gulati, 1998; Gulati, Nohria and Zaheer, 2000) explain that for Alliance partner selection (adopting a *relational* as opposed to *atomistic* view), firms rely on their existing networks and previous partners (Dhaundiyal and Coughlan, 2020). This is an indication of how the reduction of information asymmetry and transaction costs starts at the pre-Alliance stage. It also showed the level of prominence attached to this decision and the function of firm networks in providing potential business partners and the role of trust.

Coordination of the Strategic Alliances was a main factor in improving the prospect of Alliance success. This is in line with the centrality of coordination to the theory of Alliances. Kretschmer and Vannaste, 2016 enumerate the various schools of thought on coordination and cooperation in the context of Alliances. They provide an overview of the literature on coordination and cooperation and highlight that the various schools of thought focus on different formulations of coordination and cooperation. The literature (Gulati and Singh, 1998; Mohr and Spekman, 1994; and Kretschmer and Vannaste, 2016) observes that coordination is costly but its absence is what leads to Alliance failure. Consisting of several elements (i.e., detail given to identification and functionality of information sharing, decision-making, feedback mechanisms and negotiation), *per* Gulati, Wohlgezogen, and Zhelyazkov, 2012, all the Alliances reviewed, employed these elements of coordination to promote their success. Both the Foreign and Local firms emphasised the effectiveness of prior experiences, role-specification, value alignment, contractual precision and clarity and flexibility in responding to emerging problems on the implementation of the Alliance. The actions can be classified into mechanisms referred to in Chapter II of this thesis and elaborated below.

Firstly, *Hierarchy* was demonstrated by the frequency of role specification between the Alliance partners. Having known their strengths and intending to emphasise them, the partners, *via* their Financial and Legal advisors and contracts, delineated their roles. This prevented operational ambiguity and created task certainty. Hierarchy also included the granting of managerial autonomy, as some of the Alliances provided decision-making powers for Management teams within certain defined parameters. Secondly, *Programming* (Dyer and Singh, 1998) was displayed in the guidelines and operational parameters the partners practised. Programming ensured that the partners knew what they were to do (day-to-day routine tasks) but also knew how to ‘think’ and process unforeseen challenges. For instance, one of the Alliances experienced challenges from the introduction of a new recipe, which led to losses in sales. Among other things, this state of affairs was handled by the firms communicating with each other and ensuring that business continued despite the sudden distortion. Programming does not only envision spelling out a preconceived set of rules but also provides the means to address novel situations and how to go about feedback (Dyer and Singh, 1998). These actions provided the base for the operationalisation of coordination. Thirdly, the form and regularity of *Feedback* is indispensable to the success of Alliance implementation. The firms under review all held that they were involved in regular communication with their various Top Management. With one exception (where communication was delayed), Feedback platforms were useful in day-to-day tasks and also the routine amendment and interpretation of the Alliance. Respondent evidence referenced the flexibility of the Alliances and this could not have been possible without feedback mechanisms that allowed for the free flow of ideas, interests, concerns, etc.

The experiences of the firms in the Strategic Alliance, referred to above (and elaborated by the respondent's evidence) reinforces the role of learning as an example of the Knowledge Based View and Social Exchange Theory (Ireland *et al*., 2002; Kale and Singh, 2007; Russo and Cesarani, 2017). The experience of Foreign firms and even the Local firms in other contexts and markets was a consistent reason for the creation of the Alliance and the assurance that the firms would be able to make profits and grow their business. The firms perceived their experiences and emergent knowledge as a resource that could be combined with the experiential knowledge of the collaborator firm (Grant, 1996; Spender, 1996). In addition (and addressing the 'Social Exchange' component), this sharing of knowledge involved implementing safeguards in the form of Alliance structure (the use of Equity), contracting and managerial arrangements. Knowledge sharing between firms was with the implicit understanding that the firms would not engage in opportunistic behaviour, as they both had a level of trust in each other and presumed the other was invested in the success of the Alliance. This was evidenced by the language used by the respondents in questions pertaining to the capacity of the other partner, not only as a competent business within their field but with the expectation that they will use their experiences and skills to move the interests of *both parties* forward (see Chapter IV of this thesis). This trust engenders information sharing as partners. As stated in Chapter I of this thesis, trust development involves numerous components. One of them-*Partner's goal congruence*-was generally exhibited in respondent's interview data (Luo, 2002). This was manifested in the knowledge, expectation and actions of the parties regarding the eventual form of the Alliance (i.e., whether it would result in a take over or full acquisition). The quality of 'fit' contemplated by goal congruence deals with the partner's intended goals but the form of operations and value system of the Alliance partners is equally significant.

It is reiterated that trust does not operate in isolation, as Kanagaretnam and Thevaranjan, 2021, explain that trust and *fair dealing* ensure Alliance partners are able to positively exploit their relationship and obtain potential profits. The Alliances under review were able to deal relatively fairly (the latter, conceived as the just allocation of the outputs of the Alliance, in accordance with the level of inputs of each Alliance partner; Kanagaretnam and Thevaranjan, 2021) with each other. An idea of the magnitude of the inputs and outputs of the parties will also assist in creating performance evaluation frameworks to measure the level of engagement by the respective firms (Anderson and Narus, 1990). Furthermore, it was a combination of these two factors (trust and fair dealing) that enhanced the implementation of the Alliance. Various forms of Fair dealing have been noted to obtain in Alliances, i.e., Distributive fairness, Procedural fairness, Interpersonal fairness and Informational fairness (Kanagaretnam and Thevaranjan, 2021). It is also noted that the environment creating the circumstances for growth in mutual trust was due to the partner's governance structure. This governance structure, or role assignment had a number of the Alliances adopt a joint decision-making structure that was guided by decision-making templates. But this structuring also depended on the *phase* of the Alliance and whether or not a takeover was the end goal. Some of the firms under review had management decisions taken fully by either firm alone prior to the full operation of the Alliance or prior to takeover. This form of *ad hoc* structuring in roles, allowed for both partners to decide on the path the Alliance would take, in real time, *per* major decision. There were some instances where certain Top Management were given special jurisdiction over Finance or Operations and this allowed for the flexibility that was advantageous to the success of the Alliance.

The Foreign firms (all headquartered in the United States) are institutionally distant from the Nigerian collaborators, as the culture, norms and values, politics and social conventions of both countries are different. However, despite the existence of these differences, their influence has been minimally significant. Hasan, Ibrahim and Uddin (2016), in their paper on Cross Border Mergers and Acquisitions, argue for a notable degree of influence by institutional distance on firm performance. Their framework contemplated *formal* institutional distance (political, economic, administrative and legal structures) and *informal* institutional distance (cultural, demographic, knowledge, connectedness and geographical structures). They held that institutional distance incorporates variations that exist in the institutional context of the countries involved. This can be applied in the context of the firms in this study: despite their different institutional backgrounds, the performance of their Alliances had less to do with their home country characteristics (though, for the case of ***FA1*** and ***FA2*** the place of home country values was very pertinent) and more with their own flexibility, cooperativeness and resolve to grow and outcompete their rivals. The manner in which the Foreign firms adjusted their operational settings was also critical to the implementation of the Alliance and within the context of weak institutions.

The performance of the Alliances under review in the various regions, was generally satisfactory, since none of the Alliances resulted in a termination but rather a reformation. This was despite the quantum of institutional distance between the firms. This distance (in the case of emerging markets), has been held to include: "[A] lack of reliable information to assess the goods and services which they purchase and the investments which they make; regulations which place political goals over economic efficiency; and inefficient or ineffective judicial systems". The foregoing are non-trivial matters and can easily ruin the chances of any form of success. Hence the strategy of firms collaborating in Strategic Alliances must take this into consideration. While the firms under review paid attention to partner selection, there were other means through which they ensured that the institutional distance between them did not hamper the prospect of the Alliance. One of these ways was by the structuring of the Alliance. Whether this involved the creation of a separate but autonomous management vehicle or the regular reporting on activities; the firms prioritised working together and aligning their goals. One significant lesson from the manner in which the Alliance partners worked together in this study, is that they employed a high level of flexibility. This is pertinent, as it speaks to the need for agility and resilience in demanding emerging market environments.

5.2.1 The Implications for Developing Countries and MNCs

Strategic alliances are becoming more ubiquitous globally, therefore the implications for developing countries are significant. Due to the size of Nigeria's economy and its ethnic variation, this research presents findings significant to research on strategic alliances in general, in developing country contexts. In addition, the weakness of the Institutional environment is a potent variable in the study of strategic alliances in such contexts. The notion of alliance success rate, especially in developing countries that are extremely sensitive to external shocks (Yeniaras, Kaya and Dayan, 2020), is a critical issue raised in this study. Respondents (especially the Foreign firms) were convinced that in spite of the institutional weaknesses, Nigeria possesses a market that has numerous potentials and opportunities. Having attained success, it logically follows that where the institutional environment is improved along the lines of better foreign exchange management, relaxation of some Local Content regulations, improvement in the quality of regulation and resolution of the difficult security situation: more Alliances would be drawn to the country and more businesses would thrive. Developing countries must be able to improve their political and economic management to the point where there is greater predictability and certainty in doing business. This will have to come with better governance and decision-making across 3 tiers of government: a challenging line of action but one that is necessary in the context. For Nigeria to achieve the 6% GDP growth it aims to achieve, it has to improve the various indicators relating to doing business (Bloomberg, 2023).

From this Chapter's analysis, the relevance and importance of experience and learning is resounding. Both MNCs and emerging market firms in this study illustrated how powerful their experiences are in the creation of an Alliance. This means that firms should constantly innovate and take calculated risks, because the opportunities for learning are immense. For MNCs in particular, this study has shown that Local firms can play a fundamental role in the success of their Alliance. Local firms should be regularly partnered with to not only improve the prospects of MNCs, but as a means to navigate the peculiarities of the local terrain and also develop the commercial profile of firms in developing country.

5.3 Limitations and Direction of Future Research

We are in the age of Alliances (Hitt, *et al*., 2000) as international Alliances are an effective means to penetrate markets. Pressures of globalisation, commodity slumps, population expansions (especially in developing countries) means that there are potential exploitable markets emerging in certain parts of the globe. Both Foreign and Local firms will continue to explore relationships that allow them partake in these markets. Unpacking the reasons behind the selection of Foreign partner firms by Local firms will be a fruitful line of enquiry, as the evidence given, while helpful, needs to be drilled down, especially from the perspective of Middle Managers. This is an important point, as it has been noted elsewhere (Huy, 2011; Salih and Doll, 2013; Kiehne, Ceausu, Arp *et al.*, 2017), that the Middle Managers are core sources of implementation strength. One interesting additional direction of future research, concerns the nature of partner selection from the perspective of the *emerging market firm*. Fine-grained studies abound, that investigate the act of partner selection from the vantage of the MNC but few studies go in depth, to understand the motivations, interests and considerations of the emerging market firm. What forms of parameters are used to make this selection and how do the decisions tie into the broad strategic goals of the emerging market firm? Another potentially fruitful line of inquiry is replication of this study with a wider set of case studies and respondents. This thesis being qualitative, exploratory and interpretivist in nature, did not aim for replication, *per se*, as its intention was to understand the problem of region-specific market penetration strategies in the context of weak institutions. This was modestly achieved but further research would be able to evaluate the nuances of firm experiences.

Again, the manner in which firms in Strategic Alliances settled disputes and mediated their conflicts is another fertile path for further exploration. This is because the manner in which coordination and cooperation is carried out has been studied to no small degree. However, how firms settle their differences despite the uncertainties and risks involved in Alliances-especially in developing country contexts-requires further investigation. One more potential line of research enquiry is the role of company ethics and values in responding to operational and business decisions in contexts with weak institutions. While it is obvious that firms must decide whether or not to engage in unsavoury and risky practices (for MNCs this is more serious, as their vulnerability is often more than Local firms), what is less understood is how those ethics are negotiated within the firm as a single unit. This would provide more evidence for the role of leadership and norms of integrity in international business. A further potential line of enquiry, is the role of the *dedicated Strategic Alliance function*, as the focal point for Alliance management and learning. While this role was clearly effective, it is not certain how this is achieved in detail. Further investigation on this has the benefit of providing better understanding of how this managerial function interfaces with the management of the Alliance partners and the methods used to formalise, standardise and centralise the Alliance management practice.

Limitations of the research revolve around the non-quantitative nature of the study. Though a methodological and research orientation issue, it nonetheless has implications on the extent to which the findings of the study can be used. The fact that the research was interpretivist and abductive also meant that it did not aim to make predictions but to understand the phenomenon or problem. This gives such works weak predictive power, though it provides such work with deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Again, the limited number of case studies investigated in the thesis also meant that the conclusions and findings are limited to the experiences of the firms under review. They may be fundamentally different from other Foreign firms that have implemented Alliances in Nigeria. Again, the issue of access to recent literature on Strategic Alliances in emerging markets, was a significant limitation. Research benefits when the resources available are current and contemporary and ensures that findings that would assist in answering certain questions that the researcher may have formulated, would be available for them. With this, the researcher can answer other questions that may not have been answered, explored or even properly formulated.

5.4 Conclusion

Strategic Alliances in emerging market contexts is an engaging field of enquiry. The substantial amount of research, the insight in existing but unanswered questions and the implications for business practice are just a few of the key points that make Strategic Alliance research a cutting edge one. With the sluggish shift away from the weight imposed by COVID-19 on business activity, the world is already experiencing a return to the “new normal”. This has noteworthy implications for business operations, especially those in developing nations with weak institutional contexts. These developing nations have an incentive to create the appropriate conditions for their nations to be receptive to investments. Developing nations have a number of means to improve their domestic resource mobilisation and revenue development and one relatively sure way of enhancing this revenue is through Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). This study has shown that not only are Alliances an effective means to expand a firm’s reach and grow its business, but it is also a means for firms to maximise their strengths and actually, “learn” how to be a Business. This has different meanings for MNCs and firms in developing Countries. For one, MNCs can deepen the quality of their knowledge base and operational skill, while firms in developing countries can gain access to resources, knowledge and finance. But this does not mean that firms have it easy, as Alliances are never bound to succeed. Unlike a Merger and Acquisition, where a totally new entity is created, a Strategic Alliance is two partners working together with a common set of objectives and goals. Hence, Alliances succeed where the partners communicate, resolve conflict, plan and strategize together and trust each other. Nigeria holds significant promise for strategic alliances that can even go beyond the FMCG sector. This is because the current Nigerian government aims to increase its revenue base and in doing so, it would likely provide opportunities for firms to grow because the country’s revenue growth is tied to the revenue that commercial activity would bring.

Institutional weakness is a serious challenge for the success of Alliances, but this study has shown that these challenges do not have to translate to failure. In fact, this study has shown that firms with flexible strategies, strong value and willing and cooperative partners can grow, increase their revenue and gain knowledge. The firms under review manifested this flexibility in their approach to doing business in specific regions of Nigeria. This flexibility entailed the creation of new distribution, credit, and advertising protocols. In general, Alliance partners can adopt a range of strategies during the lifecycle of their Alliance. However, without adopting the fundamental elements of the partnership and how it is managed, the Alliance partners will find success elusive, or the Alliance will simply be highly inefficient, plagued by distrust, minimal communication and managerial conflict: it will be too ‘expensive’ and be a drain on resources without a commensurate gain in growth.

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Appendix 1

4.1.1. Data Analysis

In the first strategic alliance relationship Case study, 7 people were interviewed, 2 top Management staff, 1 middle level staff and 2 staff from different regions were interviewed for the foreign alliance partner. However, for the local alliance partner, only 2 top management staff were interviewed, as the alliance led to acquisition and the Company ceased to exist.

The second strategic alliance relationship Case studies covered the interview of 10 people; 4 interviews were conducted for the MNC, while 6 interviews were conducted at the local company in the strategic alliance. There were no interviews for the Regional Managers of the Foreign Alliance, as the employees of the local partner were adopted across the Regions, MNC staff occupied only select Senior strategic roles.

The Case study for the 3rd strategic alliance partner relationship had 10 people interviewed; 2 top management staff and 2 middle level staff from different regions were interviewed from the MNC. While for the local alliance, 1 Top Management staff, 3 Middle Level staff and 2 staff from the different regions were interviewed.

In total, 27 interviews were conducted. Each interview lasted for an average of 45 minutes. Considering the sensitive nature of the information, the Companies did not permit recording of conversations, rather they allowed note taking by the Researcher. See table 1 below for details of interviewees;

Table 1. Participants Details

ALLIANCE CASE STUDY 1 - PARTICIPANT DETAILS (CocaCola/Chi)					
Foreign Partner					
Company code	**Participant code**	**Position in company**	**Role in the Alliance**	**Gender**	**Years of experience**
FA1	FA1TM1	Finance Executive	Executive decision making - Finance	Male	>20 years
FA1	FA1TM2	Strategy Executive	Executive decision making	Male	10-20 years
FA1	FA1MM1	Finance Officer	Responsible for data collation during alliance process, part of implementation in Finance	Male	10-20 years
FA1	FA1RM1	Regional Manager - Sales	Operational Implementation in Region	Male	10-20 years
FA1	FA1RM2	Regional Store Manager - Key Distributors	Operational Implementation in Region	Male	>20 years
Local Partner					
LA1	LA1TM1	Managing Director	Executive in charge of the decision to sell	Male	<20
LA1	LA1TM2	Finance Executive	Strategic implementation- Finance	Male	<20
ALLIANCE CASE STUDY 2 - PARTICIPANT DETAILS (Kellogs/Tolaram)					
Company code	**Participant code**	**Position in company**	**Role in the Alliance**	**Gender**	**Years of experience**
FA2	FA2TM1	Finance Executive	Executive decision making - Finance	Male	>20 years
FA2	FA2TM2	Legal Executive	Strategic participant-Review of legal documentation, contracts, and agreement	Male	>20 years
FA2	FA2MM1	Finance Manager	Finance reporting and control	Male	10-20 years
FA2	FA2MM2	Operations Manager	Operational participant - Operations-Productions	Male	10-20 years
Local Partner					
LA2	LA2TM1	Finance Executive	Executive management in charge of alliance	Male	>20 years
LA2	LA2TM2	Head of Sales and Operations	Strategic participation - Sales and Operations	Male	>20 years
LA2	LA2MM1	Finance Manager	Finance, tracking cash flow and financial planning	Male	>20 years
LA2	LA2MM2	Sales Manager	Supportive in coordinating the sales and marketing strategies	Female	10-20 years
LA2	LA2RM1	Sales Manager- Region	Provided feedback on market scenario, product acceptance, consumption pattern/taste, consumer survey, branding strategy etc.	Female	10-20 years
LA2	LA2RM2	Sales Manager- North Regional	Sales and Distribution strategy	Male	10-20 years
ALLIANCE CASE STUDY 3 PARTICIPANT DETAILS (Olam/Crownflour Mill)					
FA3	FA3TM1	Treasury & Finance	Core committee member in the Alliance, Worked on the strategic intent	Male	>20 years

FA3	FA3TM2	Operations - Productions	Worked along in the implementation of the alliance (participated at strategic level)	Male	>20 years
FA3	FA3MM1	Finance reporting and control	Financial analysis and data collation	Male	10-20 years
FA3	FA3MM2	Operations - Productions	Collating the operations process, procedure	Male	10-20 years
Local Partner					
LA3	LA3TM1	Chief Finance Officer	Provide financial information for valuation and negotiation decisions	Male	>20 years
LA3	LA3MM1	Finance Manager	Managing financial metrics, financial records and profitability ratios to measure the operational efficiency of the alliance.	Male	>20 years
LA3	LA3MM2	Salesperson in South Region	Manage relationships with Customers, Vendors with regards to the new development i.e. the Strategic partnership	Male	10-20 years
LA3	LA3MM3	Support the Commercial Finance Manager	Internal credit system for the Key Distributors.	Male	10-20 years
LA3	LA3RM1	Sales Manager - North region sales	Responsible for integration of Design For Manufacturing (DFM) and OLAM KDs	Male	10-20 years
LA3	LA3RM2	Sales Manager – Eastern region	manage key distributors and provide day-to-day operational support to Store Manager	Male	10-20 years

Section 4.1. Data Analysis of FA1 and Chi Strategic Alliance

The data and codes of the interviews of the Case study of the strategic alliance implementation between alliance partners were coded as FA1 (Foreign Alliance partner) and LA1 (Local Alliance partner) are presented in subsections of 4.1.1 for the Top Management Data Analysis of both alliance partners. Subsection 4.1.2 for the Middle Management Data Analysis of both alliance partners, while subsection 4.1.3. is for the Regional Management Data Analysis of both alliance partners.

2.1.2. *Top Management Interview Data Analysis*

i. Data analysis for the alliance with the Multinational Corporate i.e. the International Partner.

The alliance with the Multinational Corporate is coded as FA1 and the Top Management staff are coded as FA1TM1, FA1TM2 and FA1TM3 respectively. In the data below, the local partner alliance is coded as LA1, while the Top Management staff are coded as LA1TM1, LA1TM2 and LA1TM3.

Appendix 3
Question Set 1: Type of Strategic Alliances Done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.

FA1TM1: FA1 has done a number of business alliances (numerous alliances) in many countries, (numerous alliances) JV, M&A, Franchise model – sell concentrate, share market activities, common goals. (numerous alliances) Ghana – partnership with one of the anchor bottlers. (numerous alliances) CCBA; Panama – JV with an anchor bottler (numerous alliances). This alliance was initially a JV, then it turned to full acquisition after some period.

FA1TM2: We have done many alliances all over the world. (numerous alliances). This one with LA1 is not the first one (numerous alliances) and we have succeeded. FA1 is well known when it comes to Strategic Alliances (numerous alliances) because it is one of our strategies on entering some markets or expanding. (numerous alliances) (alliance for leadership).

Categories	
Numerous alliances	9
Alliance for leadership	1
Joint Venture	1
Mergers and Acquisition	1

i. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

FA1TM1: Value proposition, Impact on society, Credible partners, (alliance for leadership) Valuable brand with track record, (Brand Value) complies to local laws and values US laws, Ownership is considered too, one that will not jeopardise the brand.

FA1TM2: It allows us to save time and conserve our capital as we expand to cover broader audience in Nigeria. (market depth) (Full use of resources). A creative way of increasing our clientele (market depth) and reaching new customers (market depth) (grow revenue).

Categories	
Brand Value	1
Alliance for leadership	1
Market depth and new consumer coverage	3
Full use of resources	1
Grow revenue	1
Value proposition and alignment	1

ii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

FA1TM1: FA1 was invited to participate by LA1, previous owner – they saw the opportunity, and reviewed the dynamics of the market. (market depth, market growth, willingness to cooperate).

FA1TM2: The opportunity came through LA1. They initiated the discussion. (willingness to cooperate).

Categories	
Market growth	1
Market depth	2
Willingness to cooperate	2

iii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

FA1TM1: I led executive decision making on the Finance side (participated at strategic level) (was fully involved).

FA1TM2: I was part of the negotiations (participated at strategic level) (was fully involved).

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	2

Was fully involved	1
Part of the implementation team	1

iv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

FA1TM1: Negotiation of the financial consideration and part of the team that did the Financial due diligence. (to ensure successful implementation) (to ensure successful implementation).

FA1TM2: Discussions to ensure successful implementation (to ensure successful implementation).

Categories	
to ensure successful implementation	3

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA1TM1: The alliance was a successful one. (Alliance success) (exceed expectation) (Market growth).

FA1TM2: As noted, FA1 has done many strategic alliances and virtually all were successful. (Alliance success) (exceed expectation) (Market growth). It was successful. Apart from having the financial capacity to execute the project, we are also an expert in Strategic alliances. (exceed expectation) (Market growth) (well organised).

Categories	
Alliance was successful	3
Alliance exceeded expectation	2
Market growth	3
Well organised	1
Prior experience in Strategic alliances helped	1

Q3: For which time/period was the strategic alliance designed envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

FA1TM1: The alliance process took over 18 months from negotiations to implementation. (Took a longer time than anticipated). The alliance has now become a full acquisition and the company is thriving. (alliance grew to an acquisition).

FA1TM2: 6 months but took over 12 months (Took a longer time than anticipated). Over 18 months (Took a longer time than anticipated).

Categories	
Took a long time than anticipated	3
Alliance was planned for 6 months	1
The alliance took over 18 months to implement	2

<u>Question Set 2. Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase</u>

Q1. 1 Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA1TM1: Of course Government policies impact business, but LA1's experience as a local partner was of (partner’s local experience helped) tremendous help in *preventing* any major conflict before and after implementation. (no tough conflict)

FA1TM2: No major conflict (no tough conflict)

Categories	
The experience of the local Partner helped	1
No tough conflict	2

Q2. What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

FA1TM1: There were no specific roles. Initially we were responsible for Finance and Operation (Strategy role) (operational role)

FA1TM2: Finance and Operations. (Strategy role) (operational role)

Categories	
Strategic role	2
Finance and operations role	2

Q3. Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

FA1TM1: Both companies were responsible for the success of the alliance (joint success effort)

FA1TM2: The two companies (joint success effort)

Categories	
Joint success effort	2

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.

FA1TM1: When we took over the 40% shares, we were only responsible for Finance. We took over the whole Management, after we acquired 100% of the shares. (structured role agreement) (joint executive decision), (well defined ways of working).

FA1TM2: We were only in Finance at the first phase. The second phase saw us take over the full control of both management and operations. (structured role agreement) (joint executive decision). At the conclusion of the Alliance we were fully in charge of the Management and Operations of the company. (structured role agreement) (joint executive decision), (well defined ways of working).

Categories	
Structured role agreement	3
Joint executive decision	2
Well defined ways of working	2

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

FA1TM1: Not so much challenges but after the full acquisition, we had to strive to retain talents and knowledge, improve the work culture. (human resources challenge)

FA1TM2: Government issues as regards documentations and some other processes for the alliance (regulatory approval challenges). Regulatory requirements, and Supply chain issues, coupled with the FX challenges in Nigeria. (regulatory approval challenges) (supply chain issues) (FX challenges).

Categories	
Human resources challenge	3
Regulatory approval challenges	2
FX challenges	1
Supply chain issues	1

Question Set 3. General questions

Q1. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

FA1TM1: There should be a flexible approach to business alliance, boundaries are well defined and known, overriding principle is core with respect to the value of brand. (flexible approach to business alliance) (phased alliance strategy)

FA1TM2: This is dependent on your target, (flexible approach to business) like for us we did the alliance to increase our competitiveness in the food and drinks market in Nigeria. A local company with a ready market provided that opportunity. (experienced local alliance partner essential) (leverage existing network)*.

Categories	
Flexible approach to business alliance	3
Well defined approach and principle	1
Experienced local alliance partner essential	1
phased alliance strategy	1

Q2. Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?

FA1TM1: Both parties were responsible for the implementation of the alliance (both parties were responsible), but since the plan was a full acquisition after a while, depending on seamless the business alliance goes, so LA1, the local partner also put in a lot to ensure that all went well, operations, sales, finance etc. (local partner involvement is essential)

FA1TM2: Both companies. (both parties were responsible) More responsibilities were on the Local partner because they are already on ground and understands the business environment. (local partner involvement is essential).

Categories	
Both Companies were responsible for the implementation of the alliance	2
Local partner involvement is essential	2
Phased alliance approach intensified Local partner involvement and responsibility	1

Q3. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

FA1TM1: Well, we had to streamline some of the processes with our global practice for example audit process, finance, ERP etc. (alliance changed existing practice) (Significant MNC process change) We had to align the employee culture and show that amazing opportunities exists for hardworking employees based on merit, loyalty and value added. (alliance changed existing practice) (Significant MNC process change).

FA1TM2: Of course, we have to align our production and products. (alliance changed existing practice) (Significant MNC process change). Yes. Cultures and procedure have to be streamlined and agreed on by all. (alliance changed existing practice) (Significant MNC process change).

Categories	
Alliance changed existing practice	4
Significant MNC process change	4
Alignment of processes, operations, products, production, culture and employee engagement	6

Q4. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?

FA1TM1: After the 1st year we could quantify the performance returns both in terms of sales volume and revenue. The access to more Finance and cheaper source of funding also assisted greatly. (quick improvement in MNC performance) (improved MNC efficiency) (More access to cheaper financing)

FA1TM2: Year one, impressive growth in Sales and efficiency improved across the company (quick improvement in MNC performance) (improved MNC efficiency).

Categories	
After the 1st year, we could quantify the Performance returns	2
Quick improvement in MNC performance	2
Improved MNC efficiency	2
More access to cheaper financing	1
Growth in sales volume and revenue	2

<u>Question Set 4. Regions and Multi-tribe</u>

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with a local company, especially with such International distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

FA1TM1: We have done several alliances in different emerging markets, so the experience came to bear in this Nigerian alliance. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries). The local partner understood the value we will be adding based on our reputation globally. We also had independent financial advisers, legal counsels, agreements, and MOUs etc. that assisted in making the process almost seamless. (modified approach to suit local environment, Flexibility in alliance approach).

FA1TM2: We have consultants who are experts in M&As that worked with us. We have had several alliances with local companies in many countries. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment, Flexibility in alliance approach).

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	2
modified approach to suit local environment	3
Flexibility in alliance approach	3
Involvement of independent Consultants, Financial advisers, Legal counsels, agreements, and MOU made process easier	1
Willingness to cooperate by local partner	1

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA1TM1: It wasn't so difficult, (Regional implementation not difficult) but the level of safety and security in the respective region differed so that had to be factored in. (Security concerns in some regions) Also, advertising had to be connected to the ethnicity of the region because language was a bit of barrier. (ethnicity of the region considerations in advert) (marketing and distribution approach differed in regions).

FA1TM2: Not so difficult because the local company has very well-known brands and our brand is known across the country, (Regional implementation not difficult) although since the alliance was to increase our market share, we had to rework distribution and advertising and also align sales strategies to capture more regions. (marketing and distribution approach differed in regions).

Categories	
Regional implementation was not difficult	3
Security concerns in some regions	3
Marketing and distribution approach differed in regions	2
Ethnic of the regions considered in advert formation	2
The local company had very well-known brand	1

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?

FA1TM1: The differences in the regions were quite significant in terms of areas of coverage, language and Culture. (culture alignment challenges, process alignment challenges, alignment challenges). The North is also more spread out (wider area of coverage), thus logistics was tougher in terms of distribution and supply chain. (distribution and supply chain differences) (Logistics challenges). The South was more concentrated with lesser areas of coverage. (lesser areas of coverage).

FA1TM2: Each region has its own peculiarities, and we have to align our strategies, especially sales to the identified peculiarities. (distribution and supply chain differences).

Categories	
Culture alignment challenges	1
Process alignment challenges	1
Wider areas of coverage in some regions	1
Distribution and supply chain differences	2
Align strategies to suit peculiarities of each region	1

Logistics challenges	1

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

FA1TM1: Yes, we had to adopt content to the region to give good connection to the people of that region. (marketing and distribution approach differed in regions), (different strategy for each region)

FA1TM2: We had to develop peculiar advert and sales strategy for different region (different strategy for each region) (marketing and distribution approach differed in regions). Region specific strategies were developed (different strategy for each region).

Categories	
Marketing and distribution approach differed in regions	2
Different strategy for each region	3
Adopt content to the region to give good connection to the people of that region	2

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

FA1TM1: The local staff of the region were employed more, and advertising and sales strategy had to be refined to suit the culture. The advertising agencies we use helped in the Connection strategy. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries, modified approach to suit local environment) (sales and marketing strategy modified to suit local environment).

FA1TM2: The experience of the local company the local custom/culture assisted us in the different region of the country, in terms of attracting new distributors and route to market. (local partnership experience helped) (prior experience in alliance in developing countries, modified approach to suit local environment), (sales and marketing strategy modified to suit local environment).

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	3
Modified approach to suit local environment	3
Sales and marketing strategy modified to suit local environment	2
political risk reduced because of previous experience	1
local partnership experience helped	2

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

FA1TM1: I would say the North because of security concerns and the wide area of coverage. (gets tougher the farther you go) (sales strategy in the region differ) (The North because of the wide area of coverage, security concerns and level of literacy).

FA1TM2: The North because of the wide area of coverage and level of literacy which affected marketing strategies (gets tougher the farther you go) (sales strategy in the region differ) (The North because of the wide area of coverage and level of literacy) (The North because of the wide area of coverage, security concerns and level of literacy).

Categories	
gets tougher the farther you go from Head Office	3
sales strategy in the region differ	2
Flexibility in alliance approach	2
The North because of the wide area of coverage, security concerns and level of literacy	2

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

FA1TM1: I think what is key is to understand the market you are entering. (understanding the peculiarities of the market) In Nigeria, the supply chain is less efficient than developed market, electricity challenge, low purchasing power, more of Cash and Carry not consumer credit led, tax is relatively smaller, and regulatory policies could be quite dynamic. Every country has its peculiarities which is not strange compared to other markets. (understanding the peculiarities of the market). The FA1 culture is very ethically principled, (Ethically principled culture) bribing is not allowed even if our resolve is tested. (Ethically principled culture) However, I would advise a JV for most new market entry. (local experience/partnership helps) (local experience helps overcome corruption).

FA1TM2: The institutions have weak structure but there are processes and policies which are to be followed for the type of transactions we did. (understanding the peculiarities of the market) We had to follow the rules to prevent sanctions and incurring unnecessary cost. (Ethically principled culture) (understanding the peculiarities of the market) (local experience helps overcome corruption) (local experience/partnership helps). Weak institutions might allow for corruption but we had to depend on the local company to navigate and reduce/eliminate any negative influence on the alliance. (understanding the peculiarities of the market) (local experience helps overcome corruption) (local experience/partnership helps).

Categories	
Understanding the peculiarities of the market	3
Local experience/partnership helps	2
Local experience helps overcome corruption	1
Ethically principled culture	2

ii. Local Partner Data Analysis

The Local partner alliance is coded as LA1 and the Management staff are coded as LA1TM1, LA1TM2 and LA1TM3 respectively. In the data below, the foreign partner is coded as FA1.

Question Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.

LA1TM1: Yes, we have done several alliances, in Nigeria, some West African countries as well. (numerous alliances)

LA1TM2: We have had alliances in different aspects of our businesses. (numerous alliances)

Categories	
Numerous alliances	2

i. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

LA1TM1: For business continuity sake. We were one of the dominant companies in the Food and Beverage sector and the sector was becoming more competitive. (divestment to another business line, consolidation of business line, grow revenue, market depth).

LA1TM2: We have done alliances to improve our products, and to give us advantage in the market. (grow revenue, market depth).

Categories	
Divestment to another business line	1
Consolidation of business line	1
Grow revenue	2
Market depth	2

ii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

LA1TM1: LA1 initiated the divestment process, and it was handled by international financial advisers who worked on shortlisting the preferred company to partner with. Our consideration was to find a partner that had been in the beverage business successfully for many years. (market depth, market growth, willingness to cooperate, consolidation of business line).

LA1TM2: For a long time, we have positioned the company for acquisition. However, the process of getting a partner that will ensure the continued success of LA1 was daunting. FA1 has also been initiating coordinated global strategic movements in enlarging investment in dairy and juices, especially in Africa. (acquire local capability, local demands, market depth, market growth).

Categories	
Market depth	2
Market growth	2
Willingness to cooperate	1
Consolidation of business line	1
Acquire local capability	1
Local demands	1

iii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

LA1TM1: I was the Executive in charge of the decision to sell and who to sell to and at what price. (participated at strategic level) (was fully involved).

LA1TM2: I was part of the Team that consummated the transaction. (participated at operational level) (was fully involved).

Categories	
Participated at strategic	1
Was fully involved	2
(Participated at strategic level)	1

iv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

LA1TM1: I was part of the whole Executive decision-making process (to ensure successful implementation).

LA1TM2: For both local and this MNC alliance, I have always been part of the Team (to ensure successful implementation).

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	2

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

LA1TM1: The alliance was a successful one, with the full divestment done subsequently. The company is doing well on its own now. (alliance was successful, growth in market share, growth in revenue, led to subsequent business alliance, alliance grew to an acquisition).

LA1TM2: Alliance with FA1 was a very successful. As you can see the company is waxing stronger in the market. (alliance was successful, growth in market share, growth in revenue, led to subsequent business alliance).

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Growth in market share	2
Growth in revenue	2
Led to subsequent business alliance	2
Alliance grew to an acquisition	1

Q3: For which time period was the strategic alliance successful, What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

LA1TM1: The process was extensive and took over 18 months. The alliance was successful and turned to full divestment after some period of time. (took a long time, alliance grew to an acquisition, Alliance was successful).

LA1TM2: We did not expect the process to last more than 12 months but because there was a JV before full acquisition. (took a long time, alliance grew to an acquisition, Alliance was successful).

Categories	
Took a long time	2

Alliance grew to an acquisition	2
Alliance was successful	2
Alliance process took over 18 months	1
Envisaged period for alliance implementation was 12 months	1

Q4: What is the legal form of the strategic alliance? For example, is it (informal agreement, formal, written agreement, separate legal entity (JV, consortium etc.), minority cross-shareholding, or any other type? Why this type?

LA1TM1: It was a JV, that subsequently became full divestment. JV now full acquisition (Joint Venture, formal, written agreement).

LA1TM2: It was an acquisition. Why? It gave us opportunity to venture in new businesses and also consolidate on other existing businesses. (Joint Venture, formal, written agreement).

Categories	
Joint Venture	2
Formal with written agreement	2
Subsequently became full Acquisition	2

Q5: How experienced is your organisation in implementing strategic alliances?

LA1TM1: Our first experience with MNC but we have done several alliances locally and even greenfield entry to a smaller neighbouring company. (very experienced, numerous alliance)

LA1TM2: We have several experiences especially in the countries where we operate but this is our first alliance with an MNC (very experienced, numerous alliance)

Categories	
Very experienced	2
Numerous alliance	2
First alliance experience with MNC	2

Question Set 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. 1 Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

LA1TM1: No conflicts, there were experienced Internal Advisers in the transaction, with framework set to cover different agreements and terms, so we had alignment on key parameters. (Executive agreement) (no conflict) (cooperation, documentation of different agreements and terms) (framework set to cover different agreements and terms, alignment on key parameters).

LA1TM2: There were no conflict from the initial 40% acquisition and the full acquisition. (Executive agreement) (no conflict) (cooperation).

Categories	
Executive agreement	2
No conflict	2
Cooperation	3
Documentation of different agreements and terms	1
Framework set to cover different agreements and terms	1
Alignment on key parameters	1

Q2. What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

LA1TM1: It was a bilateral transaction, so each partner had to do due diligence that covers several areas; Finance, Operations, Sales etc., (Strategy role, due diligence, (operational role). Roles were assigned based on competence and area of strength. (international experience).

LA1TM2: No specific roles were assigned because each partner did its own findings and came to the conclusion whether to go ahead or not. (Strategy role, due diligence, (operational role).

Categories	
Strategy role	2
Due diligence	2
Operational role	2
Roles were assigned based on competence and area of strength	1
International experience	1

Q3. Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

LA1TM1: Both parties were responsible for the success of the alliance, but since FA1's intention was to take over the company fully, they had to be very active as well. (Joint success effort, joint effort, More success effort from dominant party).

LA1TM2: The two companies. FA1 has international expertise while we have the local expertise. (Joint success effort, Joint effort).

Categories	
Joint success effort	2
More success effort from dominant party	2
Joint effort	2

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.?

LA1TM1: The intention of FA1 was to take over the company through a phased process, so they had Executives cover some key roles such as Finance and Operations, but they took over a number of the old staff of LA. (well defined ways of working), (joint executive decision), (structured role agreement).

LA1TM2: Key roles such as Finance and Operation were covered by FA1 when it acquired 40% stake in LA1 but it has now taken over all the key roles after the full acquisition. (well defined ways of working), (joint executive decision), (structured role agreement).

Categories	
Well defined ways of working	2
Joint executive decision	2
Structured role agreement	2

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

LA1TM1: No major challenges as such, it was just very important to agree alignment on thought process, culture, vision, strategy etc., (No major challenges, agree alignment, common goal, change in process).

LA1TM2: LA1 and FA1 seem to have a common goal, hence no major issues both at the initial and final phase of the alliance. (value alignment, common goal).

Categories	
No major challenges	1
Change in process	1
Agree alignment on thought process, culture, vision, strategy	1
Value alignment	1
Common goal	2

Question Set 3. General questions

Q1. How often do you discuss the outcome and challenges of the strategic alliance and its implementation with the MNC partner?

LA1TM1: The whole consortium continuously discussed, the two corporates, the Financial advisers, the Legal team etc. (Frequently, periodically and on *ad-hoc* basis).

LA1TM2: Our legal Teams and the MNC are in constant discussions, I cannot specify how often but they met as frequently as the need arises. (Frequently, periodically and on *ad-hoc* basis).

Categories	
Frequently	2
Periodically	2
Ad-hoc basis	2

Q2. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

LA1TM1: It depends on what you are trying to achieve, we have many years of experience in Nigeria and for us business continuity was important, we wanted to handover the brand to a creditable organisation, so, in our case an MNC was preferred. MNC would be able to inject new ideas, inject capital, grow the brand ethically etc. (MNC with good brand and market acceptability) (value alignment) (local company) (MNC).

LA1TM2: Alliance with local partners maybe be important if there is a need to scale faster in the market but for this alliance, an MNC from a developed economy with proven track record is preferred. (MNC with good brand and market acceptability) (value alignment) (local company) (MNC).

Categories	
Business alliance with MNC was preferred	2
Business alliance with local company can help scale faster	1
MNC with good brand and market acceptability	2
value alignment between both company is key	2
Flexibility in approach, it depends on overall goal	

Q3. Who was more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?

LA1TM1: Both companies were responsible, we both had keen interest in the success of the alliance. (Both parties), different strategy for each region).

LA1TM2: The two companies but the MNC had more at stake in the implementation. (local partner more in charge of implementation) (Both parties) (MNC had more at stake in the implementation).

Categories	
Both parties were responsible	2
Flexibility in alliance approach	3
MNC had more at stake in the implementation	1

Q4. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

LA1TM1: Yes, there were changes in practice and even in the decision of the products to take to the market. (changes in practice) As mentioned, it became a full divestment, but from what we can see, the business is doing well and the products are still dominant in the market. (changes in practice) (some old unique practice adopted)

LA1TM2: There were no noticeable changes in practice at the initial stage but the MNC introduced some changes after full acquisition. On performance returns, it cannot be quantified as we were not privy to the books of the MNC after full acquisition. However, it is obvious that the company is doing well. (changes in practice)

Categories	
Changes in practice	3

some old unique practice adopted	2
MNC introduced some changes after full acquisition	1

Question Set 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with an MNC, especially with such international distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

LA1TM1: Understand how MNCs work and think and how to navigate and get the desired result. Legal documentation neatly and clearly drawn. Management team was given autonomy to operate within certain defined parameters/SOP from FA1. (Legal documentation) (well drafted agreement and role assignment) (defined parameters agreed) (Understand how MNCs work).

LA1TM2: Our venture with another MNC was going on almost about the same time the FA1 was on. This gave us experience for the FA1 alliance. (Previous experience in alliance). We have a great Team that was responsible for negotiations, documentations and other things related to the alliance. (Legal documentation) (well drafted agreement and role assignment) (defined parameters agreed).

Categories	
Understand how MNCs work	2
Agreements and Legal documentation should be neatly and clearly drawn	2
Defined parameters of working agreed	2
Previous experience in alliance helped	1
well drafted agreement and role assignment	2

Q2. What are the factors that influenced the strategic alliances with MNCs from a different region?

LA1TM1: We wanted a company with a good reputation, brand, products relevance to the local market, experience in consumer goods. (The reputation, brand, product relevance to the local market).

LA1TM2: Good reputation and brand with value alignment was key. (The reputation, brand, product relevance to the local market, value alignment).

Categories	
Good reputation	2
Good brand and vast experience in consumer goods	2
Relevance of products to local market	2
Value alignment	1

Q3. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

LA1TM1: Differences in the region didn’t matter much, (Implementation was not difficult) since the regional entities was hitherto being run by LA1 and LA1 continues.

LA1TM2: Region did not matter because LA1 had all the structures already ground (Implementation was not difficult).

Categories	
implementation was not difficult	2
Prior experience and existence in the region helped	2

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

LA1TM1: No, the old penetration strategy was adopted, while we were still partners (no specific region penetration strategy) (Existing regional penetration strategy maintained).

LA1TM2: Yes, we had to develop different strategies for the different regions based on culture, way of life and even religion. (Specific penetration strategy for different regions) We even had to attach Sales team to various distributors in some regions and provide Credit Facility. (specific penetration strategy for different regions).

Categories	
No specific region penetration strategy	1
Existing regional penetration strategy maintained	1
specific penetration strategy was adopted for different regions	2
Flexible approach to sales and Distributor engagement and Distributor Finance	1

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

LA1TM1: No. Definitely the prior knowledge of the local environment was very useful. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries, political risk reduced because of previous experience (local experience/Partnership helps).

LA1TM2: Yes, the knowledge of the local market assisted in deciding the distribution strategy, sales strategy, advert plans etc. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries, modified approach to suit local environment, political risk reduced because of previous experience, local experience/Partnership helps).

Categories	
Prior experience of alliance in developing countries helped	3
Political risk reduced because of previous experience	2
local experience/Partnership helps	3
knowledge of the local market assisted	2

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

LA1TM1: Implementation plan for the various regions were slightly different. (sales strategy in the region differ).

LA1TM2: Implementation plan for the various regions were different. The North had always been more difficult to penetrate but we already got the strategy right before the alliance. (Implementation strategy in the North was different).

Categories	
Sales strategy in the region differ	2
Implementation strategy in the North was different	1

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

LA1TM1: Good market with great potential if you understand the dynamics of the market. There are challenges everywhere, understand the market and ride the turf. (understanding the peculiarities), (local experience/partnership helps), (good returns).

LA1TM2: Nigeria is a great market. The weak institutional structure can be strengthened to improve the ease of doing business. (understanding the peculiarities), (local experience/partnership helps), (good returns).

Categories	
Understand the dynamics of the market	2
(local experience/partnership helps	2
Be strengthened to improve the ease of doing business	1
Market with good returns but understanding the peculiarities	1

Table 4.2 Summary of Top Management Data Analysis

			Foreign Partner	**Local Partner**	**Combined Categories**

Q1 **Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done**

A **Your organization must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.**

Categories	
Numerous alliances	9
Alliance for leadership	1
Joint Venture	1
Mergers and Acquisition	1

Categories	
Numerous alliances	2

Categories	
Numerous alliances	11
Alliance for leadership	1
Joint Venture	1
Mergers and Acquisition	1

Bi **Why did your organization decide to do the alliance?**

Categories	
Brand Value	1
Alliance for leadership	1
Market depth and new consumer coverage	3
Full use of resources	1
Grow revenue	1
Value proposition and alignment	1

Categories	
Divestment to another business line	1
Consolidation of business line	1
Grow revenue	2
Market depth	2

Categories	
Brand value	1
Alliance for leadership	1
Market depth and new consumer coverage	5
Full use of resources	1
Grow revenue	3
Divestment to another business line	1
Consolidation of business line	1
Product improvement	
Value proposition and alignment	1

Bii **What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?**

Categories	
Market growth	1
Market depth	2
Willingness to cooperate	2

Categories	
Market depth	2
Market growth	2
Willingness to cooperate	1
Consolidation of business line	1
Acquire local capability	1
Local demands	1

Categories	
Market depth	4
Market growth	3
Willingness to cooperate	3
Consolidation of business line	1
Acquire local capability	1
Local demands	1

Biii **What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?**

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	2
Was fully involved	1
Part of the implementation team	1

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	1
Was fully involved	2

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	3
Was fully involved	3
Part of the implementation team	1

Biv **What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?**

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	3

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	2

Categories	
to ensure successful implementation	5

Q2 **Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?**

Categories	
Alliance was successful	3
Alliance exceeded expectation	2
Market growth	3

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Growth in market share	2
Growth in revenue	2
Led to subsequent business alliance	2

Categories	
Alliance was successful	5
Growth in market share	2
Growth in revenue	2
Led to subsequent business alliance	2

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td><table><tr><td>Well organised</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in Strategic alliances helped</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Alliance grew to an acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Alliance grew to an acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Success of alliance exceeded expectation</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance led to Market growth</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Well organised</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in Strategic alliances helped</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Q3</u></td><td></td><td><u>For which time period was the strategic alliance designed to envisage? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still on going? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Took a long time than anticipated</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was planned for 6months</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>The alliance took over 18months to implement</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Took a long time</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance grew to an acquisition</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was successful</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance process took over 18months</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Envisaged period for alliance implementation was 12months</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>took a long time than anticipated</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance took 6 months</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance grew to an acquisition</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Took over 18months</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was successful</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was for 12 months</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Q4</u></td><td></td><td><u>What is the legal form of the strategic alliance? For example, is it (informal agreement, formal, written agreement, separate legal entity (JV, consortium etc.), minority cross-shareholding, or any other type? Why this type?</u></td><td></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Joint venture</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Formal</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Written agreement</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Joint Venture</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Formal</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Written agreement</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Q5</u></td><td></td><td><u>How experienced is your organisation in implementing strategic alliances?</u></td><td></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Very experienced</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Numerous alliance</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>First alliance experience with MNC</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Very experienced</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Numerous alliance</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>First alliance experience with MNC</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6"><u>Section 2: Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase</u></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>1</u></td><td></td><td><u>Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>The experience of the local Partner helped</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>No tough conflict</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Executive agreement</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>No conflict</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Cooperation</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Documentation of different agreements and terms</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Framework set to cover different agreements and terms</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alignment on key parameters</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Executive agreement</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>No conflict</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Cooperation</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Documentation of different agreements and terms</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Framework set to cover different agreements and terms</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alignment on key parameters</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Local partner’s experience helped</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Strategic role</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Finance and operations role</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Strategy role</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Due diligence</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Operational role</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Roles were assigned based on competence and area of strength</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>International experience</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Strategy role</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Due diligence</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Finance and Operational role</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Roles were assigned based on competence and area of strength</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>International experience</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Joint success effort</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Joint success effort</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>More success effort from dominant party</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Joint effort</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Joint success effort</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>More success effort from dominant party</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Joint effort</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Structured role agreement</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Joint executive decision</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Well defined ways of working</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>well defined ways of working</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>joint executive decision</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>structured role agreement</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>well defined ways of working</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>joint executive decision</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>structured role agreement</td><td>5</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Human resources challenge</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval challenges</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>FX challenges</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Supply chain issues</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>No major challenges</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Change in process</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Agree alignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Value alignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Common goal</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Human resources challenge</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval challenges</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>FX challenges</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Supply chain issues</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>No major challenges</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Change in process</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Agree alignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Value alignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Common goal</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 3: General Questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Flexible approach to business alliance</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Well defined approach and principle</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Experienced local alliance partner essential</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Phased alliance strategy</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Business alliance with MNC was preferred</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Business alliance with local company can help scale faster</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>MNC with good brand and market acceptability</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Value alignment between both company is key</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Local partner alliance strategy</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>MNC partner alliance</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance between both company</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>MNC with good brand and market acceptability</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Phased alliance strategy</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Well defined approach and all</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<td><u>Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?</u></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Both Companies were responsible for the implementation of the alliance</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local partner involvement is essential</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Phased alliance approach intensified Local partner involvement and responsibility</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
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<tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>MNC had more at stake in the implementation</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Local partner involvement is essential</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Phased alliance approach</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>MNC had more at stake in the implementation</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<td><u>3</u></td>
<td></td>
<td><u>Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?</u></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Alliance changed existing practice</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Significant MNC process change</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Alignment of processes, operations, products, production, culture and employee engagement</td><td>6</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Changes in practice</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Some old unique practice adopted</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>MNC introduced some changes after full acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Some old unique practice adopted</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>MNC introduced some changes after full acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Significant MNC process change</td><td>4</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td><u>4</u></td>
<td></td>
<td><u>After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?</u></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>After the 1st year, we could quantify the Performance returns</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Quick improvement in MNC performance</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Improved MNC efficiency</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>More access to cheaper financing</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Growth in sales volume and revenue</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6"><u>Section 4: Regions and Multi-tribe</u></td></tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>How were you able to implement such a business alliance with an MNC, especially with such international distance i.e., differences in</td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>3</td></tr>
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<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Understand how MNCs work</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Agreements and Legal documentation should be neatly and clearly drawn</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Defined parameters of working agreed</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<td>culture, norms and practice.</td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Involvement of independent Consultants, Financial advisers, Legal counsels, agreements, and MOU made process easier</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Willingness to cooperate by local partner</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Previous experience in alliance helped</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Well drafted agreement and role assignment</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<td><table>
<tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Agreements and Legal documentation should be neatly and clearly drawn</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Involvement of Independent Consultants; financial advisers, legal counsels, agreements, and MOUs etc. That assisted in making the process almost seamless</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Understand how MNCs work</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Legal documentation</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Defined parameters agreed</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Well drafted agreement and role assignment</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?</td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Regional implementation was not difficult</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Security concerns in some regions</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Marketing and distribution approach differed in regions</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ethnic of the regions considered in advert formation</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>The local company had very well-known brand</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Implementation was not difficult</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Prior experience and existence in the region helped</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Regional implementation not difficult</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Security concerns in some regions</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Marketing and distribution approach differed in regions</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ethnic of the region considerations in advert formation</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Prior experience and existence in the region helped</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>The local company had very well-known brand</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?</td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Culture alignment challenges</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Process alignment challenges</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Wider areas of coverage in some regions</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Distribution and supply chain differences</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Align strategies to suit peculiarities of each region</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Logistics challenges</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Did you have to develop specific region penetration strategies? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?</td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Marketing and distribution approach differed in regions</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Different strategy for each region</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Adopt content to the region to give good connection to the people of that region</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>No specific region penetration strategy</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Existing regional penetration strategy maintained</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Specific penetration strategy was adopted for different regions</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Flexible approach to sales and Distributor engagement and Distributor Finance</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>No specific region penetration strategy</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?</td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sales and marketing strategy modified to suit local environment</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Political risk reduced because of previous experience</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local partnership experience helped</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Prior experience of alliance in developing countries</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Political risk reduced because of previous experience</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local experience/Partnership helps</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Knowledge of the local market assisted</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>6</td></tr>
<tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>3</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Knowledge of the local market assisted</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.</td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Gets tougher the farther you go from Head Office</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sales strategy in the region differ</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>The North because of the wide area of coverage, security concerns and level of literacy</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Sales strategy in the region differ</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Implementation strategy in the North was different</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table></td>
<td><table>
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<tr><td>Implementation strategy in the North was different</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?</td>
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<table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Understanding the peculiarities of the market</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local experience/partnership helps</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local experience helps overcome corruption</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ethically principled culture</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Understand the dynamics of the market</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local experience/partnership helps</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Be strengthened to improve the ease of doing business</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Market with good returns but understanding the peculiarities</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Ethically principled culture</td><td>2</td></tr>
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4.1.2 Middle Management Interview Data Analysis

The management staff from FA1 are as coded as FA1MM1.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly. If possible, at least 1 in each region of Nigeria, can you please talk more about the main strategic alliance, explaining the following:

FA1MM1: Yes, many alliances done in many countries and previous ones in Nigeria too; JV, Partnerships, Acquisitions, Franchise etc. Gradual purchase. 40% = 1st, progress dependent, 60% = 2nd on certain KPI (numerous alliances) (Phased alliance). A number of alliances done across the continent and in Nigeria especially. Supply partnership, JV, phased acquisition, etc (numerous alliances).

Categories	
Numerous alliances	2
Phased alliance	1

i. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

FA1MM1: The brand of the product (brand perception). Willingness of LA1 to sell and open the books. (willingness to cooperate). Reputable external auditor in the taxation made the process easier. (willingness to cooperate). To increase our market and also meet local demand. (acquire local capability), (local demands), (market depth).

Categories	
Brand perception	2
Willingness to cooperate	2
To Increase market depth	1
Meet local demand	1

ii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

FA1MM1: FA1 was invited to participate by the LA1 – they saw the opportunity (acquire local capability), review of dynamics of the market. (market growth) (acquire local capability). To have large market share, to consolidate our business, for Growth (market growth) (business consolidation). Financial consultants initiated the discussion, but the seller was willing to sell. (willingness to cooperate).

Categories	
Acquire local capability	2
Market growth	2
Consolidation of business line	1
Meet local demand	1

willingness to sell/cooperate	1

iii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

FA1MM1: I was not involved in the decision making for the business alliance, more in the implementation. (was involved in the implementation).

Categories	
was involved in the implementation	1

iv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

FA1MM1: I was in Finance, responsible for data collation during alliance process but part of implementation team in Finance. (was fully involved).

Categories	
Was fully involved	1
Finance - responsible for data collation	1

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA1MM1: Significant growth in the business (growth in market share) (revenue, staff welfare, realignment, ethical issue, general approach control), double digit growth (growth in market share). The alliance went well. Volume increased, market share increased, efficiency in operations and productions too (growth in market share) (growth in revenue). Business is well aligned, staff are now integrated. (well aligned) (alliance was successful).

Categories	
Growth in market share	3
Business growth	2
Consolidation of business line	1
Meet local demand	1
Growth in revenue	2
Efficiency in operation/production	1
Well aligned	1
Alliance was successful	

Q3: For which time period was the strategic alliance designed envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

FA1MM1: Cut-off date was achieved within the expected timeline. The whole process took 4 years - 40% acquisition first, by 2019, full acquisition subsequently, lot of separation started: employee. (took a long time) (Alliance was successful), (alliance grew to an acquisition) (Regulatory approval)

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Took a long time-The whole process took 4 years	2
Alliance grew to an acquisition	1

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA1MM1: The only real conflict was on staff issues, but that was resolved, even though it affected operations for that period. (some conflict) (no tough conflict) (made staff adjustments). There was some conflict because some key staff moved to Chi Nig. The conflict was easily resolved. (Conflict was easily resolved).

Categories	
There was some conflict	2
Conflict was easily resolved	1
No tough conflict	1
Made staff adjustments	1

Q2. What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

FA1MM1: LA1 was more significant. LA1 played a more prominent role in the implementation. Owner/MD of Chi Nig handled local recruitment for Coca-Cola with the understanding of who employer was. (Local company played significant role) (Strategy role) (looked to fit local peculiarities) (dominant party emerged). Coca Cola was responsible for majority of the production processes to ensure it aligns with the Coca Cola Standard (Process change). Coca Cola had to do a lot of due diligence, since they were the buyer. (due diligence) (Strategy role).

Categories	
Strategy role	2
Local company played significant role	1
Dominant party emerged	1
MNC’s role was for production process	1

Q3. Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

FA1MM1: Both Corporates but LA1 was more significant. LA1 played a more prominent role in the implementation. (Both MNC and LC) (joint success effort).

Categories	
Both MNC and LC	1
Local company played significant role	2
Joint success effort	1

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.

FA1MM1: Prior to the full takeover, Chi Nig. was responsible for the Management. The MD and CFO after 100% takeover – subsequently restructured staff for available roles. Chi Nig. moved out of the premises. Issues/disagreements were well managed. Information became sensitive though. (well defined ways of working), (joint executive decision before full acquisition), (structured role agreement), (MNC took over fully after full acquisition).

Categories	
Both MNC and LC	1
Local company played significant role	2
Well defined ways of working	1
Joint executive decision before full acquisition	1
Structured role agreement	1
Business alliance became full acquisition	1
MNC took over fully after full acquisition	1

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

FA1MM1: Migration of staff from Coca-Cola to TGI (Chi Nig. Holding Company), due to TGI's package being better. Plans ongoing to review welfare packages. (changed careers) (human resources issues). Regulatory challenge and staff integration (regulatory approval challenges, alignment challenges).

Categories	
Human resources issues	1
Regulatory approval challenges	2
Staff integration challenges	1

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

FA1MM1: Acquisition better than greenfield; Staggard takeover approach to Full acquisition is better as it gives full control to MNC. (Acquisition) (Staggard approach to acquisition is good). I think Local partnership is also good as it helps to jumpstart business almost immediately and the local partner will understand local environment (local partnership helps).

Categories	
Acquisition better than greenfield	1
Staggard approach to acquisition is good	1
Local partnership helps	1

Q2. Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?

FA1MM1: Both parties but TGI played a more significant role before the full acquisition. TGI played a more prominent role in the implementation. (Both parties), (local partner more in charge of implementation).

Categories	
Local corporate played a more significant role before the full acquisition	1
Both MNC and LC were responsible	1

Q3. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

FA1MM1: Audit process defined the approach, integrate local process to International, Change ERP to (SAP), Upgrade system (alignment) (changes in practise and policy) (some old unique practice adopted). Changes in operations, particularly the production processes and human resources policies (changes in practise and policy) (Changes in operations) (Changes in system).

Categories	
Changes in practise and policy	2
Changes in operations and production process	1
Changes in human resources policies	1
Changes and upgrade in System	2
Integration of local process to International	1

Q4. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?

FA1MM1: After the 1st year business performance improved, a lot of savings and reduced cost. (alliance improved performance) (cost optimization). Coca-Cola Chi network/strength brought, supplier negotiation, vendor negotiation. Leverage on Coca-Cola power to renegotiate loan pricing, fees, and terms with bankers, Reduction in expatriate salary. Coca-Cola used more local staff. (quick improvement in MNC performance) (alliance improved performance) (enhanced sales) (economies of scale) (improved MNC efficiency).

Categories	
After the 1st year business performance improved	1

Alliance improved performance	4
Cost optimization and cheaper financing cost	2
Economies of scale	1
Improved MNC efficiency	3
Enhanced sales	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with a local company, especially with such International distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

FA1MM1: Reporting structure e.g., treasury, matrix reporting to Atlanta. Compliance & Ethical – Regular audit raising issues and covering gaps. Global ethics. Creation of junior union association – labour. Procurement – consolidation, process, accident issues, safety of production floor, HSE, whistle blower policy. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (Flexibility in alliance approach). Coca Cola has done many business alliance over the years and they are also not new to Nigeria. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (defined parameters agreed).

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	2
Flexibility in alliance approach	1
Defined parameters agreed	1
Reporting structure aligned	1
Regular audit raising issues and covering gaps	1
Process consolidation	1

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA1MM1: No, it wasn't difficult. Product factory is 1 in Lagos. Distribution to various branches/warehouses. Staff here were LA1, converted to FA1. (It was not difficult). Coca Cola already has presence in Nigerian Market (prior experience in the local market helped) (Not much difficultly implementing across the different regions) (Production was centralized).

Categories	
Not much difficultly implementing across the different regions	2
Production was centralised	1
Prior experience in the local market helped	1
Prvious staff were engaged and adopted	1

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?

FA1MM1: Implementation was not so difficult. Sales directors appointed by Chi were able to coordinate well. Local recruitment from the region where branches were, helped. Branches had sales staff and accounting staff. (local recruitment) (coped with challenges better later). Implementation was not difficult, because Coca Cola understood the Nigerian market. (knowledge of local market helped). Coca Cola understands the Nigeria terrain. (knowledge of local market helped) (coped with challenges better later) (implementation was not difficult) (local recruitment) (there were differences in the various regions).

Categories	
There were differences in the various regions	2
Effective coordination	1
Prior experience in the local market helped	2
Local recruitment from the respective region	2

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

FA1MM1: Region penetration strategy were developed for increased sales and market penetration. Yes we have to develop region specific strategies. (different strategy for each region), (specific penetration strategy for different regions).

Categories	
Region penetration strategy were developed	1
Specific penetration strategy for different regions for sales and market penetration	1

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

FA1MM1: CocaCola has knowledge of the local market. This helped to mitigate environmental and political risk. CocaCola has operated in more than 10 African countries. The experience was brought to bear in this alliance. This assisted to mitigate or reduce risks. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (political risk reduced because of previous experience; local experience/Partnership helps).

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries helped	2
Political risk reduced because of previous experience	1
Local experience helped to mitigate environmental and political risk	2

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

FA1MM1: Not really, perhaps the farther region but once the strategies were reset to suit the culture and environment, it became easier. (easier where MNC HQ is based, gets tougher the farther you go) (sales strategy in the region differ) (implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O).

Categories	
Sales strategy in the region differ	2
Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	1

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

FA1MM1: Easy to handle knowing fully that Coca-Cola is an ethical facility. Regulator understood that later on and conformed. Penalties for underpayment fines. Initially, series of engagement was done with regulator to settle all issues ethically. No compromise on ethics. Customs (no corruption/bribery)/FIRS/Govt official. Seizure of trucks/cars by agencies too. No compromise, just settle fines. This stance initially impacted the whole implementation process. (understanding the peculiarities), (local experience/partnership helps) (No compromise on ethics) (Continuous dialogue and engagement of regulators).

Categories	
No compromise on ethics	5
Continuous dialogue and engagement of regulators	1
Local experience/Partnership helps	2
Understanding the peculiarities of the market	2

Final Questions.

Are there any things on strategies of strategic alliances in general you might want to tell me about that I might not have covered during the course of the interview?

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td><u>Foreign Partner</u></td><td><u>Local Partner</u></td><td><u>Combined Categories</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q1</td><td colspan="5"><u>Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done</u></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td><u>A</u></td><td><u>Your organization must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>numerous alliances</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Phased alliance</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td></td><td>Bi</td><td>Why did your organization decide to do the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>brand perception</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>willingness to cooperate</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>market depth</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Meet local demand</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Bii</td><td>What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>acquire local capability</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>market growth</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>consolidation of business line</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Meet local demand</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>willingness to sell/cooperate</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Biii</td><td>What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>was involved in the implementation</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Biv</td><td>What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>was fully involved</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Finance - responsible for data collation</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>well organized, difficulty in alignment</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q2</td><td></td><td>Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliances was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Growth in market share</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Business growth</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Consolidation of business line</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Meet local demand</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in revenue</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Efficiency in operation/production</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Well aligned</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was successful</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td><u>Q4</u></td><td></td><td><u>What is the legal form of the strategic alliance? For example, is it (informal agreement, formal, written agreement, separate legal entity (JV, consortium etc.), minority cross-shareholding, or any other type? Why this type?</u></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Q5</u></td><td></td><td><u>How experienced is your organisation in implementing strategic alliances?</u></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="6"><u>Section 2- Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase</u></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>1</u></td><td></td><td><u>Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>There was some conflict</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Conflict was easily resolved</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>No tough conflict</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Made staff adjustments</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>2</u></td><td></td><td><u>What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Strategy role</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Local company played significant role</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>dominant party emerged</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>MNC’s role was for production process</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>3</u></td><td></td><td><u>Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Both MNC and LC</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Local company played significant role</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Joint success effort</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td><u>5</u></td><td></td><td><u>What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Human resources issues</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval challenges</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Staff integration challenges</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 3 – General Questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>How often do you discuss the outcome and challenges of the strategic alliance and its implementation with the MNC partner?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Acquisition better than greenfield</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Staggard approach to acquisition is good</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>local partnership helps</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Local corporate played a more significant role before the full acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Both MNC and LC</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Changes in practise and policy</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in operations and production process</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in human resources policies</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Changes and upgrade in System</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Integration of local process to International</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>After the 1st year business performance improved</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>alliance improved performance</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Cost optimization and cheaper financing cost</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Economies of scale</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Improved MNC efficiency</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Enhanced sales</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 4 – Regions and Multi-tribe</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>How were you able to implement such a business alliance with an MNC, especially with such International distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practice.</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Defined parameters agreed</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Reporting structure aligned</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Regular audit raising issues and covering gaps</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td><table><tr><td>Process consolidation</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Not much difficultly implementing across the different regions</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Production was centralised</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in the local market helped</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Previous staff were engaged and adopted</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>There were differences in the various regions</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Effective coordination</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in the local market helped</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Local recruitment from the respective region</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>Did you have to develop specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Region penetration strategy were developed</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Specific penetration strategy for different regions</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Political risk reduced because of previous experience</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Local experience helped to mitigate environmental and political risk</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td></td><td>Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Sales strategy in the region differ</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<table>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?</td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>No compromise on ethics</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Continuous dialogue and engagement of regulators</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local experience/Partnership helps</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Understanding the peculiarities of the market</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance</td>
<td><table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>After the 1st year business performance improved</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>alliance improved performance</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>cost optimization</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>economies of scale</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>improved MNC efficiency</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>enhanced sales</td><td>1</td></tr>
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4.1.3 Regional Management Interview Data Analysis

The regional management staff from FA1 are as coded as FA1RM1 and FA1RM2 respectively.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. What was your role in the implementation of the alliance? What location?

FA1RM1: Creating regional sales plans and quotas in alignment with business objectives. I am based in the north (was fully involved).

FA1RM2: Managing key distributors and supporting Store Managers with day-to-day store operation in the Eastern part of Nigeria (was fully involved). Management of the store operations across Lagos and I am also responsible for meeting sales target in my region (was fully involved).

Categories	
Was fully involved	3
Sales/North - Creating regional sales plans and quotas	1
Sales/South - Managing key distributors and supporting Store Managers	1

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was in your region? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA1RM1: The alliance in my region was successful (alliance was successful), with increased sales capacity and increased products (Market growth)

FA1RM2: The alliance was successful. (alliance was successful). The CHI products increased our SKUs (Market growth). We were also able to use existing CHI distributors to move Coca Cola Brands too. (Market growth) (local experience helped).

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Market growth	3
Local experience helped	1

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA1RM1: There were no conflict with the employees of CHI limited. They were comfortable with some terms and condition and *most preferred to be employees of the Coca Cola company*. (No Conflict). We had to get some government approvals, that delayed a bit. (regulatory approval).

FA1RM2: There were no conflicts (No Conflict), though some staff had to leave because of some alignments. (No Conflict) (employee engagement and alignment).

Categories	
No Conflict	1
Regulatory approval required	1
Employee engagement and alignment	2

Q2. What challenges did you face as a region, doing the alliance, and during the implementation of the business alliance?

FA1RM1. The business was already existing in the regions, so, not much challenges, just a bit of apprehension amongst the staff and some old products were being stopped temporarily. (staff apprehension) (product adjustment). In fact the alliance made some existing Coca Cola products to gain access into new markets. (market depth), (Market acceptability improved (Brand Value).

FA1RM2: No major challenges. Our existing distributors were still willing to take up more products (market depth) (Market acceptability improved).

Categories	
Staff apprehension	1
Product adjustment	1
No major challenges, positive growth	1
Market depth	2
Market acceptability improved	2
Product improvement	1

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance? State some.

FA1RM1: Yes, we had changes in practice such as synchronisation of customer's account because distributors who have been purely CocaCola distributors automatically became Chivita Distributors also and we had to streamline regions and synchronise their accounts. (alliance changed MNC practice)

FA1RM2: Yes there were obvious changes in practices (alliance changed MNC practice), there were some processes from CHI that were adopted. (alliance changed MNC practice).

Categories	
Yes, changes in practise	2
Synchronization of Customer's account	1
Streamline regions	
Alliance changed MNC practice	2

Q2. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns in your region, as a result of the business alliance?

FA1RM1: It took about twelve months to quantify returns (quick improvement in MNC performance). This is so because of new product development. (alliance improved performance).

FA1RM2: It was after a year (quick improvement in MNC performance), though 6 months into the Alliance, we started observing changes in sales figures (quick improvement in MNC performance) (alliance improved performance).

Categories	
Quick improvement in MNC performance	3
Alliance improved performance	2
It took about twelve months to quantify returns	2

Q3. What are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenges?

FA1RM1: Staff were aware of what was going on, (human resources challenges) but the communication on the fate of some staff was not communicated timely resulting in some staff resigning (made staff adjustments) (communication not timely) (human resources challenges)

FA1RM2: Implementation did not affect most regions. Although there were staff redeployments (staff adjustments), there were some staff apprehension and communication gap initially. (communication not timely) (increased communications) (human resources challenges).

Categories	
Employee engagement and realignment	3
Human resources challenges	2
Communication not timely	2
Staff apprehension	2

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How did the differences in culture, norms and practices affect implementation in the regions?

FA1RM1: There were differences in culture and practise, but the local partner had that under control, and they had structures in place already, so we just refined a bit. (local partnership and experience helped) (cultural alignment) (existing structure)

FA1RM2: There were differences, but we had to ensure that the line managers take charge and set the right tone even at the Head Office (cultural alignment) (line managers set the right tone).

Categories	
Local partnership and experience helped	2
Cultural alignment between the two companies	1
Existing structure	1
Line managers set the right tone	1

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA1RM1: Yes, a bit of difficulty that required change in policies, mindset and personnel. (implementation not so difficult) (alliance changed MNC practice) (change in policies, mindset and personnel).

FA1RM2: Not so difficult (implementation not so difficult) because CHI staff embraced Coca Cola (alliance changed MNC practice) (change in mindset and personnel).

Categories	
Implementation not so difficult	2
Alliance changed MNC practice	2
Change in policies, mindset, and personnel	2

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant compared to Head Office and how did the differences impact the alliance?

FA1RM1: There were differences (differences in the region) (regional attributes impacted penetration strategy) but the existing operating model was adopted. (existing operating model was adopted).

FA1RM2: LA2 already had an efficient sales and distribution model but the strategy in each region differed. (strategy in each region differed) (differences in the region).

Categories	
Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	2
Existing operating model was adopted	2
Strategy in each region differed	2

Q4. Did they have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for your parts of the country?

FA1RM1: No significant change (Existing regional penetration strategy maintained) because the existing model worked (existing business model, existing operations) but it was different for different parts of the country (different strategy for each region).

FA1RM2: No major changes (Existing regional penetration strategy maintained) (existing business model, existing operations), old staff were still on ground but the expectations across the region was more communicated and documented. (appropriate documentation is critical).

Categories	
Existing regional penetration strategy maintained	2
Existing business model, existing operations	2
Different strategy for each region	2
Appropriate documentation and communication is critical	1

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in your region?

FA1RM1: The experience of Chi really helped (local experience/Partnership helps) coupled with our experience in other emerging markets (prior experience in alliance in developing countries)

FA1RM2: No significant impact due to existing local experience (local experience/Partnership helps)

Categories	
Local experience/Partnership help	2
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	1

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td><u>Foreign Partner</u></td><td><u>Local Partner</u></td><td><u>Combined Categories</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q1</td><td colspan="5">Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>i</td><td>What was your role in the implementation of the alliance? What location?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Was fully involved</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Sales/North - Creating regional sales plans and quotas</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Sales/South - Managing key distributors and supporting Store Managers</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q2</td><td></td><td>Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliances was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>alliance was successful</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Market growth</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>local experience helped</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 2</td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>No Conflict</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>regulatory approval required</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Staff adjustment</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>2</td><td>What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Staff apprehension</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Product adjustment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>No major challenges, positive-growth</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Market depth</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Market acceptability improved</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Product improvement</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Section 3</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Yes, changes in practise</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>synchronization of customer’s account</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance changed MNC practice</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>2</td><td>After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns in your region as a result of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Quick improvement in MNC performance</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance improved performance</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>It took about twelve months to quantify returns</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>3</td><td>What are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenges?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Employee engagement and realignment</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Human resources challenges</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Communication not timely</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Staff apprehension</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 4 – Regions and Multi-tribe</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>How did the differences in culture, norms and practice affect implementation in the regions?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Local partnership and experience helped</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Cultural alignment between the two companies</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Existing structure</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Line managers set the right tone</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>2</td><td>Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Implementation not so difficult</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance changed MNC practice</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Change in policies, mindset, and personnel</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>3</td><td>Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td><table><tr><td>Existing operating model was adopted</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Strategy in each region differed</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>4</td><td>Did you have to develop specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Existing regional penetration strategy maintained</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Existing business model, existing operations</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Different strategy for each region</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Appropriate documentation and communication is critical</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>5</td><td>How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Local experience/Partnership help</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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Section 4.2 Data Analysis of Strategic Alliance Partnership Case study 2

In this section, the data and codes of the interviews of the Case study of the Strategic alliance implementation between alliance partners coded as FA2 (Foreign alliance partner) and LA2 (Local alliance partner) are presented in subsections of 4.2.1 Top Management Data Analysis of both alliance partners, 4.2.2 Middle Management Data Analysis of both alliance partners 4.2.3. Regional Staff Data Analysis of both alliance partners.

4.2.1 Top Management Interview Data Analysis

Foreign alliance is coded as FA2 and the top management staff from FA2 are as coded as FA2TM1, FA2TM2 and FA2TM3 respectively.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done several alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.

FA2TM1: Yes, we have done several alliances (numerous alliances) but the first in Nigeria (Global alliance). Previous alliance done in Nigeria were more of general commerce. (Previous alliance was trading).

FA2TM2: We have done a number of alliances (numerous alliances) across various country (Global alliance).

Categories	
Numerous alliances	2
Global alliance	2
Previous alliance was trading	1

i. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

FA2TM1: Looking for Investment opportunity (market depth), (grow revenue) with fit into existing product portfolio (Global alliance).

FA2TM2: Part of expansion plan to Africa (Global alliance), (acquire local capability).

Categories	
Market depth	1
Global alliance	2
Grow revenue	1
Acquire local capability	1

Bii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

FA2TM1: Tolaram approached Kellogs (willingness to cooperate), (market depth, market growth). Tolaram had plans of expanding their product base on the food and snacks line, (market depth, market growth) their goal was to partner with a reputable brand. (reputable brand). We already had our products in the Nigerian Market but imported (acquire local capability, local demand). Kellogs had plans to expand manufacturing into the local market (acquire local capability, local demands). This aligned with our strategy. (market growth).

FA2TM2: I was not in the organisation then, but I understand that Tolaram initiated the alliance discussions (willingness to cooperate) and Kellogs major consideration was gaining access to the African market (acquire local capability, local demands, market depth, market growth).

Categories	
Market depth	3
Global alliance	2
Grow revenue	1
Acquire local capability	3
Willingness to cooperate	2
Market growth	4
Reputable brand	1
Local demand	3

Biii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

FA2TM1: It was handled by the M&A unit. (participated at strategic level)

FA2TM2: I was not in the organisation then.

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	1

Biv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

FA2TM1: Finance. To ensure the success of the alliance. (to ensure successful implementation).

FA2TM2: I was part of the Legal team. My main role was to ensure the documentation, contracts, agreement was properly handled. (to ensure successful implementation).

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	2
Handling of Legal documentation	1
Finance	1

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA2TM1: Far beyond initial expectation and budget. Good geographic expansion. Business is really growing, double digit.

FA2TM2: Very Successful, exceeded budget.

Categories	
Alliance successful beyond expectation and budget	2
Business growing	2

Q3: For which time period was the strategic alliance designed envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

FA2TM1: It was envisaged for 6 months but took over 12 months. The alliance is still ongoing (took a long time), and very successful. (Alliance was successful) I think it must have taken like 18 months (took a long time).

FA2TM2: The planned timeline was 6 months but took over 12 months (took a long time). The first phase was successful. (Alliance was successful)

Categories	
Alliance was envisaged for 6 months	2
Implementation of Alliance took over 12 months	2
Alliance was successful and is still ongoing	2

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA2TM1. R&D plans to localise taste, led to a bumpy start. (local practice) (Alignment to consumer's local preference and taste) (tough change process) This had to be reversed to global taste. (local practise) (local preference) (cooperation).

FA2TM2: No real conflict (no tough conflict), issues were resolved immediately (cooperation), except for the change of the planned local recipe. (Alignment to consumer's local preference and taste) (tough change process).

Categories	
No tough conflict	2
Cooperation	2
Alignment to consumer's local preference and taste	1
Change of recipe and production process	2
Tough change process	1

Q2. What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

FA2TM1: Kellogs brought in technology, R&D capability, product recipe (international experience) while TG brought in implementation plus local knowledge (local expertise). Kellogs had CFO role, key factory operations, Production Head, Quality Control (Strategy role) while TG had CEO, Head of Factory and other roles (operational role) (dominant party emerged).

FA2TM2: TG was more responsible for the operations of the JV especially (dominant party emerged), TG had local market experience (local expertise) and had been operating in the local market (local expertise) and also had good knowledge of the market (local expertise). KG was more incharge of Finance (Strategy role).

Categories	
International experience from MNC	1
Local expertise of local company	4
Local company took up operational role	1
MNC adopted more strategic role	2
Dominant party emerged - Local company	2

Q3. Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

FA2TM1: Both Corporates but TG was more responsible for implementation. (joint effort) (More success effort from dominant party).

FA2TM2: The two-organisation worked tirelessly to make a success of the implementation. (joint success effort), as the success was critical to both companies. (joint success effort).

Categories	
Joint success effort	3
More success effort from dominant party	2

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.

FA2TM1: Kellogg gave autonomy (Responsibilities was structured) (structured role agreement) for TG to implement and drive the business based on agreed strategic direction (amended established template), as the operating management, due to their depth of experience in the local market (local experience).

FA2TM2: Key management team was appointed (structured role agreement), with reporting line to the Board (well defined ways of working) that comprised both TG and Kellogg's Executive. (joint executive decision) The structure for engagement and roles (structured role agreement) was well defined. (well defined ways of working), (established template).

Categories	
Responsibilities was structured	3
Structured role agreement	3
Amended established template	2
Well defined ways of working	2
Joint executive decision	1

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

FA2TM1: Extremely unique market; need for involvement in backward integration, Currency volatility. (apprehension), FX limitation, Supply chain challenges. (apprehension), Regulatory requirement (regulatory approval challenges), attracting good talent, skill migration to developed market, regulatory instability. (apprehension)

FA2TM2: Employees getting used to some new ways of working but not so much issues because employees and management were that of TG. (Apprehension) Similarities were more though, because TG had strong value system which aligned (value alignment) with that of Kellogg.

Categories	
Regulatory approval challenges	3
Supply chain challenges	2
Attracting good talent/migration of talent	1
Value alignment	1
Structure alignment	1
Apprehension	4
Need for involvement in backward integration	1
Currency volatility	1
Employee alignment	1

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with a local partner or as a greenfield? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

FA2TM1: I think business alliance is better done with a local partner (experienced local alliance partner essential), and the local partner's understanding of the local market made implementation easier. (experienced local alliance partner essential).

FA2TM2: The alliance partner being local made implementation easy (experienced local alliance partner essential).

Categories	
Experienced local alliance partner essential	3

Q2. Who was more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or the local company?

FA2TM1: The local partner was more responsible for implementation; operating management and more on management team. (local partner was more responsible for implementation) (local partner involvement is essential).

FA2TM2: Local partner was more responsible for implementation, operational tasks, set up etc (local partner was more responsible for implementation) (local partner involvement is essential).

Categories	
Local partner involvement is essential	2
Local partner was more responsible for implementation	2

Q3. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

FA2TM1: Few changes because the value system was similar (alliance changed existing practice) (value system aligned).

FA2TM2: Yes, a number of changes but we had some similar principles (value system aligned), (alliance changed existing practice).

Categories	
Value system aligned	2
Alliance changed existing practice	2
Changes in practise as a result of the business alliance	2

Q4. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?

FA2TM1: After 2 years but the growth in revenue has been double digit, manufacturing commenced in Nigeria vs previous import of our products (Significant process change, quick improvement in performance, improved efficiency, growth in revenue).

FA2TM2: Within the first 2 years (Significant MNC process change, quick improvement in MNC performance, improved MNC efficiency).

Categories	
Increased performance returns after 2 years	2
Significant process change	3
Quick improvement in performance	2
Improved efficiency and local production	2
Double digit growth in revenue	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with a local company, especially with such international distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

FA2TM1: Understand how Alliance work and think on how to navigate and get the desired result. Legal documentation drawn. Management team was given independence to operate within certain defined parameters. (modified approach to suit local environment, Flexibility in alliance approach) (appropriate documentation is critical).

FA2TM2: We have a great Team that was responsible for negotiations, documentations and other things related to the alliance. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (appropriate documentation is critical).

Categories	
Modified approach to suit local environment	1
Flexibility in alliance approach	1
Appropriate documentation is critical	2
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	2
Well defined operating parameters	1

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA2TM1: Not really, but some adjustments and customisation were done in certain region (implementation was customised but not difficult)

FA2TM2: Yes, we had to develop different strategies for the different region based on culture, way of life and even religion. (specific penetration strategy for different regions) (implementation was customised but not difficult) We even had to attach Sales team to various distributors in some regions and provide Credit Facility. (specific penetration strategy for different regions).

Categories	
Implementation was customised but not difficult	2
Specific penetration strategy for different regions	2
Customised sales and distribution approach	1
Different strategies for the different region, based on culture, way of life, religion etc.	2

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?

FA2TM1: Differences in the region was not significant, (slight differences in the region) (Regional implementation not difficult) because the regional entities was being operated and managed by TG and the structure continued. (leadership direction key).

FA2TM2: Region did not matter because TG had all the structures already on ground (Regional implementation not difficult) (leadership direction key).

Categories	
Differences in the region was not significant	1
Regional implementation not difficult	2
Leadership direction key	2

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

FA2TM1: Slightly, we adopted the existing business model and operations of TG (Existing regional penetration strategy maintained, existing business model, existing operations).

FA2TM2: No, the penetration strategy of TG was already efficient (Existing regional penetration strategy maintained).

Categories	
Existing regional penetration strategy maintained	2
Adopted existing business model and operations	2
Slight adjustment of strategy for different regions	1

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

FA2TM1: As mentioned earlier, the business and operation models of TG was adopted across the region with slight adjustments. (modified approach to suit local environment) Regional presence was more of sales and distribution. The local knowledge of TG was critical and useful in implementation. (political risk reduced because of previous experience) (local experience/Partnership helps).

FA2TM2: Yes, the knowledge of the local market assisted in deciding the distribution strategy, sales strategy, advert plans etc. (modified approach to suit local environment, political risk reduced because of previous experience) (local experience/Partnership helps).

Categories	
Modified approach to suit local environment	2
Political risk reduced because of previous experience	2
Local experience/Partnership helps	2
Local market knowledge assisted in deciding the distribution strategy, sales strategy, advert plans	1

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state & explain which.

FA2TM1: This was not really obvious to us, because we basically adopted the existing business model with slight modifications. However, the sales strategy in the region differ especially in the North (sales strategy in the region differ) (implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O)

FA2TM2: Implementation plan for the various regions were different. (sales strategy in the region differ) The North has its peculiarities, branding and advert campaign is customised, and sales strategy. (implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O) The business dynamics in the South was driven by Traders. (easier where MNC HQ is based, implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O)

Categories	
Sales strategy in the region differ	2
Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	2
The North has its peculiarities, branding and advert campaign is customised, and sales strategy	2
Implementation is easier where MNC HQ is based	1

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

FA2TM1: The population in Nigeria creates a good market with potential of good returns (good returns) So, it is important to understand the structure and peculiarities (understanding the peculiarities) of the market. This will aid business implementation efficiency. The weak institutional structure can be strengthened to improve the ease of doing business.

FA2TM2: Good potential with big market, (good returns) might be difficult for MNC to independently penetrate. (local experience/partnership helps). Very important to study and understand the market (understanding the peculiarities), Alliance with local companies (local experience/partnership helps), that have knowledge of the market. (understanding the peculiarities).

Categories	
Understanding the peculiarities of the market	3
Weak institutional structure can be strengthened to improve the ease of doing business	1
Good potential with big market	2
Local experience/partnership helps	2

4.2.1

Local alliance is coded as LA2 and the top management staff from LA2 are as coded as LA1TM1 and LA1TM2.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.

LA2TM1: Yes, several alliances (numerous alliances) both in Nigeria and other African countries. First was with Smle in 1996 for Indomie Noodles, Arla, Colgate, Kelloggs, Kimberly Clarke. (numerous alliances)

LA2TM2: LA2 has done a number of alliances (numerous alliances) over the years in our various businesses; Distribution, Cereal, Noodles, Oil, dairy etc. (numerous alliances).

Categories	
Numerous alliances	4
Previous alliance in other African countries	1

i. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

LA2TM1: Financial benefit, scale (alliance for leadership) (Full use of resources), (market depth), good brand (Brand Value), desire to create a Pan African presence (Global alliance), after creating Nigerian presence (local demand) and reputation (market depth), (Brand Value), Platform for MNCs to penetrate Nigerian market. (market depth).

LA2TM2: Deeper penetration of the market (local demand) (market depth), (alliance for leadership) Opportunity to expand (market depth) and grow revenue (grow revenue) (market depth), drive to create a Pan African presence (market depth), (Global alliance), good manufacturing ownership (market depth) (alliance for leadership).

Categories	
Alliance for leadership	3
Increased Market depth	7
Brand Value and good reputation	2
Local experience/partnership help	1
Local demand for product	1
Grow revenue	1
Global alliance-creation of Pan African presence	1
Deeper penetration of the market	2

ii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

LA2TM1: LA2 initiated the Salem and Kellogg alliance but not the subsequent ones. (willingness to cooperate) LA2 was the initiator for initial sets, (willingness to cooperate) but good referral led to subsequent ones. Many opportunities now but more stringent criteria now, based on commercials and credibility of partners (market depth, market growth, willingness to cooperate).

LA2TM2: FA2 initiated the alliance discussions (willingness to cooperate). The major consideration is gaining access to Africa's market (acquire local capability, local demand, market depth, market growth).

Categories	
Willingness to cooperate	4
Market depth	1
Market growth	2
Acquire local capability	2

iii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

LA2TM1: Member of Executive management in charge of the alliance (participated at strategic level) (was fully involved)

LA2TM2: TG was more responsible for the alliance, for production, sales, new development, Operations; (was fully involved) with concurrence from FA2 except for recipe decisions (participated at strategic level).

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	2
Was fully involved	2

iv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

LA2TM1: To ensure the success of the alliance. (to ensure successful implementation)

LA2TM2: Head of Sales and Operations. My main role was to ensure the successful sales of the products across the region. (to ensure successful implementation).

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	3
Operational role	1

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

LA2TM1: Successful, double digit growth YOY, Product expansion, budget surpassed every year. Subsequent alliance in the Distribution company. (alliance was successful, growth in market share, growth in revenue) (led to subsequent business alliance).

LA2TM2: The alliance was successful, sales increased, growth in market share, market leader, very known brand in Nigeria - now a household name. (alliance was successful, growth in market share, growth in revenue) (led to subsequent business alliance).

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Growth in market share	2
Double digit growth in revenue	2
Led to subsequent business alliance	2

Q3: For which time period was the strategic alliance designed envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

LA2TM1: Negotiation and signing took over 1 year (took a long time), process was not tedious because of past experience (past experience helped) and more was done ex-Nigeria. Alliance is still ongoing. (Alliance was successful). FA2 brought in technology, R&D capability, product recipe (experience helped), while LA2 brought in implementation plus local knowledge. (took a long time) (experience helped).

LA2TM2: The alliance is still ongoing (took a long time), and very successful. (Alliance was successful) I think it must have taken like 18 months (took a long time).

Categories	
Took a long time	4
Past experience helped	3
Alliance was successful	3
Local experience/partnership helps	2
Alliance implementation took over 1year	1

Q4: What is the legal form of the strategic alliance? For example, is it (informal agreement, formal, written agreement, separate legal entity (JV, consortium etc.), minority cross-shareholding, or any other type? Why this type?

LA2TM1: It was a JV (Joint Venture) (formal, written agreement), that was extended to Kenya, S/A, Egypt.

LA2TM2: It was a Joint Venture (Joint Venture) (formal, written agreement) between FA2 and LA2. Kellogs as the MNC needed to partner with a company that had good knowledge of the local market. (local knowledge).

Categories	
Joint Venture	2
Formal, written agreement	2
Local knowledge of the market was essential	1

Q5: How experienced is your organisation in implementing strategic alliances?

LA2TM1: Very experienced, (very experienced) done more than 5 major alliances (numerous alliance)

LA2TM2: LA2 is very experienced (very experienced) with several alliances done with different partners and across various consumer products. (numerous alliance)

Categories	
Very experienced in implementing strategic alliances	2
Numerous alliance implementation done	2

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. 1 Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

LA2TM1. Strong informal conflict resolution system. (informal conflict) Conflict with global R&D when Kellogg changed taste/recipe for the Nigerian market. (Local preference and taste of consumer) The process of getting FA2 to change the taste and technology (local preference) back, was not a seamless process. (Tough change in production process)

LA2TM2: No real challenges because both companies worked together. (No strong conflict, cooperation between both companies) The main challenge was with the recipe (Local preference and taste of consumer), after the alliance, FA2 introduced new technique for cereal production in Nigeria, but the consumer did not accept the taste compared to the international taste. (Local preference and taste of consumer). The recipe technique was withdrawn, and new line brought in. (Tough change in production process).

Categories	
Informal conflict	1
Local preference and taste of consumer	5
Local practise	2
No strong conflict, cooperation between both companies	2
Tough change in production process	2

Q2. What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

LA2TM1: FA2 brought in technology, R&D capability, product recipe (international experience) while TG brought in implementation plus local knowledge. (local expertise) FA2 had CFO role, key factory operations, Production Head, Quality Control (Strategy role) while LA2 had CEO, Head of Factory and other roles. (local expertise) (operational role) (Strategy role) (dominant party emerged).

LA2TM2: LA2 was more responsible for the operations of the JV (operational role) (dominant party emerged) especially because they have been operating in the local market (local expertise) and they had good knowledge of the market (local expertise). FA2 was more responsible for the role of Finance. (Strategy role).

Categories	
MNC brought International experience	1
Technology, R&D capability	1
MNC took strategic role	3
Local company adopted both strategic and operational role	2
Local company brought on local experience and expertise	3
Dominant party emerged	2

Q3. Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

LA2TM1: Both Corporates but TG was more responsible for implementation. (joint success effort).

LA2TM2: TG was more responsible for implementation. (More success effort from dominant party).

Categories	
Joint success effort	1
More success effort from dominant party	1

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.

LA2TM1: The JV had a key management team which reported to the Board that comprised of both TG and Kellogg's Executive. (joint executive decision) JV was independent of interference from any of the corporate entities. (structured role agreement) Ways of working was well defined. (well defined ways of working)

LA2TM2: Responsibilities was structured (established template) based on expertise both companies had agreements which guided way of working (structured role agreement)

Categories	
Joint executive decision	1
Structured role agreement	2
Well defined ways of working	1
Established template	1

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

LA2TM1: The FA2 recipe formula for the emerging market was not accepted by the local consumer. (Apprehension, international standard preference) Consumer taste was more aligned to the products in the developed international market, (alignment challenges) so sales plummeted. (Apprehension, international standard preference) They had to change the technology and machinery. (change in process)

LA2TM2: There was no major challenge except for the decision to adopt the local recipe for the taste of Cornflakes, which consumers did not like. (Apprehension, international standard preference) (change in process)

Categories	
Consumer preference for International taste and standard	3
Apprehension	3
Alignment challenges	3
Change in process	2

Section 3. General questions

Q1. How often do you discuss the outcome and challenges of the strategic alliance and its implementation with the MNC partner?

LA2TM1: Frequently, periodically and on ad-hoc basis but Board meets quarterly for review of performance. (Frequently, periodically and on *ad-hoc* basis)

LA2TM2: As soon as there is need for meeting but there are statutory meetings every quarter (periodically and on *ad-hoc* basis)

CA3TM3: Quarterly or as may be necessary. (periodically and on ad-hoc basis)

Categories	
Frequently	2
Periodically	3
Ad-hoc basis	3

Q2. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

LA2TM1: It depends but our strategy is more aligned towards good brand and products in the international market that can be manufactured in Nigeria. (dependent on company strategy) (reputation of brand is important) (MNC) (good brand and market acceptability)

LA2TM2: I think business alliance decision is dependent on the strategy of the company and the end goal value. If it is just trading or franchising, then it does not really matter as long as the products are acceptable in the market. We have done business alliance across all the spectrum so for us market acceptability and value alignment is critical. (dependent on company strategy) (value alignment) (good brand and market acceptability).

Categories	
Dependent on company strategy	2
Reputation of brand is important	1
Vood brand and market acceptability	2
Value alignment	1

Q3. Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?

LA2TM1: Implementation was more on LA2, in the hands of management team of TG. (local partner more in charge of implementation)

LA2TM2: Our company, LA2. (local partner more in charge of implementation)

Categories	
Local partner more in charge of implementation	2

Q4. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

LA2TM1: Yes, but not widely spread changes. (slight changes in practice) TG's ways of working made them successful, so no point fully changing the winning formula. (Old practice adopted) (slight changes in practice) After 2 years but was disrupted due to the recipe/technology change.

LA2TM2: No real changes in practice. (changes in practice) The old way of working from TG especially in Sales and Operations, was continued. (Old practice adopted) (slight changes in practise).

Categories	
Slight changes in practice	4
Old practice adopted	3
Recipe/technology change	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with an MNC, especially with such International distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

LA2TM1: Understand how MNCs work and think and how to navigate and get the desired result. (Understand how MNCs work) (value alignment) Legal documentation neatly and clearly drawn. (Legal documentation) (well drafted agreement and role assignment) Management team was given autonomy to operate within certain defined parameters/SOP from Kellogg. (Flexibility in alliance approach) (defined parameters agreed).

LA2TM2: Our venture with the Arla Group was going on almost about the same time the Kellogg was on. This gave us experience for Kellogg alliance. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) We have a great Team that was responsible for negotiations, documentations and other things related to the alliance. (Legal documentation) (well drafted agreement and role assignment) (defined parameters agreed).

Categories	
Understand how MNCs work	1
Value alignment	1
Legal documentation	2
Well drafted agreement and role assignment	2
Flexibility in alliance approach	1
Defined parameters agreed	2
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	1

Q2. What are the factors that influenced the strategic alliances with MNCs from a different region?

LA2TM1: The reputation, brand, product relevance to the local market. (The reputation, brand, product relevance to the local market).

LA2TM2: The product alignment with our core focus in the Consumer goods sector, the likely market acceptability, value alignment. (The reputation, brand, product relevance to the local market, value alignment).

Categories	
The reputation and brand	2
Product relevance to the local market	2
Product alignment with core focus	1
Market acceptability of product	2
Value alignment	2

Q3. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

LA2TM1: Differences in the region didn't matter much, (implementation was not difficult) since the regional entities was hitherto being run by TG and TG continues. (existing local experience helped).

LA2TM2: In the Lagos and Southwest and Abuja, there were more working-class people in this region, so the products were easier to penetrate. (implementation was not difficult) (sales strategy in the region differ) (regional attributes impacted penetration strategy). However, in the North, it was more difficult to penetrate especially for the coated Cereal like Coco Pops (implementation was more difficult) (regional attributes impacted penetration strategy), while the uncoated cereal was easier to sell. Lots of branding and advert campaign was more required in the North with school sampling. (regional attributes impacted penetration strategy) (implementation was not difficult). South-south was less difficult and business dynamics was driven by Traders predominantly ladies. (implementation was not difficult) (regional attributes impacted penetration strategy).

Categories	
Implementation was not difficult	5
Existing local experience helped	1
Implementation was more difficult in the North	1
Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	3
Sales strategy in the region differ	1
More branding and advert campaign was required in the North	1

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

LA2TM1: No (no specific region penetration strategy)

LA2TM2: Yes, we had to develop different strategies for the different regions based on culture, way of life and even religion. (specific penetration strategy for different regions) (different strategy for each region). We even had to attach Sales team to various distributors in some regions and provide Credit Facility. (specific penetration strategy for different regions)

Categories	
Specific region penetration strategy was developed	3
Different strategy for each region	1
Sales and Distribution strategy differed	2

Existing regional penetration strategy maintained, different strategy for each region, existing business model, existing operations, (no specific region penetration strategy) (specific penetration strategy for different regions)

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

LA2TM1: The prior knowledge of the local environment was very critical, (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) as it helped to reduce the various risks and challenges of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness. (modified approach to suit local environment, local experience/Partnership helps).

LA2TM2: Yes, the knowledge of the local market assisted in deciding the distribution strategy, sales strategy, advert plans etc (prior experience in alliance in developing countries, modified approach to suit local environment).

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	2
Local experience/Partnership helps	1
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	2

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

LA2TM1: The North was peculiar, marketing, branding and advert campaign was customised in the North to suit religion, gender, and perception. (regional attributes impacted penetration strategy) South/South was less difficult and market share growth was driven by product acceptability and competitive brand. (easier where MNC HQ is based, gets tougher the farther you go) (sales strategy in the region differ, implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O)

LA2TM2: Implementation plan for the various regions were different. The North was more difficult to penetrate lots of branding and advert campaign was required in the North with special attention on the children and their mothers. (regional attributes impacted penetration strategy) (sales strategy in the region differ, implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O). South-South was less difficult and business dynamics was driven by Traders predominantly ladies.

Categories	
Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	2
Sales strategy in the region differ	2
Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	2
Easier where MNC HQ is based	1
Gets tougher the farther you go from Head Office	1

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

LA2TM1: Understanding of the legal framework, regulatory authority, economic peculiarities is very critical. A very big market with great potential, so it is important to do your feasibility study and due diligence to ensure that the structure of the market and economy is well known before delving in. (understanding the peculiarities), (local experience/partnership helps), (good returns). Our values are known and clear so less pressure on corrupt practices. However, if the weak institutional structure can be strengthened it will improve the ease of doing business. (weak institutional structure impacts business)

LA2TM2: Good potential with big market, though difficult for MNC to independently penetrate. (weak institutional structure impacts business). Best way to enter is to study the market, do research on the acceptability of the market. (understanding the peculiarities), (local experience/partnership helps). Alliance with local companies that have knowledge of the market and with capacity for backward/forward integration, not manufacturing only. (local experience/partnership helps)

Categories	
Understanding the peculiarities	2
Local knowledge/partnership helps	3
Big market with great return potential	2
Weak institutional structure impacts business	2

			Foreign Partner	**Local Partner**	**Combined Categories**
Q1	**Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done**				

	A	**Your organization must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.**			

Categories	
numerous alliances	2
Global alliance	2
Previous alliance was trading	1

Categories	
numerous alliances	4
Previous alliance in other African countries	1

Categories	
numerous alliances	6
Global alliance	2
Previous alliance was trading	2

	Bi	**Why did your organization decide to do the alliance?**			

Categories	
Market depth	1
Global alliance	2
Grow revenue	1
acquire local capability	1

Categories	
Alliance for leadership	3
Increased Market depth	7
Brand Value and good reputation	2
local experience/partnership help	1
local demand for product	1
grow revenue	1
Global alliance -creation of Pan African presence	1
Deeper penetration of the market	2

Categories	
Alliance for leadership	3
Increased Market depth	8
Brand Value and good reputation	2
local experience/partnership help	2
local demand for product	1
grow revenue	2
Global alliance -creation of Pan African presence	3
Deeper penetration of the market	2

	Bii	**What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?**			

Categories	
Market depth	3
Global alliance	2
Grow revenue	1
Acquire local capability	3
Willingness to cooperate	2
Market growth	4
Reputable brand	1
Local demand	3

Categories	
Willingness to cooperate	4
Market depth	1
Market growth	2
Acquire local capability	2

Categories	
Market depth	4
Global alliance	2
Grow revenue	1
Acquire local capability	5
Willingness to cooperate	6
Market growth	6
Reputable brand	1
Local demand	3

	Biii	**What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?**			

Categories	
participated at strategic level	1

Categories	
participated at strategic level	2
was fully involved	2

Categories	
participated at strategic level	3
was fully involved	2

	Biv	**What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?**			

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	2
Handling of Legal documentation	1
Finance	1

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	3
Operational role	1

Categories	
To ensure successful implementation	5
Handling of Legal documentation	1
Finance	1
Operational role	1

Q2		**Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliances was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?**			

Categories	
Alliance successful beyond expectation and budget	2
Business growing	2

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Growth in market share	2
Double digit growth in revenue	2
led to subsequent business alliance	2

Categories	
Alliance was successful	4
Growth in market share	4
Double digit growth in revenue	2
led to subsequent business alliance	2

Q3		**For which time period was the strategic alliance designed envisage? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still on going? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?**			

Categories	
Alliance was envisaged for 6months	2
Implementation of Alliance took over 12months	2
Alliance was successful and is still ongoing	2

Categories	
Took a long time	4
Past experience helped	3
Alliance was successful	3
Local experience/partnership helps	2
Alliance implementation took over 1year	1

Categories	
Took a long time	4
Past experience helped	3
Alliance was successful	5
Local experience/partnership helps	2
Alliance implementation took over 1year	3
Alliance was envisaged for 6months	2

<table>
<tr><td>Q4</td><td></td><td>What is the legal form of the strategic alliance? For example, is it (informal agreement, formal, written agreement, separate legal entity (JV, consortium etc.), minority cross-shareholding, or any other type? Why this type?</td><td></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Joint Venture</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>formal, written agreement</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>local knowledge of the market was essential</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Joint Venture</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>formal, written agreement</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>local knowledge of the market was essential</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q5</td><td></td><td>How experienced is your organisation in implementing strategic alliances?</td><td></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>very experienced in implementing strategic alliances</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>numerous alliance implementation done</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>very experienced in implementing strategic alliances</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>numerous alliance implementation done</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="6">Section 2</td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="6">Section 3 – General questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>How often do you discuss the outcome and challenges of the strategic alliance and its implementation with the MNC partner?</td><td></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Frequently</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>periodically</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>ad-hoc basis</td><td>3</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Frequently</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>periodically</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>ad-hoc basis</td><td>3</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<td>How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?</td>
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<td>What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?</td>
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			the ease of doing business		Big market with great return potential	2	the ease of doing business	
			Good potential with big market	2	Weak institutional structure impacts business	2	Good potential with big market	4
			local experience/partnership helps	2			local experience/partnership helps	5

Middle Management Interview

First Order Category Data Analysis

The Kellog alliance is coded as FA2 and the Middle management staff are coded as FA2MM1 and FA2MM2

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Why did you think your organisation decided to do the alliance?

FA2MM1: To significantly expand in Africa (To expand presence in Africa), To create a platform to increase our snacks and breakfast brands in Africa. (To expand presence in Africa) (Growth in market share)

FA2MM2: To make significant our presence in the African Market. (To expand presence in Africa) (acquire local capability), (market depth)

Categories	
To expand presence in Africa	3
Growth in market share	2
Growth in revenue	2

Q2. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

FA2MM1: Finance reporting and control (participated at strategic level)

FA2MM2: Operations-Productions (participated at strategic level)

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	2
Finance	1
Operations	1

Q3. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA2MM1: The alliance was successful (alliance was successful). We surpassed projections for the 2nd year and gained market share. (exceeded expectation)

FA2MM2: The alliance went well (alliance was successful). Volume increased, market share increased, efficiency in operations and productions too (Growth in revenue) (Growth in market share)

Categories	
Alliance was successful	3
Exceeded expectation	1
Growth in revenue	1
Growth in market share	1

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA2MM1 The conflicts were minimal (Minimal conflict during implementation). The ones worth of note are the ones with the Government regulatory authorities. (Regulatory approval delay)

FA2MM2: Conflicts with employees was minimal because of good communication. (Minimal conflict during implementation)

Categories	
Minimal conflict	2
Regulatory approval delay	3

Q2. In your opinion, who was more responsible for the implementation of the alliance success? Why?

FA2MM1: Both parties. They have good understanding of what they are going into. (both MNC and Local Corporate)

FA2MM2: Both companies (both MNC and Local Corporate)

Categories	
Both MNC and Local Corpotate responsible for implementation	2

Q3. What challenges did you and other managers face during the implementation of the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

FA2MM1: Communication from top management was major challenge. (Poor Communication)

FA2MM2: Communication of the changes (Poor Communication)

Categories	
Poor Communication from top management	2

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

FA2MM1: Yes, significant changes in production process, procurement strategy, risk management, reporting, as well as accounting policies (alliance changed MNC practice) (changes in production process) (changes in marketing) (changes in risk management and reporting)

FA2MM2: Yes, changes in production process, policies, human resources policies etc. (alliance changed MNC practice) (changes in production process).

Categories	
Business alliance led to changes in practice	5
Changes in Production process	2
Changes in risk management and reporting,	1

Q2. Was it difficult dealing with staff during this period? What issues were experienced?

FA2MM1: No issues with staff.

FA2MM3: Re-alignment of staff created some frictions initially (alignment challenges) but was resolved promptly.

Categories	

Slight alignment challenges	1

Q3. What were your major challenges?

FA2MM1: The major challenges are with regulatory authority and valuation shares of Tolaram (regulatory approval challenges)

FA2MM2: The major challenge is kick starting the production of Kellogg brands in Nigeria (Commencement of production locally)

Categories	
Regulatory approval challenges	1
Commencement of production locally	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA2MM1: No. Tolaram already has the required spread. (local experience helped).

FA2MM2: The regional spread of LA2 was adopted. (local experience helped).

Categories	
Local experience helped	2

Q2. Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the implementation alliance?

FA2MM1: Differences are significant, but the existing regional practice was adopted (local experience helped)

FA2MM2: Local partner already handled that with their earlier presence. (local experience helped)

Categories	
Local experience helped	3

Q3. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

FA2MM1: We adopted existing strategy from Tolaram (local experience helped) (Existing model was adopted)

FA2MM1: The structure in place by local partner worked (local experience helped) (Existing model was adopted)

Categories	
Local experience helped	2
Existing model was adopted	2

Q4. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

FA2MM1: I am not aware of this, pre-alliance strategy was adopted (local experience helped) (Existing model was adopted)

FA2MM2: We adopted existing strategy from Tolaram (local experience helped) (Existing model was adopted)

Categories	
Local experience helped	2
Existing model was adopted	2

First Order Category Data Analysis

Middle Management Interview Data Analysis

The Tolaram alliance is coded as LA2 and the Middle management staff are coded as LA2MM1 and LA2MM2 respectively

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Why did you think your organisation decided to do the alliance?

LA2MM1: To increase profitability and grow our revenue base. Deeper penetration of the market, Opportunity to expand and grow revenue, drive to create a Pan-African presence, good manufacturing partnership. (growth in market share) (Increased profitability) (Business expansion) (Pan-African presence)

LA2MM2: To grow our business and increase product lines (growth in market share) (growth in revenue). To increase profitability and grow our revenue base. (growth in revenue).

Categories	
Alliance for leadership	1
Growth in market share	2
Growth in revenue	2
Increased profitability	1
Business expansion	1
Pan-African presence	1
Good manufacturing partnership	1

Q2. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

LA2MM1: I was in sales and was supportive in coordinating the sales and marketing strategies during the implementation. (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

LA2MM2: Finance, tracking cash flow and financial planning. (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

Categories	
Participated at operational level	2
Was fully involved	2
Sales and Operations.	1
Finance	1

Q3. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

LA2MM1: The alliance was successful because we have shared objectives. The alliance was successful, sales increased, growth in market share, market leader, very known brand in Nig - now a household name. (alliance was successful) (Mutual objectives).

LA2MM2: The alliance went well because we did our research about the other company and believed they are the right partner. (alliance was successful) (alignment of values) (due diligence). Each company was able to manage their internal stakeholders and have mutual understanding. (alliance was successful) (mutual understanding)

Categories	
Alliance was successful	3
Mutual objectives and understanding	2
Alignment of values	2
Due diligence on partner	1
Increased sales	1
Growth in market share	1

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

LA2MM1: Conflicts were minimal because each side had an understanding of the goals and were ready to immediately call for meetings to resolve any observed conflict (coped with challenges better later) (Minimal conflict, mutual understanding, common goal)

LA2MM2: The handlers of the JV are professionals, and this minimized conflicts. (Minimal conflict, mutual understanding, common goal) (Professionally approached. There were conflicts which had to do with aligning strategies (alignment challenges) and developing new ones for new products but they are not major to have stopped the alliance. (Minimal conflict) (coped with challenges better later)

Categories	
Minimal conflict	3
Mutual understanding	3
Common goal	3
Professionally approached	1
Slight strategy alignment challenges	1

Minimal conflict, mutual understanding, common goal, alignment challenges)

Q2. In your opinion, who was more responsible for the implementation of the alliance success? Why?

LA2MM1: LA3 was more responsible because we have been in Nigeria for years and understands the business landscape in Nigeria (Local partner more critical in alliance success), (Joint success effort). I believe because we were already on ground and had the expertise too (MNC more critical in the success of the alliance)

LA2MM2: LA3 retained most of the previous responsibilities but the two Corporates pushed for the success of the implementation. (Local partner more critical in alliance success) (Joint success effort)

Categories	
Local partner more critical in the alliance success	3
Joint success effort	2

Q3. For which time period was the strategic alliance envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

LA2MM1: The alliance is still ongoing and very successful. I think it must have taken like 18 months.
LA2MM2: The alliance took over 18 months, but the product discontinuation was a major setback.

Categories	
Alliance ongoing and very successful	3
Alliance implementation took over 18months	2
Alliance implementation took a long time than envisaged	1
Production issue resulted in setback	1

Q4. What challenges did you and other managers face during the implementation of the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

LA2MM1: No real challenges because both companies worked together. The main challenge was with the recipe, after the alliance, KG introduced a new technique for cereal production in Nigeria, but the consumer did not accept the taste compared to the International taste. The recipe technique was withdrawn, and new line brought in. (alignment challenges, Consumer taste and preference for international standard).

LA2MM2: The recipe change for emerging market was a major challenge. Aligning of sales (alignment challenges) and marketing strategy was an initial challenge (Alignment of marketing and sales strategy).

Categories	
Alignment challenges	3
Consumer taste and preference for international standard	2

Alignment of marketing and sales strategy	1

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

LA2MM1: The change in taste impacted sales though. However, some production processes were modified (slight changes in practice). Recruitment of new staff to assist in the new snacks business and realignment of staff. (alignment) (changes in practice). Old way of working from TG was adopted from sales and operations perspectives.

LA2MM2: Yes, changes in production process, marketing and distribution strategy, policies, human resources policies etc. (alignment) (changes in practice) (slight changes in practice)

Categories	
Slight changes in practice	3
Production process modification	1
Staff re-alignment	1
Changes in marketing and distribution strategy	1
Existing Sales structure was adopted	1

Q2. Was it difficult dealing with staff during this period? What issues were experienced?

LA2MM1: Just some slight issues with staff. (staff alignment).

LA2MM2: Re-alignment of staff created some frictions initially but was resolved promptly (staff alignment) (communication was intensified).

Categories	
Re-alignment of staff created some frictions	2
Communication was intensified	1

Q3. What were your major challenges?

LA2MM1: The major challenges are with regulatory authority and valuation of shares (Regulatory approval challenges). Coordinating staff and getting new staff to start the Kellogg brands. (staff alignment challenges) (Regulatory approval challenges), hitches in manufacturing process, (staff alignment challenges)

LA2MM2: The major challenge was kick starting the production of Kellogg brands in Nigeria (alignment challenges), hitches in manufacturing process.

Categories	
Regulatory approval challenges	1
Hitches in manufacturing process	2
Staff alignment challenges	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

LA2MM1: In the Lagos and South West and Abuja, there were more working-class People in this region so the products were easier to penetrate. However, in the North, it was more difficult to penetrate especially for the coated Cereal like Coco Pops, while the uncoated cereal was easier to sell. Lots of branding and advert campaign was more required in the North with school sampling. South-South was less difficult and business dynamics was driven by Traders predominantly ladies.

LA2MM2: Regional operations continued but with more products introduced. This changed the sales and marketing dynamics in the Market, more in the North though. New products and SKU. Existing regional operations continued.

Categories	
Existing regional operations adopted	3
Sales easier in the South	1
Sales in the North was more difficult to penetrate	2
More advert and campaign required in the North	2

Q2. Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the implementation alliance?

LA2MM1; Yes, there were significant changes especially with marketing strategy and even sales approach. the knowledge of the local market assisted in deciding the distribution strategy, sales strategy, advert plans etc.

LA2MM2: Tolaram already had the geographic spread in Nigeria and the MNC is riding on the back of this to access the Nigeria Market (experienced local alliance partner essential)

Categories	
Significant changes with marketing strategy and sales strategy	1
Experienced local alliance partner essential	2

Q3. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

LA2MM1: Yes, we had to develop different strategies for the different region based on culture, way of life and even religion. We even had to attach Sales team to various distributors in some regions and provide Credit Facility. (Existing regional penetration strategy maintained) (experienced local alliance partner helped). (Sales and distribution approach was modified)

LA2MM2: Yes, but that was already implemented and in place by LA2 in the existing business structure (Existing regional penetration strategy maintained) (existing operations)

Categories	
Existing regional penetration strategy maintained	2
Specific regional penetration strategy was developed	2
Sales and distribution approach was modified	1

Q4. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

LA2MM1: Implementation plan for the various regions were different. The North was more difficult to penetrate lots of branding and advert camapign was required in the North, with special attention on the children and their mothers. South South was less difficult and business dynamics was driven by Traders predominantly ladies. MultiPro handled the distribution in the regions (local experience helped) (specific penetration strategy for different regions)

LA2MM2: The regional distribution was handled by a subsidiary multiPro and they already had a good business running (local experience helped) (specific penetration strategy for different regions). Each region has its own peculiarities but that had been handled by Tolaram. (specific penetration strategy for different regions).

Categories	
Different implementation plan for each region	2
Implementation strategy in the North was different	2
Distribution approach across the region was retained	2
Local experience helped	1

Q5. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

LA2MM1: Good potential with big market, though difficult for MNC to independently penetrate. Best way to enter is to study the market, do research on the acceptability of the market. Alliance with local companies that have knowledge of the market and with capacity for backward/forward integration, not manufacturing only.

LA2MM2: Our operations are guided by the laws of the land, and we do not circumvent any law despite the weak institutional structures in Nigeria (Spirit of the law needed more) (maintain ethical standard) (understanding the peculiarities). The weak institutional structure affects how we structure our strategies. We ensure that all we do are ethical. (Spirit of the law needed more) (enforcing values across the company, maintain ethical standard) (understanding the peculiarities).

Categories	
Alliance was successful	3
Growth in market share	3
Growth in revenue	3
Weak institutional structure impacts business	2

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td><u>Foreign Partner</u></td><td><u>Local Partner</u></td><td><u>Combined Categories</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q1</td><td colspan="5">Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Bi</td><td>Why did your organization decide to do the alliance?</td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>To expand presence in Africa</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in market share</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in revenue</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Alliance for leadership</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in market share</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in revenue</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Increased profitability</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Business expansion</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Pan-African presence</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Good manufacturing partnership</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Alliance for leadership</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in market share</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in revenue</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Increased profitability</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Business expansion</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Pan-African presence</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Good manufacturing partnership</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q2</td><td>Biii</td><td>What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?</td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>participated at strategic level</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Finance</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Operations</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>participated at operational level</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>was fully involved</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Sales and Operations.</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Finance</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
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<tr><td>Q3</td><td></td><td>Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliances was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?</td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was successful</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Exceeded expectation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in revenue</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Growth in market share</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was successful</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Mutual objectives and understanding</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alignment of values</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Due diligence on partner</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Increased sales</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>growth in market share</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was successful</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Mutual objectives and understanding</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alignment of values</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Due diligence on partner</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Increased sales/Growth in revenue</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>growth in market share</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Exceeded expectation</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 2 - Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?</td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Minimal conflict</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval delay</td><td>3</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Minimal conflict</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>mutual understanding</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>common goal</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Professionally approached</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Minimal conflict</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>mutual understanding</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>common goal</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Professionally approached</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Both MNC and Local Corporate responsible for implementation</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Local partner more critical in the alliance success</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Joint success effort</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Local partner more critical in the alliance success</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Joint success effort</td><td>4</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="6">Section 3 – General questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Business alliance led to changes in practice</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>changes in Production process</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>changes in risk management and reporting,</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Slight changes in practice</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Production process modification</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Staff re-alignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in marketing and distribution strategy</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Existing Sales structure was adopted</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Slight changes in practice</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Production process modification</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Staff re-alignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in marketing and distribution strategy</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Existing Sales structure was adopted</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>changes in risk management and reporting,</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>Was it difficult dealing with staff during this period? What issues were experienced?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Slight alignment challenges</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Re-alignment of staff created some frictions</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>communication was intensified</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Re-alignment of staff created some frictions</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>communication was intensified</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Slight alignment challenges</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>What were your major challenges?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>regulatory approval challenges</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval challenges</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval challenges</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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			Commencement of production locally – 1	hitches in manufacturing process – 2 staff alignment challenges – 1	hitches in manufacturing process – 2 staff alignment challenges – 1 Commencement of production locally – 1
Section 4 – Regions and Multi-tribe					
1		**Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?**	***Categories*** local experience helped – 2	**Categories** Existing regional operations adopted – 3 Sales easier in the South – 1 Sales in the North was more difficult to penetrate – 2 More advert and campaign required in the North – 2	***Categories*** Existing regional operations adopted – 5 Sales easier in the South – 1 Sales in the North was more difficult to penetrate – 2 More advert and campaign required in the North – 2
2		**Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?**	***Categories*** local experience helped – 3	***Categories*** significant changes with marketing strategy and sales strategy – 1 experienced local alliance partner essential – 2	***Categories*** significant changes with marketing strategy and sales strategy – 1 experienced local alliance partner essential – 5
3		**Did you have to develop specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?**	***Categories*** local experience helped – 2 Existing model was adopted – 2	***Categories*** Existing regional penetration strategy maintained – 2 Specific regional penetration strategy was developed – 2 Sales and distribution approach was modified – 1	***Categories*** Existing regional penetration strategy maintained – 4 Specific regional penetration strategy was developed – 2 Sales and distribution approach was modified – 1 local experience helped – 2
4		**How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?**			
5		**Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.**	***Categories*** local experience helped – 2 Existing model was adopted – 2	***Categories*** Different implementation plan for each region – 2 Implementation strategy in the North was different – 2 Distribution approach across the region was retained – 2 local experience helped – 1	***Categories*** Different implementation plan for each region – 2 Implementation strategy in the North was different – 2 Distribution approach across the region was retained – 2 local experience helped – 3 Existing model was adopted – 2

6		**What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?**		***Categories*** alliance was successful — 3 growth in market share — 3 growth in revenue — 3 weak institutional structure impacts business — 2	***Categories*** alliance was successful — 3 growth in market share — 3 growth in revenue — 3 weak institutional structure impacts business — 2

First Order Category Data Analysis

Regional Management Interview Data Analysis

The Tolaram alliance is coded as LA2 and the Regional management staff are coded as LA2RM1 and LA2RM2.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. What was your role in the implementation of the alliance? What location?

LA2RM1: Provided constant feedback on market scenario, product acceptance, local and domestic taste and consumption pattern, how products should be done, response from consumer based on survey, potential in the market, product display and branding strategy. (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

LA2RM2: Capitalise on existing process and provide soft landing for the new products in the market. (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

Categories	
Participated at operational level	2
Regional sales	2

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was in your region? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

LA2RM1: The alliance has proven to be successful thus far, and the implementation is still ongoing (alliance was successful) (growth in market share, growth in revenue)

LA2RM2: The alliance has been successful, implementation is ongoing, KG products has different SKUs. We focus energy on SKUs that will give different milestone. We study products and check acceptability of SKU. (alliance was successful) (growth in market share, growth in revenue)

Categories	
Alliance was successful	3
Growth in market share	3
Growth in revenue	3
Weak institutional structure impacts business	2

<u>Section 2.</u>

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

LA2RM1: Senior management combination of both TG and KG was done in a seamless manner. Values were similar and this made it easy to align vision. (alignment challenges) (no major conflict) (Executive agreement) (cooperation)

LA2RM2: No major conflict. New product brings excitement and creates lot of noise. Change in advert, sampling, feedback etc commences. Change awareness was of utmost priority (alignment challenges) (no tough conflict) (Executive agreement) (cooperation) (communication and awareness was good) (modified approach to sales and marketing).

Categories	
No major conflict	3
No major conflict, Executive agreement and cooperation	1
No major conflict, alignment of value	1
No major conflict, communication and awareness was good	2

Q2. What challenges did you face as a region, doing the alliance, and during the implementation of the business alliance?

LA2RM1. Training and sensitisation had to be done continuously for the Sales team of the new products based on feedback from the market. Sales team had to be familiar with products and accept the new products. (continuous Training and sensitisation) (product acceptance) (Continuous engagement of sales team)

LA2RM2: The North is a big category seller of Cornflakes; thus the recipe change affected the North more. However, immediate steps were taken which included stopping sales, communication of actions taken, accelerate sales of other products etc. (coped with challenges better later) (product acceptance) (Continuous engagement of sales team)

Categories	
Product acceptance	3
Continuous Training and sensitisation	3
Continuous engagement of sales team	2

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance? State some.

LA2RM1: There were some changes; slight changes in marketing strategies, infusion of some international style of advert. New products, new flavour, new SKU required new learning. Training and learning for resources esp sales team. (alliance changed MNC practice) (changes in marketing strategy) (changes in product recipe) (introduction of new products) (continuous Training and sensitisation) (changes in practise)

LA2RM2: Within 1 year there were visible growth in sales. Several changes were implemented, including the incorporation of international advertising styles (alliance changed MNC practice) (changes in marketing strategy) (changes in product recipe) (changes in practice)

Categories	
Introduction of new products	3
Changes in advert and marketing strategies	2
Continuous Training and sensitisation	2
Changes in practice	2
Changes in product recipe	1

Q2. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns in your region as a result of the business alliance?

LA2RM1: It took a while, because the factory had to be constructed for production of Kellogg products. (took a long time) (alliance improved performance later)

LA2RM2: The reset of the product recipe led to delayed take-off of sales volume expected initially. (took a long time) (alliance improved performance later)

Categories	
Took a long time than envisaged	2
Alliance improved performance later	2

Q3. What are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenges?

LA2RM1: Mainly communication challenges initially but this was resolved, training and sensitisation of Sales team on how to handle consumer queries on new products and taste, some cultural attributes also impacted some initiatives. (communication challenge with consumers in the region, inability to communicate directly, as a result of religion and culture).

LA2RM2: Communication was seamless with staff, change awareness was of utmost priority and we were constantly updated; however, the communication challenge was with consumers in the region, inability to communicate directly, as a result of religion and culture. (increased communications) (communication challenge with consumers in the region, inability to communicate directly as a result of religion and culture).

Categories	
Communication challenge with consumers in the region	2
Religion and cultural difference	2

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How did the differences in culture, norms and practises affect implementation in the regions?

LA2RM1: We had to incorporate regional culture and values in our advert (alignment) e.g mother and kid advert. Regional language was done for marketing campaign, dialect was considered in TV advert, social media campaign etc,. (alignment) (incorporate regional culture and values in our advert)

LA2RM2: Way of implementing differed in the various region, we had to customise to suit the region culture/dialect. (alignment) (customise approach to suit region)

Categories	
Incorporation of regional culture and values in advert	2
Customisation of marketing strategy to incorporate language	2

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

LA2RM1: Acceptance and implementation in various region differ but with focused strategy we were able to overcome the initial challenges.

LA2RM2: Yes, security concerns were more of an issue in the North. (Acceptance and implementation in various region differ), (security concerns)

Categories	
Acceptance and implementation in various region differ	2
Security concerns in various region differ	2

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant compared to Head Office and how did the differences impact the alliance?

LA2RM1: Acceptance was easier in metropolitan cities like Lagos, Abuja. Penetration of spreading message took a longer time in the North. (gets tougher the farther you go), sales strategy in the region differ, (implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O)

LA2RM2: Yes, the North is geographically wider. North covers more area, the land area is bigger as such outlets/depots were far from each other. Lagos is more densely populated but a smaller area to cover than the North. As such more sales people required in the North, more vehicles, more fuel consumption; strong logistics arrangement is required. (gets tougher the farther you go) implementation strategy in the region differ, wider coverage in the North, more sales resources required in the North, logistics more complex in the North)

Categories	
Product Acceptance was easier in metropolitan cities	1
Consumer communication was more difficult in the North	1
Sales strategy in the region differ	1
North is geographically wider, expanded sales resources and logistics	1
Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	2
Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	1

Q4. Did they have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for your parts of the country?

LA2RM1: Yes, extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate in the region, and their family value. Marketing was done on a broad scale, but sales team was further customise to suit the area/tribe/language (culture alignment challenges) (customisation of sales and marketing approach). We had to ensure that the Sales team understood the local region and language. Thus, creating employment for the region. (modified approach to suit local environment) (local and community involvement was critical) (customisation of sales and marketing approach)

LA2RM2: Yes, marketing strategy had to be region specific; communication, advert-women audience not directly reachable as a result of religion and culture (culture alignment challenges) (customisation of sales and marketing approach) (specific penetration strategy for different regions)., more attention on TV/brand, Retailers in the North were more empowered for marketing with fliers/posters to give mothers during visit to the market. (modified approach to suit local environment) (customisation of sales and marketing approach)

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in your region?

LA2RM1: Infrastructural challenges. Good ROI so investors have to be innovative and entrepreneurial investors and will have to keep finding new solutions to overcome the challenges. Such as backward integration, trying to create businesses/division from those challenges. (Consumer behaviour changes based on different region) (modified approach to suit local environment)

LA2RM2: Consumer behaviour changes based on *different region*, not based on *products*. (modified approach to suit local environment) (Consumer behaviour changes based on different region)

Categories	
Consumer behaviour changes based on different region	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	2

Final Questions.

Q6. Are there any things on strategies of strategic alliances in general you might want to tell me about that I might not have covered during the course of the interview?

LA3RM1: Look for strong domestic players with experience of local market, culture, intricacies, taste, policies/authorities, FX policies, permits. MNCs set of rules and guidelines requires expertise for the local region. To succeed look for good alliance partnership not about capital only. Capital needs to be spent in the right direction.

LA3RM2: Weak institutional structure has always been a part of the journey of TG from inception in Nigeria. Thus KTNL, leveraged on the same knowledge and the good understanding of the market.

Categories	
Strong domestic players with experience of local market is critical	2
Knowledge and the good understanding of the market	1

<table>
<tr><th></th><th></th><th></th><th><u>Foreign Partner</u></th><th><u>Local Partner</u></th><th><u>Combined Categories</u></th></tr>
<tr><td>Q1</td><td colspan="5">Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Bi</td><td>Why did your organization decide to do the alliance?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q2</td><td>Biii</td><td>What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?</td><td></td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>participated at operational level</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Regional sales</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>participated at operational level</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Regional sales</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Q3</td><td></td><td>Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliances was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?</td><td></td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>alliance was successful</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>growth in market share</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>growth in revenue</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>weak institutional structure impacts business</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>alliance was successful</td><td>3</td></tr></table></td>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 2 - Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e., before, during or after implementation?</td><td></td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>No major conflict</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>No major conflict, Executive agreement and cooperation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>No major conflict, alignment of value</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>No major conflict, communication and awareness was good</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td>
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<tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>What challenges did you face as a region while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?</td><td></td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Product acceptance</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Continuous Training and sensitisation</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Continuous engagement of sales team</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td>
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<tr><td colspan="6">Section 3 – General questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?</td><td></td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Slight changes in practice</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Production process modification</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Staff re-alignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in marketing and distribution strategy</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Existing Sales structure was adopted</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
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2		**After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns in your region as a result of the business alliance?**		***Categories***		***Categories***	
				took a long time than envisaged	2	took a long time than envisaged	2
				alliance improved performance later	2	alliance improved performance later	2
3		**What are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenges?**		***Categories***		***Categories***	
				communication challenge with consumers in the region	2	communication challenge with consumers in the region	2
				religion and cultural difference	2	religion and cultural difference	2
Section 4 – Regions and Multi-tribe							
1		**How did the differences in culture, norms and practise affect implementation in the regions**		***Categories***		***Categories***	
				Incorporation of regional culture and values in advert	2	Incorporation of regional culture and values in advert	2
				Customisation of marketing strategy to incorporate language	2	Customisation of marketing strategy to incorporate language	2
2		**Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?**		***Categories***		***Categories***	
				Acceptance and implementation in various region differ	2	Acceptance and implementation in various region differ	2
				security concerns in various region differ	2	security concerns in various region differ	2
3		**Were the differences in the various regions significant, compared to Head Office and how did the differences impact the alliance?**		***Categories***		***Categories***	
				Product Acceptance was easier in metropolitan cities	1	Product Acceptance was easier in metropolitan cities	1
				Consumer communication was more difficult in the North	1	Consumer communication was more difficult in the North	1
				Sales strategy in the region differ	1	Sales strategy in the region differ	1
				North is geographically wider, expanded sales resources and logistics	1	North is geographically wider, expanded sales resources and logistics	1
				Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	2	Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	2
				Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	1	Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	1
4		**Did they have to develop specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for your parts of the country?**		***Categories***		***Categories***	
				Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2	Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
				Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3	Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
				Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2	Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
				Modified approach to suit local environment	4	Modified approach to suit local environment	4
				Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2	Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

5		**How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in your region?**		**Categories** | Consumer behaviour changes based on different region | 2 Modified approach to suit local environment | 2	**Categories** | Consumer behaviour changes based on different region | 2 Modified approach to suit local environment | 2
6		**Are there any thing on strategies or strategic alliances in general you might want to tell me about that I might not have covered during the course of the interview?**		***Categories*** | Strong domestic players with experience of local market is critical | 2	***Categories*** | Strong domestic players with experience of local market is critical | 2

4.2.3

<u>Top Management Interview First Order Category Data Analysis</u>

OLAM is coded as FA3

DFM alliance is coded as LA3, BUA alliance is coded as LA4

Top management staff from the Foreign alliance; OLAM from FA3 are as coded as FA3TM1, FA3TM2 and FA3TM3 respectively. Local alliance is coded as LA2 and the top management staff from LA2 are as coded as LA1TM1 and LA1TM2.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.

FA3TM1: Yes, CA has done numerous alliances both locally and internationally (numerous alliances). Various alliances done in Nigeria; JV, Partnerships, Acquisitions etc. ((numerous alliances) Large major acquisition giving leadership position in the market (alliance for leadership)

FA3TM2: Various alliances done in Nigeria already, in the food, drinks and dairy industry (numerous alliances). JV, acquisitions are some of the forms of alliance used in Nigeria (numerous alliances).

Categories	
Numerous alliances	2
Global alliance, both local and international	1
JV, Partnerships, Acquisitions	2
Alliance for leadership	

1b. If possible, at least 1 in each region of Nigeria, can you please talk more about the main strategic alliance, explaining the following:

Bi. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

FA3TM1: Global organisation with technical experience (Global alliance) (Technical experience), experience with turnaround (Technical experience), cheap production cost (Lower Transaction cost), high quality brand (Brand Value). Different production between main market (local demand), value, and premium products (Brand Value). Penetration (market depth). Procurement of raw materials at cheap discount (Lower Transaction cost). Solid technical trading base (Technical experience). Technical capability. Sales. HR capability to manage workforce (Technical experience). Understanding of the whole business process (local demand). Drawing up milestone key performance (local demands)

FA3TM2: Existing production capacity is maximised (market depth) and desire to increase share of wallet in the industry (Increase Market share). To gain market share (Increase Market share) and increase market share (market depth). To buy up competitor capacity (Increase Market share) (acquire local capability)

Categories	

Global alliance	2
Technical experience	4
Lower Transaction cost	2
Brand Value	4
Increase Market share	5
Full use of resources	2
Alliance for leadership	1
Maximise production capacity	1
Local demand	3

Bii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

FA3TM1: Double capacity reached (Maximise production capacity). Maximum capacity of DFM (Maximise production capacity, acquire local capability) and in the next year another action needs to take place, expansion, acquisition etc. (Business expansion acquire local capability) Financial advisers initiated the deal to both parties.

FA3TM2: Understanding the market (local demands) (acquire local capability), only dominant player can drive growth (Increase market share) (acquire local capability). To have large market share; greenfield pricing power, consolidate business, brownfield penetrate market at right price. (local demands) (increase market share) (acquire local capability) Acquire company – Growth (market growth). Capacity maximised after 1st acquisition. Financial consultants initiated the discussion, but the seller was willing to sell (willingness to cooperate)

Categories	
Acquire local capability	4
Local demand	3
Market growth	2
Willingness to cooperate	1
Maximise production capacity	2
Business expansion	2
Increase market share	2

Biii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

FA3TM1: Core committee member in the Alliance, worked on the strategic intent. (participated at strategic level) (was fully involved)

FA3TM2; Was involved in the due diligence intent (Participated at strategic level) Worked along in the implementation of the alliance.

Categories	
Participated at strategic level	2
Was fully involved	2

Biv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

FA3TM1: Treasury & Finance – How to fund.

FA3TM2: Operations-Productions

Categories	
Finance	1
Operations	1

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA3TM1: A1 alliance was successful (Alliance success). Business performance exceeded (alliance success). Milestone/year projection exceeded (exceed expectation). Business is well synchronised, gaining market share. (alliance was successful) (Increased market share)

FA3TM2: The alliance went well (alliance was successful). Flour milling was an existing business operation, so, it was not very difficult to operationally align (alignment of operations not difficult).

Categories	
Alliance was successful	4
Business performance exceeded expectation	2
Increased market share	2
Alignment of operations not difficult	1
Previous experience in the Industry helped	1

Q3: For which time period was the strategic alliance designed envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

FA3TM1: Alliance was planned for 12 months but took 18-20 months. FX challenges in the country; (took a long time) buyer needed to do some further check (took a long time), discussion and get some further consensus (took a long time) (Long time for consensus). Time to obtain regulatory approval was prolonged - SEC approval, FCCPC approval. (took a long time) (government delays) The alliance ended up being a full acquisition. (took a long time) (alliance grew to an acquisition)

FA3TM2: 12 months but took 18-20 months (took a long time). Alliance is completed with full acquisition (alliance grew to an acquisition) Regulatory approval and due diligence was prolonged (took a long time).

Categories	
Alliance took longer than planned	1
Alliance was planned for 12 months but took over 18 months	3
Long time for counterparty consensus	1
Regulatory approval and government delays	2
Alliance grew to an acquisition	2

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. 1 Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA3TM1. Some staff were laid off (Staff reshuffling and retirement). Some DFM staff were retained and integrated to the system (Staff reshuffling and retirement). Key talents were identified (Staff reshuffling and retirement) (disruptions). Strike for 3 weeks (Employee Strike led to business disruption), Negotiation with union subsequently (Employee Strike led to business disruption). Staff welfare package was discussed and communicated. Career path. (Increased employee engagement)

FA3TM2: Yes, conflict (Conflict during implementation) with staff which led to the strike by staff (Employee Strike led to business disruption) and almost crippled production (Employee Strike led to business disruption) because some staff were laid off (Staff reshuffling and retirement), which led to Strike for 3 weeks (Employee Strike led to business disruption). We had to go on real Negotiations with union (Increased employee engagement). Communication with staff also increased (Increased employee engagement).

Categories	
Conflict during implementation	2
Staff reshuffling and retirement	5
Staff training and integration	3
Increased employee engagement	3
Employee Strike led to business disruption	5
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q2. 2 What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

FA3TM1: FA took over the main roles (MNC took on the Strategic role); CEO, CFO; (MNC took on the Strategic role) since the real intent was full acquisition (dominant party emerged). (MNC took on the Strategic role)

FA3TM2: CA was assigned a few roles such as CFO (MNC took on the Strategic role), other Finance role (MNC took on the Strategic role), after the full acquisition, all roles devolved to CA (MNC took on the Strategic role) (Dominant party emerged). FA was conducting due diligence on all information provided and valuation (due diligence).

Categories	
Dominant party emerged	2
MNC took on the Strategic role	6
After the full acquisition, all roles devolved to MNC	1

Q3. 3 Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

FA3TM1: Both but Olam had more at stake since the intent was full acquisition (joint success effort) (More success effort from dominant party) and the existing production capacity was almost at optimum. (More success effort from dominant party)

FA3TM2: More of Olam (More success effort from dominant party), because the plan is usually full acquisition of any JV/Strategic partnerships (More success effort from dominant party)

Categories	
Joint success effort	2
More success effort from dominant party	4

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner has to perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.

FA3TM1: FA had a structured alliance format and template, this was then customised to suit the alliance (amended established template) and peculiar characteristic of the local environment, region and business. (amended established template) (Structure customised to fit local peculiarities)

FA3TM2: FA had structure and template that had worked in many other countries (established template), this is flexible though and customised to suit the local environment, region and business (amended established template) (Structure customised to fit local peculiarities).

Categories	
Amended established template	2
Structure customised to fit local peculiarities	2
MNC had a structured alliance format and template	2

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

FA3TM1: "Lots of apprehension from Staff (Staff apprehension)– minority shareholder acquires majority shareholder. Listing guideline (regulatory approval challenges). FCCPC – new regulatory body with respect to competition and protection of consumer" (regulatory approval challenges)

FA3TM2: Regulatory challenges (regulatory approval challenges), aligning production process (alignment challenges). staff integration (alignment challenges)

Categories	
Staff apprehension	1
Regulatory approval challenges	3
Production and process alignment challenges	2

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with a local partner or as a greenfield? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

FA3TM1: I think business alliance is better done with a local partner (experienced local alliance partner essential), and the local partners understanding of the local market made implementation easier. (experienced local alliance partner essential) (Local partner with good understanding of the Market)

FA3TM2: Local partnership is better done (experienced local alliance partner essential), as it gives a good head start (experienced local alliance partner essential) (Local partner with good understanding of the Market). Starting afresh comes with a lot of challenges (experienced local alliance partner essential)

Categories	
Experienced local alliance partner is essential	4
Local partner with good understanding of the Market	2

Q2. Who was more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or the local company?

FA3TM1: FA was more responsible for the implementation (MNC was more responsible in alliance success) (Dominant party emerged)

FA3TM2: FA was in charge of alliance implementation (MNC was more responsible in alliance success) (Dominant party emerged).

Categories	
MNC was more responsible in alliance success	2
Dominant party emerged	2

Q3. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

FA3TM1: Yes (alliance changed MNC practice), significant changes in process (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change), procurement strategy (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change), risk management (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change), reporting etc. (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change)

FA3TM2: Yes, changes in production process (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change), automation (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change), policies etc. (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change). In our case changes in human resources policies (alliance changed MNC practice) (Significant MNC process change).

Categories	
Alliance changed MNC practice	2
Significant MNC production and process change	2
Changes in risk management and reporting policy	2
Changes in human resources policies	1

Q4. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?

FA3TM1: After the 1st year, volume increased (alliance improved performance) (quick improvement in MNC performance), marketing (alliance improved performance) and distribution strategy (alliance improved performance) enhanced sales (alliance improved performance). Efficiency (alliance improved performance) (improved MNC efficiency) and integration set in ((alliance improved performance) (improved MNC efficiency) and profitability increased (alliance improved performance).

FA3TM2: The production volume increased within 1 year, (alliance improved performance) (quick improvement in MNC performance) the synergy was great (alliance improved performance) (improvement in MNC performance). The distribution process greatly enhanced sales (alliance improved performance) (improvement in MNC performance). Business performance improved (alliance improved performance), and profitability increased too (alliance improved performance) (improvement in MNC performance)

Categories	
Alliance improved performance	8
Quick improvement in MNC performance within 1year	3
Alliance resulted in increased sales	2
Alliance resulted in efficiency	2
Alliance resulted in increased profitability	2
Alliance resulted in enhanced distribution and marketing	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with a local company, especially with such International distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

FA3TM1: We have done many of such alliances in different jurisdiction (prior experience in alliance in developing countries), within African and even in Nigeria (prior experience in alliance in developing countries). So, we just had to modify our approach (prior experience in alliance in developing countries (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment)

FA3TM2: FA has done many business alliance over the years (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) and we are also not new to Nigeria. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries). We had to be flexible in our approach (modified approach to suit local environment) (Flexibility in alliance approach), especially since we have done such alliance in different emerging markets before (prior experience in alliance in developing countries)

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	7
Modified approach to suit local environment	4

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA3TM1: Yes, it was slightly difficult initially, (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later), integrating the staff (alignment challenges) and business operations of the new depots (alignment challenges).

FA3TM2: Kind of (early challenges), but once the tone was set at the top (coped with challenges better later),(leadership direction key) implementation became easier. Staff integration and alignment of depot operations too became easier (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later).

Categories	
Slightly difficult across the different regions initially	2
Coped with challenges better later	2
Staff alignment challenges	2
Business operation alignment challenges	4
Leadership direction key	2
Early challenges	4

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?

FA3TM1: Culture (culture alignment challenges), process (process alignment challenges), reporting lines (alignment challenges) (leadership direction key) was the main issue but once the tone at the top was firm (alignment challenges) (leadership direction key). Everyone cooperated (alignment challenges) (leadership direction key).

FA3TM2: It was more of culture (culture alignment challenges) and way of doing things (culture alignment challenges), like processes (process alignment challenges). Initially, it slowed down implementation (process alignment challenges) (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later).

FA3TM3: The difference in procedure (process alignment challenges), language (culture alignment challenges) and way of life impacted initially (culture alignment challenges) (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later).

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

CATM1: No

CATM2: No

CATM3: No

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

FA3TM1: FA was already present in Nigeria (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) and even had distribution outlets and manufacturing plants in most of the regions (prior experience in alliance in developing countries helped to reduce the political risks), so the difficulty was not immense across all the regions (prior experience in alliance in developing countries).

FA3TM2: Yes (prior experience in alliance in developing countries), prior knowledge of the local environment helped to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance (prior knowledge of the local environment helped to reduce the political risks), enhance the effectiveness of the efforts. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries).

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing country helped	4
Prior knowledge of the local environment helped to reduce the political risks	1

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

FA3TM1: It was easier to implement in the South where the Head office is (easier where MNC HQ is based), perhaps due to proximity (easier where MNC HQ is based). However, it was not so tough in other region.

FA3TM2: The farther regions were more difficult to implement (easier where MNC HQ is based) i.e. Northern part of Nigeria (easier where MNC HQ is based) (gets tougher the farther you go).

Categories	
Implementation was easier where MNC HQ is based	4
Implementation gets tougher the farther you go from HQ	2

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

FA3TM1: Flow regulators interpret laws/acts (less regulation more implementation of rules).. Spirit of the law should be on focus (less regulation more implementation of rules) (Spirit of the law needed more). Secret emergence market – carry them along on what you are doing and reason for doing that (MNC should carry government along). No issue with corruption maybe on the seller side (local experience helps overcome corruption within MNC).

FA3TM2: Weak institutional structure does not make doing business seamless. (MNC should carry government along) (less regulation more implementation of rules). However, the ROI in Nigeria makes it worth the effort (local experience helps overcome corruption within MNC).

FA3TM3: The weak institutional structure impacts business negatively (Spirit of the law needed more) (less regulation more implementation of rules) and it makes investors wary of approaching the market (Spirit of the law needed more).

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Top Management Interview First Order Category Data Analysis

Dangote Flour Mill Alliance is coded as LA3 and the Top management staff from Dangote are coded as LA3TM1. The BUA alliance is coded as LA4, Tiger Brand Alliance FA4.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.

LA3TM1: Yes, we have done series of alliances in the past (numerous alliances), we did a prior business alliance with Tiger brands acquiring 67%, (Previous alliance with MNC) (numerous alliances) but the alliance failed and Tiger Brand had to sell back their shares to Dangote Industries. (failed business alliance) numerous alliances, alliance for leadership, failed business alliance.

Categories	
Numerous alliances	2
Previous alliance with MNC	1
Failed business alliance	1

i. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

LA3TM1: We moved on to another alliance with Olam International, because our plan was to fully divest from Flour Milling business and consolidate our business interest in Cement and Refinery which had a slightly better margin. (divestment to another business line, consolidation of business line).

Categories	
Divestment to another business line	1
Consolidation of business line	1

ii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

LA3TM1: The consideration was the plan to scale up production and divest from the FlourMilling business. The alliance was a case of willing buyer, willing seller. (willingness to cooperate), consolidation of business line.

Categories	
Divestment to another business line	1
Willingness to cooperate	1

Consolidation of business line	1

iii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

LA3TM1: To provide financial information for valuation and negotiation decisions. I participated at operational level though. (participated at strategic level)

Categories	
participated at operational level, participated at operational level	1

iv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

LA3TM1: The Chief Finance Officer of Dangote who was responsible for all the Finance related decisions and assigning resources for financial due diligence. (to ensure successful implementation) (was fully involved)

Categories	
Was responsible for all the Finance related decisions	1
To ensure successful implementation	1
Was fully involved	1

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

LA3TM1: The initial alliance with Tiger Brands was not successful (Previous MNC alliance was not successful) but that with Olam was successful. (Subsequent MNC alliance was successful) For the initial alliance, I think the level of due diligence was not deep enough. Cost management could have been better bearing in mind the thin margin in the Flour Mill industry, their expectations were also very high in terms of Profit margin, unfortunately market dynamics was bad for the Flour Milling industry, during the 4 year period due to some changes in market dynamics and policy. Tiger Brands also lacked a good understanding of the local market, *it took them a long time to adjust to the culture and attitude of the typical Nigerian consumer and distributor scheme which is diverse with fragmented customer base*, compared to the South African consumer. This led to huge drop in sales and market share and the Shareholders were Institutional investors who wanted to exit, as a result of the immediate challenges. The business alliance failed. However, the 2nd business alliance with Olam was more successful, they understood the market, and had a clear vision of what they intend to achieve.

Categories	
Previous MNC alliance was not successful	1
Subsequent MNC alliance was successful	1
Level of due diligence with FA4 alliance was not deep enough	2
Cost management in FA4 alliance not good	1
Market dynamics was bad for the FlourMilling industry, during the FA4 alliance period	1
Lack of understanding of local market led to failed FA4 alliance	1
FA4 was unable to adjust structure to suit the culture and attitude of the local consumer and distributor scheme	1
Huge drop in sales and market share during FA4 alliance	1
Business alliance failed	1
Led to subsequent business alliance	1
Knowledge of local market helped FA3 alliance and had a clear vision of what they intend to achieve,	1
Previous experience local market helped FA3 alliance	1

Q3: For which time period was the strategic alliance envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

LA3TM1: The due diligence process of signing agreements and obtaining regulatory approval took about 1.5 years. Past experience helped in dealing with Regulatory approval, government delays promptly.

Categories	
Alliance was successful	1

Alliance grew to an acquisition	1
Past experience helped	1
Past experience helped in dealing with Regulatory approval, government delays	1
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	1

Q4: What is the legal form of the strategic alliance? For example, is it (informal agreement, formal, written agreement, separate legal entity (JV, consortium etc.), minority cross-shareholding, or any other type? Why this type?

LA3TM1: Both alliances were backed by formal agreement, however the initial alliance with TigerBrands was a JV, while alliance with Olam was aimed at full acquisition from onset. (formal, written agreement)

Categories	
Alliances were backed by formal agreement	1
Initial alliance with FA4 was a JV	1
Alliance with FA3 was aimed at full acquisition	1

Q5: How experienced is your organisation in implementing strategic alliances?

LA3TM1: Dangote had done a lot of alliances with suppliers, distributors and key players in the FlourMills value chain; even in the other business lines, various alliances and acquisitions had been done but the one with Tiger Brands was the 1st done with an MNC. (very experienced), (numerous alliance)

Categories	
Numerous alliance	4
Very experienced	1
FA4 was first alliance with MNC	1

<u>Section 2.</u>

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

LA3TM1: Dangote had done a lot of alliances with suppliers, distributors and key players in the FlourMilling value chain, even in the other business lines various alliances and acquisition had been done but the one with Tiger Brands was the 1st done with an MNC and there were strong informal conflict with tough change process.

LA3TM1: However, the alliance with CrownflourMills was almost seamless because the company already understood the sector, market and country. They had also done series of business alliance locally and internationally. (Executive agreement) (no conflict) (cooperation)

Categories	
Strong informal conflict in FA4 alliance	1
Tough change process in FA4 alliance	1
Understanding of the country, local market and sector is important	1
Executive agreement	1
Previous experience helped	1

Q2. What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

LA3TM1: Olam team took the lead roles such as MD, Directors, CFO etc. Middle management retained their old roles but additional responsibilities were added. (operational role) (Strategy role) (dominant party emerged, due diligence)

Categories	
FA3 took key strategic role	1
Dominant party emerged	1

Q3. Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

LA3TM1: The two companies were responsible for the success of the alliance but FA3 had more at stake as the intent was full acquisition. (joint effort, More success effort from dominant party)

Categories	
Joint success effort	1
More success effort from dominant party	1

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.?

LA3TM1: The roles and responsibilities were merged based on the perceived strength of people, duplicate roles were combined but the Olam team took the lead roles such as MD, Directors, CFO etc. (structured role agreement), (well defined ways of working)

Categories	
The roles and responsibilities were merged based on the perceived strength	1
FA3 team took the lead roles	1
Dominant party emerged	1
Structured role agreement	2
Well defined ways of working	2
Joint executive decision	1

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

LA3TM1: Integration of processes, workforce and alliance partners such as suppliers and distributors. This led to Apprehension. (alignment challenges) (change in process)

Categories	
Integration of processes	1
Alignment challenges	1
Change in process	3
Apprehension amongst staff	1

<u>Section 3. General questions</u>

Q1. How often do you discuss the outcome and challenges of the strategic alliance and its implementation with the MNC partner?

LA3TM1: There were lots of discussions, informal and formal meetings at all levels during the implementation period, almost daily at some levels and weekly at higher level. (Frequently, periodically and on ad-hoc basis), phased alliance strategy.

Categories	
Frequently	4
Periodically	3
On ad-hoc basis	1

Q2. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

LA3TM1: Both options of alliance have its advantages, the key point is to have experienced *financial advisers* and *legal parties to advise and assist in structuring agreements and the process*. (well-structured agreements, documents and the process). I think a one-off approach to alliance is beneficial though, the gradual approach introduces a number of challenges.

Categories	
Well-structured agreements, documents and the process is critical	1

Alliance approach depends on peculiarities and goal	1
One-off approach to alliance is more beneficial	1
Phased alliance approach introduces a number of challenges	1
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q3. Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?

LA3TM1: Both parties but it was critical for the MNC to get it right and get good value for their investment. (MNC) (Both parties)

Categories	
Both parties responsible for the strategic alliance implementation	1
Alliance success more critical for MNC, FA3 took more responsibility	1
Dominant party emerged	1

Q4. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

LA3TM1: Yes, we had to adopt most of the Olam's practices (changes in practice) and fuse our operations into that of Olam International (changes in practice) and also integrate both customer and operational processes. (changes in practice). However, the unique and positives from DFM was adopted too. In a number of instances, the better process or practice of both companies was adopted.

Categories	
Changes in practise as a result of the business alliance	3
Integration and alignment of business operations	1
Integration and alignment of customer and operational process	1
Better process or practice of both companies was adopted	1
Some old unique practice adopted	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with a local company, especially with such international distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

LA3TM1: Olam International already had some operating business and products in Nigeria, so they had a *good understanding of the local market* already with *well drafted agreement and role assignment*. Thus, the differences were not so material to impact business operations. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment, Flexibility in alliance approach) (well drafted agreement and role assignment) (defined parameters agreed)

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	1
Good understanding of the local market helped	1
Flexibility in alliance approach	1
Modified approach to suit local environment	1
Well drafted agreement and role assignment	1
Defined parameters agreed	1
Legal documentation is critical	1

Q2. What are the factors that influenced the strategic alliances with MNCs from a different region?

LA3TM1: The company was already in that line of business, with good experience, access to Capital and good understanding of the industry. (The reputation, brand, product relevance to the local market).

Categories	
Previous experience of MNC in the sector helped	1
good understanding of the industry	1
Previous business experience of MNC in the local market helped	1

Q3. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

LA3TM1: Yes, regional peculiarities were different. The *product offerings were different* and *distributors in the North were fewer and bigger* while the *Distributors in the South were more but smaller and more fragmented*. (implementation was more difficult) (different strategy for each region)

Categories	
Regional peculiarities were different for implementation	1
Different implementation strategy for each region	1
Sales and distribution implementation different in the region, North was bigger than South	

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

LA3TM1: Yes, the product offerings were different and distributor penetration in the North were bigger, while the Distributors in the South were more, but smaller and more fragmented. (specific penetration strategy for different regions.

Categories	
Different penetration strategy for each region	1
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	1
Product offerings were different in different region	1

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

LA3TM1: Yes, prior knowledge of the market by even the MNC helped and made some processes quite seamless. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries, local experience/Partnership helps)

Categories	
Prior knowledge of the market by MNC helped to reduce the political risks	1
Political risk reduced because of previous experience	1

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

LA3TM1: Yes, perhaps the Northern region was quite different and slightly difficult to operate in *but the prior knowledge of the market by the MNC and dominance of DFM in that region made it easier*. (sales strategy in the region differ, local experience/Partnership helps)

Categories	
Northern region was quite different and slightly difficult to operate	1
Local experience/Partnership helps	1
Dominance of local partner in the region made implementation easier	1

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

LA3TM1: I think every market has its peculiarities and challenges such as Infrastructure, Power, Policy instability etc., (understanding the peculiarities) the main point is that Investors should understand the peculiarities of the economy, market, industry, consumer, value chain and devise risk mitigants to support especially, where the ROI is good and convincing enough. (understanding the peculiarities), (local experience/partnership helps), (good returns)

Categories	
Understanding the peculiarities of the local market	4
Local experience/partnership helps	1
Weak institutional structure presents good returns	1

			Foreign Partner	**Local Partner**	**Combined Categories**
Q1	**Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done**				

<table>
<tr><td></td><td><u>A</u></td><td><u>Your organization must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Numerous alliances</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Global alliance, both local and international</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Jv, partnerships, acquisitions</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance for leadership</td><td></td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Numerous alliances</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Previous alliance with MNC</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Failed business alliance</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td><u>Bi</u></td><td><u>Why did your organization decide to do the alliance?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Global alliance</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Technical experience</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Lower Transaction cost</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Brand Value</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Increase Market share</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Full use of resources</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance for leadership</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Maximise production capacity</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Local demand</td><td>3</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>divestment to another business line</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>consolidation of business line</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td><u>Bii</u></td><td><u>What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>acquire local capability</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>local demand</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>market growth</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>willingness to cooperate</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Maximise production capacity</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Business expansion</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Increase market share</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>divestment to another business line</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>willingness to cooperate</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>consolidation of business line</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td><u>Biii</u></td><td><u>What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>participated at strategic level</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>was fully involved)</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>participated at operational level, participated at operational level</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td><u>Biv</u></td><td><u>What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Finance</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Operations</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>was responsible for all the Finance related decisions</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>To ensure successful implementation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>was fully involved</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td><u>Q2</u></td><td></td><td><u>Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Alliance was successful</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Business performance exceeded expectation.</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Increased market share</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alignment of operations not difficult</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Previous experience in the industry helped</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Previous MNC alliance was not successful</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Subsequent MNC alliance was successful</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>level of due diligence with FA4 alliance was not deep enough</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Cost management in FA4 alliance not good</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Market dynamics was bad for the FlourMilling industry, during the FA4 alliance period</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Previous MNC alliance was not successful</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Subsequent MNC alliance was successful</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>level of due diligence with FA4 alliance was not deep enough</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Cost management in FA4 alliance not good</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Market dynamics was bad for the FlourMilling industry, during the FA4 alliance period</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td></tr>
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<tr><td>Alliance took longer than planned</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Alliance was planned for 12 months but took over 18 months</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Long time for counterparty consensus</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Regulatory approval and government delays</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Alliance grew to an acquisition</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td><td><table>
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<tr><td>Alliance with FA3 was aimed at full acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr><td><u>Q5</u></td><td></td><td><u>How experienced is your organisation in implementing strategic alliances?</u></td><td></td><td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>numerous alliance</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>very experienced</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>FA4 was first alliance with MNC</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6"><u>Section 2: Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase</u></td></tr>
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<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Conflict during implementation</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Staff reshuffling and retirement</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Staff training and integration</td><td>3</td></tr>
</table></td><td><table>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td><u>after implementation?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Increased employee engagement</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Employee Strike led to business disruption</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of sales and marketing approach</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Executive agreement</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Previous experience helped</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>2</u></td><td></td><td><u>What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Dominant party emerged</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>MNC took on the Strategic role</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>after the full acquisition, all roles devolved to MNC</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>FA3 took key strategic role</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Dominant party emerged</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>3</u></td><td></td><td><u>Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Joint success effort</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>More success effort from dominant party</td><td>4</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>joint success effort</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>More success effort from dominant party</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td><u>1</u></td><td></td><td><u>Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?</u></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Experienced local alliance partner is essential</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Local partner with good understanding of the Market</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>well-structured agreements, documents and the process is critical</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance approach depends on peculiarities and goal</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>one-off approach to alliance is more beneficial</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Phased alliance approach introduces a number of challenges</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of sales and marketing approach</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td><u>2</u></td><td></td><td><u>Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>MNC was more responsible in alliance success</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Dominant party emerged</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Both parties responsible for the strategic alliance implementation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance success more critical for MNC, FA3 took more responsibility</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Dominant party emerged</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>3</u></td><td></td><td><u>Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>alliance changed MNC practice</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Significant MNC production and process change</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in risk management and reporting policy</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>changes in human resources policies</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>changes in practise as a result of the business alliance</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Integration and alignment of business operations</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Integration and alignment of customer and operational process</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>better process or practice of both companies was adopted</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>some old unique practice adopted</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>4</u></td><td></td><td><u>After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Alliance improved performance</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>quick improvement in MNC performance within 1year</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance resulted in increased sales</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance resulted in efficiency</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance resulted in increased profitability</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance resulted in enhanced distribution and marketing</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="6"><u>Section 4: Regions and Multi-tribe</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>How were you able to implement such a business alliance with an MNC, especially with such international distance i.e., differences in culture, norms and practice.</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>4</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>good understanding of the local market helped</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>well drafted agreement and role assignment</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>defined parameters agreed</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Legal documentation is critical</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>What are the factors that influenced the strategic alliances with MNCs from a different region?</td><td></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Previous experience of MNC in the sector helped</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>good understanding of the industry</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Previous business experience of MNC in the local market helped</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Slightly difficult across the different regions initially</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>coped with challenges better later</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Staff alignment challenges</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Business operation alignment challenges</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>leadership direction key</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>early challenges</td><td>4</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Regional peculiarities were different for implementation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Different implementation strategy for each region</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Marketing strategy had to be region specific</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of sales and marketing approach</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>Did you have to develop specific region penetration strategies? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?</td><td></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>different penetration strategy for each region</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>product offerings were different in different region</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Prior experience in alliance in developing country helped</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Prior knowledge of the local environment helped to reduce the political risks</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Prior knowledge of the market by MNC helped to reduce the political risks</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Political risk reduced because of previous experience</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.</td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Implementation was easier where MNC HQ is based</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Implementation gets tougher the farther you go from HQ</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td>
<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Northern region was quite different and slightly difficult to operate</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>local experience/Partnership helps</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Dominance of local partner in the region made implementation easier</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?</td>
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<td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Understanding the peculiarities of the local market</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>local experience/partnership helps</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>weak institutional structure presents good returns</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td>
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Middle Management Interview Data Analysis

OLAM is coded as FA3, and the middle management staff from OLAM are as coded as FA3MM1, FA3MM2 and FA3MM3 respectively.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. A. Your organisation must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.

FA3MM1: Yes, many alliances done in many countries and previous ones in Nigeria too; JV, Partnerships, Acquisitions (numerous alliances).

FA3MM2: Many alliances done in Nigeria already, food, juice, drinks etc. Mergers, Acquisitions, Purchasing etc. (numerous alliances).

Categories	
Numerous alliances in many countries	2
Numerous alliances in Nigeria	2
Numerous alliances in different sectors	1

i. Why did your organisation decide to do the alliance?

FA3MM1: To dominate the flour milling market demand (alliance for leadership), grow our business and increase availability of our products (market depth) (grow revenue)

FA3MM2: We needed to expand our operations. Our current capacity does not meet our demand for our products. (alliance for leadership) (market depth) (business expansion). To gain market share and increase market share. To buy up competitor capacity (alliance for leadership) (business expansion) (market depth) (increase market share)

Categories	
Alliance for leadership	2
Grow revenue	1
Increase market depth	
Business expansion	1
Expand production capacity	2

Increase market share	1

ii. What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?

FA3MM1: I am not sure, but I think the seller wanted to divest and they got advisers to assist with the sale (willingness to cooperate). We wanted to have a larger market share and we were almost at full capacity. (market depth) (business expansion)

FA3MM2: To have large market share, to consolidate our business, for Growth. Capacity maximized after BUA acquisition. (alliance for leadership) (business expansion) (consolidation of business line) (market growth)

Categories	
Seller wanted to divest	1
Willingness to cooperate	1
Need for larger market share	2
Need for expansion of production capacity	1
Consolidation of business line	1
Need for growth	1
Business expansion	1

iii. What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?

FA3MM1: Worked in the Finance department, I was responsible for financial analysis and data collation. I was not part of the core team. (part of core team)

FA3MM2: Worked in the Operations department, I was responsible for collating the operations process, procedure etc. I was not part of the core team. (part of core team)

Categories	
Part of the core operational team	2
Finance	1
Operations department	1

iv. What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?

FA3MM1: Finance reporting and control (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

FA3MM2: Operations-Productions (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

CAMM3: Human resources and admin (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

Categories	
Participated at operational level	2
Was fully involved	2
Operations-Productions	1
Modified approach to suit local environment	1

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA3MM1 The alliance was successful (successful). We surpassed projections for the 2nd year and gained market share (exceed expectation). Business is well aligned, alliance became an acquisition (well aligned) (alliance was successful),

FA3MM2: The alliance went well (Alliance success). Volume increased, market share increased, efficiency in operations and productions too, staff are now integrated.

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Exceeded expectation	1
Increased market share	2
Increased sales volume	1

Efficiency in operations and productions	1
Staff are now integrated	1
Alliance grew to an acquisition	1

Q3: For which time period was the strategic alliance designed envisaged? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still going on? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?

FA3MM1: It took almost 2 years - FX challenges in the country; regulatory approval was delayed. (took a long time, government delays) (Regulatory approval and due diligence was prolonged). The alliance became full acquisition

FA3MM2: 12 months was planned but took about 2 years (took a long time). Regulatory approval and due diligence were prolonged. (took a long time). The company is still ongoing and doing well.

Categories	
12 months was planned but took about 2years	2
Alliance grew to an acquisition	2
Regulatory approval and due diligence was prolonged	2

<u>Section 2.</u>

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. 1 Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA3MM1: More of conflict with staff because some staff were laid off from DFM, even though some DFM staff were retained, the union fought back with and then embarked on a Strike for 3 weeks. (Staff realignment led to strike) (conflict with staff)

FA3MM2: Only conflict on staff issues but it was resolved even though it affected operations for that period. (Staff realignment led to strike) (conflict with staff). We had to go on real Negotiations with the union. Communication with staff also increased. (increased communications) (informal conflict) (conflict with staff)

Categories	
Informal conflict	2
Informal conflict with employees	2
Staff realignment led to strike	2
Conflict led to increased communications and negotiation	1

Q2. 2 What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?

FA3MM1: FA3 took over the main roles; CFO, Head of Operations, Head of Production (international experience) (due diligence) (MNC adopted strategic roles) especially with the acquisition plan. FA3 was conducting due diligence on all information provided and valuation. (MNC adopted strategic roles).

FA3MM2: Olam had some important roles such as Head of Finance role, Head of production but after the full acquisition, all roles devolved to Olam. (Role assigned because alliance became acquisition) (MNC adopted strategic roles) (dominant party emerged) (international experience) (local expertise) (operational role) (Strategy role) dominant party emerged, due diligence.

Categories	
MNC adopted strategic roles	2
Role assigned due to international experience	2
Role assigned because alliance became acquisition	2
Dominant party emerged	2

Q3. Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?

FA3MM1: Both parties but Olam had more at stake since the intent was full acquisition and the existing production capacity was almost at optimum. (joint success effort) (More success effort from dominant party)

FA3MM2: More of Olam because the plan is usually full acquisition of any JV/Strategic partnerships. (More success effort from dominant party) (joint success effort)

Categories	
Joint success effort	2
More success effort from dominant party	2
More success effort from MNC due to full acquisition plan	2

Q4: How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner has to perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.

FA3MM1: Olam had a structured alliance format and template; this was used for the alliance, but some amendments were made necessary. (customised established template) (structured alliance format and template)

FA3MM2: Olam has gone through alliances in many countries, so they have a format they follow but they customise depending on the type of alliance and business/country. (customised established template) (looked to fit local peculiarities)

CAMM3: Olam had a structured alliance format and template, this was then customised to suit the alliance and peculiar characteristic of the local environment, region and business. (amended established template)

Categories	
Structured alliance format and template	2
Customised established template	2
Well defined ways of working	2
Structured role agreement	1
Previous alliance experience helped	1

Q5. What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?

FA3MM1: Initially communication from top management was not frequent, hitches with integration of process. (alignment challenges) (Process and Production integration challenges) (Low communication)

FA3MM2: Aligning production process, integration of workforce. alignment challenges, (change in process) integration of workforce. (Regulatory approval challenges) (Process and Production integration challenges)

Categories	
Low communication	1
Process and Production integration challenges	2
Employee integration	2
Alignment and integration challenges	5
Regulatory approval challenges	1

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with a local partner or as a greenfield? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?

FA3MM1: Local partnership was easier, since the company was already existing and has a good brand, experienced local alliance partner essential, and the local partner will understand the local environment.

FA3MM2: Local partnership is better done, it is faster even though expensive and it comes with integration struggles. experienced local alliance partner essential.

Categories	
Alliance with Local partnership is better	2
Experienced local alliance partner essential	3
Local alliance partnership gives faster start	2
Local alliance partnership helps with good knowledge of local market	1

Q2. 2 Who was more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or the local company?

FA3MM1: Olam was more responsible for the implementation. (MNC was more responsible for implementation)

FA3MM2: The real plan was full acquisition, so MNC was more responsible. (MNC was more responsible for implementation)

Categories	
MNC was more responsible for implementation	2
MNC was more responsible for implementation due to full acquisition	1

Q3. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?

FA3MM1: Yes, significant changes in process, procurement strategy, risk management, reporting, marketing and distribution strategy, accounting policies, auditors etc. (Significant changes in practise)

FA3MM2: Yes, changes in production process, marketing and distribution strategy, policies, human resources policies etc. (Significant changes in practice). We had to align. (Alignment of human resource policies) (Significant changes in practise)

Categories	
Changes in process	5
Changes in risk management and reporting	1
Changes in marketing and distribution strategy	2
Changes in accounting policies and auditors	1
Changes in production process	2
Alignment of human resource policies	1

Q4. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?

FA3MM1: After 2 years, volume increased, and profitability increased. (Quick improvement in MNC performance)

FA3MM2: The production volume increased within, and distribution became more efficient (Alliance led to improved MNC efficiency), (quick improvement in MNC performance) (alliance improved performance). By the 2nd year, business performance improved and profitability increased too. (Quick improvement in MNC performance) (alliance improved performance).

Categories	
Within 2 years, alliance improved performance and profitability	2
Quick improvement in production volume	1
Alliance led to improved MNC efficiency	1
Quick improvement in MNC performance	2

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How were you able to implement such a business alliance with a local company, especially with such International distance i.e. differences in culture, norms and practise.

FA3MM1: Olam has done many business alliances over the years, and we are also not new to Nigeria. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (Local knowledge and experience of the local market helped)

FA3MM2: We had to be flexible in our approach (modified approach to suit local environment) (Flexibility in alliance approach), especially since we have done such alliance in different emerging markets before (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment)

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	2
Flexibility in alliance approach	1
Local knowledge and experience of the local market helped	2

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA3MM1: Just a bit difficult, aligning the depot processes, staff etc (alignment challenges)

FA3MM2: More of distance, culture and way of doing things, like processes. Initially, it slowed down implementation (alignment challenges), but we had to ensure that the line managers take charge and set the right tone especially after the negotiations with the union. (Difficult initially, coped with challenges better later)

Categories	
Different approach to implementing across the different regions	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Alignment challenges	2
Leadership direction is key	1
Difficult initially, coped with challenges better later	2

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?

FA3MM1: Culture, language and way of life impacted initially (culture alignment challenges), process (process alignment challenges), reporting lines (alignment challenges) (leadership direction key) was the main issue but once the tone at the top was firm (alignment challenges) (leadership direction key). Everyone cooperated (alignment challenges)

FA3MM2: It was more of culture (culture alignment challenges) and way of doing things (culture alignment challenges), like processes (process alignment challenges). Initially, it slowed down implementation (process alignment challenges) (coped with challenges better later).

Categories	
Significant differences in the region	4
Culture alignment challenges	6
Process alignment challenges	3
Leadership direction key	2
Differences slowed down implementation initially	2
Coped with challenges better later	2

Q4. Did you have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?

FA3MM1: I think so, especially the marketing and distribution. (different penetration strategy for different regions)

FA3MM2: In the North, the process had to be refined especially the distribution and marketing strategy. (different penetration strategy for different regions)

Categories	
Different penetration strategy for different regions	2
Specific penetration strategy for marketing and distribution in the North	1

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?

FA3MM1: FA3 was already present in Nigeria (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (local experience/Partnership helps) (modified approach to suit local environment) and even had distribution outlets and manufacturing plants in most of the regions (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment), so the difficulty was not immense across all the regions (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment)

FA3MM2: Olam was already present in Nigeria and even had distribution outlets and manufacturing plants in most of the regions, so the difficulty was not immense across all the regions. (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (local experience/Partnership helps) (modified approach to suit local environment)

FA3MM3: Yes (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment), prior knowledge of the local environment by both CA and the local partner (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment) helped to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance (prior experience in alliance in developing countries) (modified approach to suit local environment) (political risk reduced because of previous experience) and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts (prior experience in alliance in developing countries)

Categories	
Prior experience in alliance in developing countries	6
Local experience/Partnership helped	3
Political risk reduced because of previous experience	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4

Q6. Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.

FA3MM1: Implementation was not so difficult across region, but the North required more effort gets tougher the farther you go. Sales and distribution approach had to be flexible

FA3MM2: It was not so tough but it was easier to implement in the South where the Head office is, due to proximity.

Categories	
Implementation in the North was more difficult	1
Implementation became tougher, the farther you go	2
Implementation was easier in the South	1
Implementation easier, where MNC HQ is based	1
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	1
Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	1

Q7. What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?

FA3MM1: Senior management will be able to explain better but where the legal framework, *regulatory authority is not strong doing business cannot be easy* (legal framework, regulatory authority should be stronger) (understanding the peculiarities of the market)

FA3MM2: The weak institutional structure impacts business negatively, as such alliance agreements can be tough. (legal framework, regulatory authority should be stronger) and it makes investors wary of approaching the market (understanding the peculiarities)

Categories	
Strong legal framework and regulatory authority is required for business to thrive	2
Understanding the peculiarities of the market	2
Weak institutional structure impacts business negatively	1
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Middle Management Interview First Order Category Data Analysis

The DFM alliance is coded as LA3 and the Middle management staff from OLAM are coded as LA3MM1, LA3MM2 and LA3MM3 respectively.

Section 1: Type of Strategic Alliances Done

Q1. What was your role in the implementation of the alliance? What location?

LA3MM1: As the Finance Manager, my team and I assisted in establishing profitability ratios which measure of the operational efficiency of a company. We ensured financial records are made tidy. All assets were verified and the NBV ascertained and confirmed. So also, the entire stocks, stock in trade, raw materials, and spares. The most outstanding factors affecting alliance success are shown to be a good relationship with the partner, mutual trust, a minimum commitment between the parties, and clear objectives and strategy. As an employee and Finance manager, it is my duty to ensure good relationship with all parties concerned in the alliance and help as much as possible make the objectives of the alliance crystal clear to the new colleagues. Ours between Crown Flour Mill and Dangote Flour Mill Plc., is not an alliance rather an outright acquisition. Both parties must be sure of what value is being bought and sold. As an Accounts and Finance person I help in establishing finance metrics which is used in assessing a firm's performance, in establishing and monitoring specific and measurable financial strategic goals on a coordinated, integrated basis, thus enabling the firm to operate efficiently and effectively. The efficient management of current assets (cash, receivables, inventory) and current liabilities (payables, accruals) turnovers is core responsibility of finance professional. (was fully involved) (participated at operational level) (participated in Finance)

LA3MM2: I am a salesperson in Ilorin, Kwara State. My role was to manage relationships with customers and vendors with regards to the new development i.e. the strategic partnership. I was involved in the alignment of products because the companies have overlapping products. Some of the existing Dangote customers are so loyal to the brand especially in the Northern part of Nigeria, hence there was a need to sensitise the customers that the quality of the products will remain the same and that they will be able to reach more people because there will be no competition again between Dangote Flour and Crown Flour. (Participated at operational level) (participated in sales and distribution level)

LA3MM3: I support the Commercial Finance Manager. I handled the internal credit system for the Key Distributors. I also carry out the verification and destruction of damaged/expired products at Distributor warehouse as well as carry out profitability studies by SKU, brand, Customer and region on monthly basis. (Was fully involved) (participated in Finance)

Categories	
Finance Manager	2
Sales and distribution manager in North	1
Manage relationships with customers and vendors	1
Ensure alignment of products	1
Establish finance metrics for assessing performance, monitoring specific and measurable financial strategic goals	1
Assess internal credit system for Key Distributors and Product verification	1
Participated at operational level	3
Was fully involved	3

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was in your region? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

LA3MM1: I consider the FA3 takeover of LA3 successful (alliance was successful). There has been increased production capacity/volume at a reduced cost as well as increased market share (market depth) (cost optimisation). The reason being:

1. Availability of exceptionally experience manpower in milling business, (experience manpower)

2. Goodwill gained over the years by LA3 has helped in no small way the acceptability of FA3 Products. (goodwill) (local experience helped)

3. FA3 has a core competence in wheat sourcing at a very competitive cost. (core competence in wheat sourcing) (competitive cost)

4. LA3 have inter-Government advantage, and this rubbed off on FA3 by way of acquisition. (good Regulatory engagement) (local experience helped)

5. LA3 has tremendous Market share of Northern Nigeria and the marriage of the two companies strengthened it the more. (good Market share in Northern Nigeria) (local experience helped)

6. There is opportunity to expand beyond our current capacity

7. There is synergy in System Application Products. (synergy)

LA3MM2: The strategic partnership was successful (alliance was successful) because awareness was created among the Dangote Distributors. (good awareness and communication) *They were informed that the partnership is part of the strategy of expanding capacity, upgrading capabilities, and enhancing product portfolio* (Full use of resources) (growth in market share, growth in revenue). About the takeover and the effect it would have on the road to market. They were also assured that the partnership will result in stronger growth for their businesses (market depth) (growth in market share, growth in revenue).

LA3MM3: The alliance has been a successful one (alliance was successful). We have been able to harmonise internal credits to distributors and we have hit the ground running. (harmonise internal credits) (harmonise internal credits) The two entities have maintained fair accurate records of stocks and credit to distributors, hence, merging and reconciling the books was easy. (harmonise records and accounting process) (harmonise internal credits)

Categories	
Alliance was successful)	3
Increased production capacity and Full use of resources	3
Increased market share	2
Cost optimisation	2
Local experience helped	3
Good Regulatory engagement	1
Good Market share in Northern Nigeria	1
Good awareness and communication	2
Harmonization of records, accounting process and internal credits	1

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

LA3MM1: There was conflict before alliance due to the fact that employees of LA3 were not comfortable with some terms and condition. This led to strike. On the part of the parent's company some terms in the agreement weren't fulfilled by one of the partners. The shareholders were well briefed and no issue from their side and that of government. After alliance there were grey areas that needed clarification within the handbook, appraisal rating, promotion, transfer allowance, annual increment, incentives, gratuities. Human Resources managers of both companies with finance team worked together for harmonisation of the handbook, collectively with the union. Synchronisation of functions, right sizing etc.

LA3MM2: The re-organization of sales activities following the partnership was inevitable. FA3 and LA3 distributors play in the same territories and because of the partnership. This was one of the major conflicts. The territories have to be re-arranged in such a way that the distributors do not encroach on each other's territories. Re-distribution of sales targets also created conflict.

LA3MM3: Cultural differences occurred between the head office and the other region. This is due to religion, strength of union and number of people.

Categories	
Conflict with employees on welfare package	1
Conflict with employees on roles and responsibilities	2
Conflict with Distributor on territory coverage	1
Conflict with employees on re-organization of sales activities	1
Conflict with Distributor on sales targets	2

Cultural differences caused conflict amongst region	1

Q2. What challenges did you face as a region, doing the alliance, and during the implementation of the business alliance?

LA3MM1: Market acceptability, cultural differences, cultural challenges, culture alignment challenges, speculations, mass resignation, prejudices about alliance, brand rejection, fear of monopoly. The sales dropped at a time. The Northerners where the region is located were emotionally attached to the brand of Dangote. Staff has prejudice about the alliance, hence mass resignation alignment challenges.

LA3MM2: The alliance meant that territories covered by Sales Personnel now overlap. There is a challenge of streamlining coverage areas for the sales team and some of them have to be moved to another region, but some sales staff have to resign because of this. process alignment challenges.

LA3MM3: South-south region more volatile in nature and character with variety of competitive products, southwest more liberal and southeast is business friendly. This varied from region to region alignment challenges.

Categories	
Market acceptability of new products	1
Cultural differences and alignment	1
Employee apprehension led to resignation	1
Alliance led to drop in sales initially	1
Emotional attachment to brand and existing product in the North	1
Distributor territory overlap	1
Streamlining coverage areas for the sales team	1
Process alignment challenges	1
Alignment challenges	1

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance? State some.

LA3MM1: Yes, we had changes in practice such as synchronisation of customer's account, Emergence of Regional Sales manager, Product segmentation, Collapsing of structure into Business to Business, Creating of independent supply chain with structures of inbound and outbound logistics, Creating of an established wheat department alliance changed MNC practice, Pasta became the largest contribution to growth, Family oriented versus friendship with partnership. (The old is seen as more of family business to the northerners). There was a little bit of resistance embarrassing the new alliance because of the feeling that some customers interest.

LA3MM2: There were changes because the operating procedures have to be aligned given that the Sales Team from the two companies operate different procedures e.g. realignment of territories. alliance changed MNC practice.

LA3MM3: Not so many changes. Distributor targets were changed, and the internal credits were also aligned with the new territories assigned. alliance changed MNC practice.

Categories	
Alliance changed MNC practice	3
Synchronization of customer's account	1
Consolidation and collapse of business structure	1
Change of Distributor targets and internal credits	1
Alignment of operating process and procedures	1
Adjustment and alignment of supply chain and distribution	1

Q2. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns in your region as a result of the business alliance?

LA3MM1: I think it took a while longer than planned.

LA3MM2: It was a bit longer than expected.

CA1MM3: About 18 months, it was longer than the plan.

Categories	
Took over 18 months	1
Took a long time than envisaged	3

Q3. What are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenge?

LA3MM1: Staf problems- compensation, changes in staff composition of some departments.

LA3MM2: Some Staff were laid off. This caused a lot of issues.

LA3MM3: Majorly staff issues and lack of sufficient communication of plans.

Categories	
Employee engagement challenges	3
Employee disengagement and realignment	2
Insufficient communication of plans	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How did the differences in culture, norms and practises affect implementation in the regions?

LA3MM1: The difference in cultures affected, Perception on product and its quality, The product packaging (Old owner versus new owner mentality), Credit limit in the new alliance versus credit limit in the old way. (The credit limit was high before the alliance). Culture affects the season of product. Customer procurement was based on relationships. (culture alignment challenges)

LA3MM2: Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups in about 6 regions as such culture affected the implementation of the alliance. Majorly, the Northern distributors were much committed to the LA3 Flour Brand and getting them to drive the Crown Flour Brand was challenging. (Emotional attachment to local brand)

CA1MM3: We only dealt with the Distributors and cannot confirm if there was any effect of norms and culture on the implementation of the alliance.

Categories	
Difference in cultures affected, Perception on product and its quality	3
Culture impacted product packaging	2
Culture affected the seasonal demand for the product	1
Customer procurement was based on relationship	1
Emotional attachment to local brand	1

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

LA3MM1: Yes, a bit of difficulty that required change in policies, mindset and personnel. (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later)

LA3MM2: Same as mentioned earlier, culture made implementation across region a bit technical and difficult (culture challenges)

CA1MM3: Not so difficult because each of the companies maintained the data of their KDs correctly. (Slight difficulty) (local experience helped)

Categories	
Regional implementation difficulty that required change in policies, mindset and personnel business to thrive	1
Culture made implementation across region a bit technical and difficult	1

Local experience helped in regional implementation	1
Initial difficulty in implementing across the different regions	1

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant compared to Head Office and how did the differences impact the alliance?

LA3MM1: Cultural differences occurred between the head office and the other region. This is due to religion, strength of union and number of people. (unionisation led to customisation and flexibility in approach)

LA3MM2: Yes, differences among regions were much more significant compared to Head Office. The regions have more ethnic groups and varying cultures. (ethnic groups and varying cultures led to customisation and flexibility in approach)

LA3MM3: Not so difficult because each of the companies maintained the data of their KDs correctly. (easier where MNC HQ is based)

Categories	
Cultural differences occurred between the head office and the other region	2
Religious belief cause differences in the various regions compared to Head Office	2
The regions have more ethnic groups and varying cultures thus differences	1
unionisation led to customisation and flexibility in approach	1
Differences among regions were much more significant compared to Head Office	1
Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	2

Q4. Did they have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for your parts of the country?

LA3MM1: South-south region more volatile in nature and character, southwest more liberal and southeast is business friendly. This affected from region to region. New talents infused, Core marketing of advertising, and engaging role models (celebrities) to penetrate markets, Customer's forum developed, more Interaction with customers, Community social responsibility increases, Support for local farmers, Creating a vibrant corporate affair department with a local heading the department. Engaging locals and involvements of traditional rulers within locals. (modified approach to suit local environment) (approach to business differs) (sales and marketing approach differ) (customer engagement model was customised to suit regional attributes) (community engagement approach was adopted) (recruitment of local personnel based in the region)

LA3MM2: New market penetration strategy was applied in the regions. This is because even though the two brands already had presence in the region prior to the alliance, some new products and brand names were introduced. (prior experience in alliance in the region helped) (modified approach to suit local environment) (approach to business differs) (sales and marketing approach differ) (customer engagement model was customised to suit regional attributes) (specific penetration strategy for different regions)

LA3MM3: We worked with the existing distributors who are already in the regions and customised our approach especially for new products. (prior experience in alliance in the region helped) (modified approach to suit local environment) (approach to business differs) (sales and marketing approach differ) (customer engagement model was customised to suit regional attributes) (specific penetration strategy for different regions)

Categories	
Specific region penetration strategy was developed for different region	2
Different marketing strategy for each region	1
Customer engagement model was customised to suit regional attributes	1
Modified approach to suit local environment	2
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2
Engaging locals and involvements of traditional rulers within locals	1
Recruitment of local staff from the regions	1
Prior experience in alliance in the region helped	2

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in your region?

LA3MM1: Local Customs had little impact, southwest more liberal and southeast is business friendly and we saw the impact on the Financial performance indices for the region. (Modified approach to suit local environment)

LA3MM2: The alliance was not so impacted by the local custom in my region as the existing market knowledge helped. (prior local experience in the region helped)

LA3MM3: The credit system for KDs were adjusted and the criteria impacted the Family/social culture of KD financing in some regions. (Modified approach to suit local environment) (modified approach to impacted sales in some peculiar regions)

Categories	
Alliance was not so impacted by the local custom	2
Credit system for KDs were adjusted	2
Alliance impacted the Family/social culture of KD financing in some regions.	1
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Prior local experience in the region helped	2

<table>
<tr><th></th><th></th><th></th><th>Foreign Partner</th><th>Local Partner</th><th>Combined Categories</th></tr>
<tr><td>Q1</td><td colspan="5">Set 1: Type of Strategic alliances done</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>A</td><td>Your organization must have done a number of alliances (What is the legal form of the strategic alliance), please discuss some briefly.</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>numerous alliances in many countries</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>numerous alliances in Nigeria</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>numerous alliances in different sectors</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Bi</td><td>Why did your organization decide to do the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Alliance for leadership</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>grow revenue</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Increase market depth</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>business expansion</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Expand production capacity</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>increase market share</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Bii</td><td>What were the considerations? Who initiated the alliance discussion?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Seller wanted to divest</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Willingness to cooperate</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Need for larger market share</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Need for expansion of production capacity</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>consolidation of business line</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Need for growth</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>business expansion</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Biii</td><td>What was your role in the decision making to do the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>part of the core operational team</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Finance</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Operations department</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td></td><td><u>Biv</u></td><td><u>What was your role in the implementation of each alliance?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>participated at operational level</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>was fully involved</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Operations-Productions</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Finance Manager</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Sales and distribution manager in North</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Manage relationships with customers and vendors</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Ensure alignment of products</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Establish finance metrics for assessing performance, monitoring specific and measurable financial strategic goals</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Assess internal credit system for Key Distributors and Product verification</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Participated at operational level</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Was fully involved</td><td>3</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Q2</u></td><td></td><td><u>Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>alliance was successful</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>exceeded expectation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Increased market share</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Increased sales volume</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>efficiency in operations and productions</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>staff are now integrated</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>alliance grew to an acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>alliance was successful</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>increased production capacity and Full use of resources</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>increased market share</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>cost optimisation</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>local experience helped</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>good Regulatory engagement</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>good Market share in Northern Nigeria</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>good awareness and communication</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Harmonization of records, accounting process and internal credits</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Q3</u></td><td></td><td><u>For which time period was the strategic alliance designed to envisage? How long was it successful for or how long did it fail for? Is the alliance still on going? What is responsible for it being ongoing/or stopped?</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>12 months was planned but took about 2years</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance grew to an acquisition</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval and due diligence were prolonged</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6"><u>Section 2: Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase</u></td></tr>
<tr><td><u>1</u></td><td></td><td><u>Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or</u></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>informal conflict</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>informal conflict with employees</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Staff realignment led to strike</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Conflict led to increased communications and negotiation</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Conflict with employees on welfare package</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Conflict with employees on roles and responsibilities</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Conflict with Distributor on territory coverage</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><u>after implementation?</u></td>
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<td><table>
<tr><td>Conflict with employees on re-organization of sales activities</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Conflict with Distributor on sales targets</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Cultural differences caused conflict amongst region</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td><u>2</u></td>
<td></td>
<td><u>What were the specific roles of each alliance partner? Why were these roles assigned to the partner?</u></td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>MNC adopted strategic roles</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Role assigned due to international experience</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Role assigned because alliance became acquisition</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>dominant party emerged</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td><u>3</u></td>
<td></td>
<td><u>Who was responsible for alliance success? Why?</u></td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>joint success effort</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>More success effort from dominant party</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>More success effort from MNC due to full acquisition plan</td><td>2</td></tr>
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<td><u>4</u></td>
<td></td>
<td><u>How did they structure the various responsibilities and roles of each partner? Introduction of structures or formal roles, clear guidelines about the task that each partner must perform, the specific responsibility for each task, feedback mechanism etc.</u></td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>structured alliance format and template</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>customised established template</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>well defined ways of working</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>structured role agreement</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Previous alliance experience helped</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<td>What challenges did you face as a region, doing the alliance, and during the implementation of the business alliance?</td>
<td></td>
<td><table>
<tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Market acceptability of new products</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>cultural differences and alignment</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Employee apprehension led to resignation</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Alliance led to drop in sales initially</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Emotional attachment to brand and existing product in the North</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Distributor territory overlap</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>streamlining coverage areas for the sales team</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>process alignment challenges</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>alignment challenges</td><td>1</td></tr>
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<tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>What challenges did you face as a company while doing the alliance, and after the initial phase of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Low communication</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Process and Production integration challenges</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Employee integration</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>alignment and integration challenges</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Regulatory approval challenges</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><td colspan="6">Section 3: General Questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>Based on your prior alliance experience, would you say a business alliance is better done with an existing local partner or an MNC? MNC from emerging market or developed market, which would you prefer?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Alliance with Local partnership is better</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>experienced local alliance partner essential</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Local alliance partnership gives faster start</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Local alliance partnership helps with good knowledge of local market</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>Who is more responsible for the strategic alliance implementation and formation? The MNC or your company?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>MNC was more responsible for implementation</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>MNC was more responsible for implementation due to full acquisition</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Changes in process</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in risk management and reporting</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in marketing and distribution strategy</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in accounting policies and auditors</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Changes in production process</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alignment of human resource policies</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>alliance changed MNC practice</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Synchronization of customer's account</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Consolidation and collapse of business structure</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Change of Distributor targets and internal credits</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alignment of operating process and procedures</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Adjustment and alignment of supply chain and distribution</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns as a result of the business alliance?</td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Within 2years, alliance improved performance and profitability</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>quick improvement in production volume</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance led to improved MNC efficiency</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Quick improvement in MNC performance</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Took over 18months</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>took a long time than envisaged</td><td>3</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td>what are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenges?</td><td></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Employee engagement challenges</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Employee disengagement and realignment</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Insufficient communication of plans</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6"><u>Section 4: Regions and Multi-tribe</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td></td><td>How were you able to implement such a business alliance with an MNC, especially with such international distance i.e., differences in culture, norms and practice.</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Flexibility in alliance approach</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Local knowledge and experience of the local market helped</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>How did the differences in culture, norms and practise affect implementation in the regions?</td><td></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Difference in cultures affected, Perception on product and its quality</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Culture impacted product packaging</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Culture affected the seasonal demand for the product</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Customer procurement was based on relationship</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Emotional attachment to local brand</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td></td><td>Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Different approach to implementing across the different regions</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>alignment challenges</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Leadership direction is key</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Difficult initially, coped with challenges better later</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Regional implementation difficulty that required change in policies, mindset and personnel business to thrive</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>culture made implementation across region a bit technical and difficult</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Local experience helped in regional implementation</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Initial difficulty in implementing across the different regions</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td>Were the differences in the various regions significant and how did the differences impact the alliance?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Significant differences in the region</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Culture alignment challenges</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Process alignment challenges</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Leadership direction key</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Differences slowed down implementation initially</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Cultural differences occurred between the head office and the other region</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Religious belief cause differences in the various regions compared to Head Office</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
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<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td><table><tr><td>Coped with challenges better later</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>The regions have more ethnic groups and varying cultures thus differences</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>unionisation led to customisation and flexibility in approach</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Differences among regions were much more significant compared to Head Office</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>Did you have to develop specific region penetration strategies? What are the peculiar ones for the respective parts of the country?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>different penetration strategy for different regions</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>specific penetration strategy for marketing and distribution in the North</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>specific region penetration strategy was developed for different region</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Different marketing strategy for each region</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Customer engagement model was customised to suit regional attributes</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of sales and marketing approach</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Engaging locals and involvements of traditional rulers within locals</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Recruitment of local staff from the regions</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>prior experience in alliance in the region helped</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td></td><td>How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in each region? Did the prior knowledge of the local environment help to reduce the political risks of implementing the alliance and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts?</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>prior experience in alliance in developing countries</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>local experience/Partnership helped</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>political risk reduced because of previous experience</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>4</td></tr></table></td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Alliance was not so impacted by the local custom</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Credit system for KDs were adjusted</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance impacted the Family/social culture of KD financing in some regions.</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Prior local experience in the region helped</td><td>2</td></tr></table></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td></td><td>Was there any region that was more difficult to operate or implement? Please state and explain which.</td><td><table><tr><td>Categories</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Implementation in the North was more difficult</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Implementation became tougher, the farther you go</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Implementation was easier in the South</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Implementation easier, where MNC HQ is based</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Customisation of sales and marketing approach</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>What is your view on the weak institutional structure in Nigeria and how does this influence strategic alliance and its implementation?</td>
<td>
<table>
<tr><th>Categories</th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td>Strong legal framework and regulatory authority is required for business to thrive</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Understanding the peculiarities of the market</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>weak institutional structure impacts business negatively</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Modified approach to suit local environment</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>Customisation of sales and marketing approach</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table>
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Regional Management Interview First Order Category Data Analysis

DFM alliance is coded as FA and the Regional management staff from OLAM are coded as FA3RM1, FA3RM2 and FA3RM3 respectively.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. What was your role in the implementation of the alliance? What location?

FA3RM1: Depot manager in the North Manager, responsible for operations and sales in the North. It is my duty to ensure good relationship with all parties concerned in the alliance and help as much as possible make the objectives of the alliance crystal clear to the new colleagues in the region. (Was fully involved at the region)

FA3RM2: Depot Finance manager in the South region, covering finance for the region and monitoring specific and measurable financial strategic goals on a coordinated, integrated basis, thus enabling the region to operate efficiently and effectively. (Was fully involved at the region)

FA3RM3: Depot Finance manager in the West region. My role was to coordinate the activities of distributors ensuring that sales goals are attained (Was fully involved at the region)

Categories	
Depot Sales and Operations manager	1
Depot Finance manager	2
Participated at operational level	1
Ensure good relationship with all parties concerned in the alliance	1
Was fully involved at the region	3

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was in your region? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

FA3RM1: The alliance in my region was successful, with increased sales capacity and increased volume at a reduced cost, as well as increased market share. Olam's global core competence in wheat sourcing at a very competitive cost really helped to reduce cost and thus selling price. (alliance was successful) (Market growth) (growth in revenue)

FA3RM2: The alliance in my region was successful, with increased market share. (Alliance was successful) (growth in revenue) (Market growth) Dangote Flour Mills already had good Market share of Northern Nigeria and the alliance improved it more.

FA3RM3: The alliance was very successful in the west region. Crown Flour and Dangote Flour already have established spread in this region making integration easy. (Alliance was successful) (Market growth) alliance was successful, growth in market share, growth in revenue, led to subsequent business alliance, alliance grew to an acquisition.

Categories	
Alliance was successful	1
Increased sales capacity	1

Marketing strategy had to be region specific	1
Modified approach to suit local environment	1
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	1

Section 2.

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

FA3RM1: There was conflict with the employees of Dangote, they were not comfortable with some terms and conditions. This led to strike. On the part of parent company, some terms in the agreement weren't fulfilled by one of the partners. The shareholders were well briefed and had no issue from their side and that of the government. After the alliance there were grey areas that needed clarification within the handbook, appraisal rating, promotion, transfer allowance, annual increment, incentives, gratuities. Human Resources managers of both companies with finance team worked together for harmonisation of the handbook, Collectively with the union. Synchronisation of functions, right sizing etc. (made staff adjustments) (strong informal conflict), (Executive agreement) (Disruptions)

FA3RM2: More of conflict with employees which resulted in the strike action. (Disruptions) (made staff adjustments)

FA3RM3: Cultural differences occurred between the head office and the other region. This is due to religion, strength of union and number of people. (Disruptions) (strong informal conflict) (strong informal conflict), (local practise and preference) (tough change process) (no tough conflict) (Executive agreement) (cooperation) (local taste) (Cultural differences)

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q2. What challenges did you face as a region, doing the alliance, and during the implementation of the business alliance?

FA3RM1: Market acceptability, cultural differences, cultural challenges, speculations, mass resignation, prejudices about alliance, brand rejection, fear of monopoly. The sales dropped at a time. The northerners where the region is located were emotionally attached to the brand of Dangote. Staff has prejudice about the alliance, hence mass resignation (alignment challenges) (leadership direction key) (Cultural differences), prejudices about alliance, drop in sales, emotional attachment to brand, Employee issues (Apprehension)

FA3RM2: Cultural differences occurred between the head office and the other region. This is due to religion, strength of union and number of people. (culture alignment challenges) (leadership direction key) (cultural differences)

FA3RM3: South south region more volatile in nature and character, southwest more liberal and south east is business friendly. This affected from region to region (culture alignment challenges) (cultural differences) prejudices about alliance, drop in sales, emotional attachment to brand, Employee issues, Apprehension, regulatory approval challenges, minority partner acquiring large partner, alignment challenges, international standard preference (change in process)

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance? State some.

FA3RM1: Yes, we had changes in practice such as Synchronisation of customer's account, Emergence of Regional Sales manager, Product segmentation, Collapsing of structure into Business to Business, Creating of independent supply chain with structures of inbound and outbound logistics, Creating of an established wheat department, Pasta became the largest contribution to growth contribution, Family oriented versus friendship with partnership. The old is seen as more of family business to the northerners. There was a little bit of resistance embarrassing the new alliance because of the feeling that some customers were interested. (disruptions) (made adjustments) (significant changes in practise)

FA3RM2: Yes, we had changes in practices such as Product segmentation, Collapsing of structure into Business to Business, Partnership structure with distributors and suppliers. (disruptions) (made adjustments) (Change in business structure)

FA3RM3: Yes, there were a lot of changes both in the sales approach and business models in our region. Even staff changes and reporting line. (disruptions) (Old practice adopted) (some old unique practice adopted) (Change in business structure) (significant changes in practise)

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q2. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns in your region as a result of the business alliance?

FA3RM1: It took about twelve months to quantify returns. This is so because of new product development (took a short time) (alliance improved performance)

FA3RM2: Between 12 to 18 months (took a long time) (alliance improved performance)

FA3RM3: 18 months (took a long time) (alliance improved performance) (quick improvement in MNC performance), (enhanced sales). Efficiency (improved MNC efficiency) and integration set in and profitability increased.

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q3. What are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenge?

FA3RM1: Staff are aware of what was going on but the communication on the fate of some staff was not communicated timely resulting in some staff resigning (delayed communication) (communication not timely)

FA3RM2: Initially there was agitation among staff because they do not know their fate. The agitation was because there was no communication directly to them (poor communications) (delayed communication).

FA3RM3: Communication was initially a challenge especially with low level staff, but this was later overcome as the takeover process became clear. (delayed communications) (human resources challenges) (made staff adjustments) (poor communications).

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4

Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How did the differences in culture, norms and practises affect implementation in the regions?

FA3RM1: The difference in cultures affected, Perception on product and its quality, the product packaging old owner versus new owner mentality, credit limit in the new alliance versus credit limit in the old way (the credit limit was high before the alliance). Culture affects the season of product. Customer procurement was based on relationship. (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later) (emotional attachment) (brand loyalty) (Culture affects the season of product)

FA3RM2: This impacted greatly initially as some of the practices and norms needed to be changed to follow due process and international best practice. (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later)

FA3RM3: In my region, the customs were relatively homogeneous, as such there was not so much (early challenges) (coped with challenges better later) (emotional attachment) (brand loyalty) (Culture affects the season of product)

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

FA3RM1: Yes, a bit of difficulty that required change in policies, mindset, and personnel. (difficulty in alignment)

FA3RM2: Yes, a bit of difficulty that required change in policies, mindset, and (difficulty in alignment)

FA3RM3: Across regions, territories have to be merged or further divided for Key distributors. The personnel had to also be reshuffled to be in tune with the current reality. (difficulty in alignment), (coped with challenges better later).

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant compared to Head Office and how did the differences impact the alliance?

FA3RM1: Cultural differences occurred between the head office and the other region. This is due to religion, strength of union and number of people. (Cultural differences)

FA3RM2: The differences in the various regions were not so significant but there were some differences based on religion, culture and approach to business. (Cultural differences)

FA3RM3: The differences were not so obvious and were easy to manage (slight Cultural differences) (Cultural differences)

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q4. Did they have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for your parts of the country?

FA3RM1: South-south region more volatile in nature and character, southwest more liberal and southeast is business friendly. This affected from region to region. New talents infused, core marketing of advertising, and engaging role models (celebrities) to penetrate markets, customer's forum developed, more Interaction with customers, community social responsibility increases, support for local farmers and creating a vibrant corporate affair department with a local heading the department. Engaging locals and involvements of traditional rulers within locals. (developed new strategy) (new employee recruitment, modified marketing and advert strategy, introduced customer forum, increased CSR, increased community involvement)

FA3RM2: Yes, some specific strategy had to be adopted especially in the North and south south due to religion, way of doing businesses and security concerns. (developed new strategy) (Increased security focus)

FA3RM3: Of course, strategy were redefined for each of the regions to ensure that market share was not lost (developed new strategy), new employee recruitment, modified marketing and advert strategy, introduced customer forum, increased CSR, Increased community involvement, Increased security focus.

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q5. How was the alliance impacted by the local custom/culture in your region?

FA3RM1: Aggressive approach to doing business. (No significant impact) (new employee recruitment, modified marketing and advert strategy, introduced customer forum, increased CSR, Increased community involvement)

FA3RM2: Family approach to doing business in the North. (new employee recruitment, modified marketing and advert strategy, introduced customer forum, increased CSR, Increased community involvement) (mild impact)

FA3RM3: Impact was not so much as culture in each region were almost the same (mild impact) (new employee recruitment, modified marketing and advert strategy, introduced customer forum, increased CSR, Increased community involvement). No significant impact, impacted significantly, change in practise, change in business model, change in engagement.

Categories	
Extensive market research had to be done to determine how consumers operate	2
Customisation of Sales team to suit the area/tribe/language	3
Marketing strategy had to be region specific	2
Modified approach to suit local environment	4
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Regional Management Interview First Order Category Data Analysis

The DFM alliance is coded as CA1 and the regional management staff from DFM are coded as LA3RM1, LA3RM2 and LA3RM3 respectively.

Section 1: Type of Strategic alliances done

Q1. What was your role in the implementation of the alliance? What location?

LA3RM1: I oversaw North region sales for the Dangote Flour. (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

LA3RM2: In the Eastern part of Nigeria, I manage key distributors and provide day-to-day operational support to Store Manager (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

LA31RM3: I was responsible for integration of LA3 and FA3 KDs in Lagos and its surroundings. (was fully involved) (participated at operational level)

Categories	
Sales in the North	1
Manage key distributors and provide support to Store Manager in the East	2
Manage key distributors in the South	1
Participated at operational level	3
Was fully involved	3
Customisation of sales and marketing approach	2

Q2. Can you explain how well (successful or otherwise) the alliance was in your region? Why do you think they failed/succeeded?

LA3RM1: The alliance was successful (alliance was successful)

LA3RM2: It was successful (alliance was successful). The OLAM KDs increased the total numbers of KDs which is good for the market. (Market growth)

Categories	
Alliance was successful	2
Alliance led to increase in Distributors	1
Growth in sales/revenue	1

<u>Section 2.</u>

Success factors in Alliance Operational Phase

Q1. Were there any conflicts (with employees, partners, government, parent company) while the alliance was being implemented i.e. before, during or after implementation?

LA3RM1: No conflict with the KDs. (No Conflict)

LA3RM2: Initially, some KDs were reluctant to take the CrownFlour (Olam) products. They are not sure if their customers will buy the products. (Apprehension) (local preference) (no tough conflict)

Categories	
No Conflict	2
Initial apprehension amongst Distributors	1
Local preference for existing local products	1

Q2. What challenges did you face as a region, doing the alliance, and during the implementation of the business alliance?

LA3RM1: The major challenge is getting the Distributors to accept the FA3 products. (Apprehension), (local preference) (tough change process) (no tough conflict)

LA3RM2: It took a while before we could bring the distributors together and reassign coverage areas. (coped with challenges better later), (local preference) (tough change process)

Categories	
Initial apprehension amongst Distributors	2
Getting Distributors and Consumers to accept the new products	1
Realignment of Distributors and reassignment of coverage areas	1
Coped with challenges better later	2
Tough change process in Sales and distribution	2

Section 3. General questions

Q1. Are there changes in practice as a result of the business alliance? State some.

LA3RM1: There were changes in business practices due to a shift in distributorship from LA3 to FA3. This required the synchronisation of customer accounts and the streamlining of regional accounts to accommodate the new arrangement. (some old unique practice adopted) (shift in distributorship model) (Alliance led to changes in business practices)

LA3RM2: There were clearly noticeable changes in practices (alliance changed MNC practice). Olam brought in some changes in the way we dealt with KDs. (alliance changed MNC practice) (shift in distributorship model)

Categories	
Alliance led to changes in business practices	2
Realignment of Distributors and reassignment of coverage areas	2
Synchronization of customer accounts	1
Some old unique practice adopted	1
Change in distributorship engagement model	2

Q2. After how long were you able to quantify the performance returns in your region as a result of the business alliance?

LA3RM1: Quantifying returns took approximately twelve months due to new product development. (quick improvement in MNC performance)

LA3RM2: Over 6 months into the Alliance, we started observing changes in sales figures (quick improvement in MNC performance) (alliance improved performance) enhanced sales.

Categories	
Increased returns within 12months twelve months	2
Alliance led to quick improvement in performance	2
New product development	1
Enhanced sales within 12months	2

Q3. What are the problems experienced during implementation? Any communication challenges?

LA3RM1: The staff were aware of what was happening, but the communication regarding the fate of some employees was not timely (late communication), leading to the resignation of some staff (made staff adjustments) (human resources challenges)

LA3RM2: While there were staff redeployments, the implementation did not affect most regions (changed career) (made staff adjustments)

Categories	
Untimely communication	1
Human resources challenges	2
Staff realignment and adjustment	2
Staff apprehension	1

Section 4. Regions and Multi-tribe

Q1. How did the differences in culture, norms and practises affect implementation in the regions?

LA3RM1: The regions already existed under the local company, so it didn't really affect implementation. However, acceptance of products was an issue in some region because of local preference for existing products and emotional attachment to the brand. (Culture alignment challenges)

LA3RM2: Norm and practice affected the implementation a bit because the Distributors and Sales team were already used to the existing products and specific way of doing business such as coverage areas, credit facility model etc. (Culture alignment challenges)

Categories	
Acceptance of products was difficult	2
Local preference for existing products	2
Emotional attachment to the brand	2
Specific ways of doing business was altered	2
Distributor engagement model was changed	2

Q2. Was it difficult implementing across the different regions of the Nigerian market?

LA3RM1: Indeed, there were some difficulties that necessitated a change in policies.

LA3RM2: It was initially difficult but with the right tone set and subsequent engagements, the implementation picked up.

Categories	
Difficulty experienced in implementing across different regions	2
Leadership direction set the right tone	1
Increased engagement and communication	1

Q3. Were the differences in the various regions significant compared to Head Office and how did the differences impact the alliance?

LA3RM1: The differences vary from one region to the other, thus we had to modify distribution and marketing approach to suit each region.

LA3RM2: The differences were quite significant for the regions that are far away from Head Office, but the local experience of both organisation helped to adjust implementation style (easier where MNC HQ is based) (existing local experience helped), (implementation strategy more flexible)

Categories	
Differences in the various regions significant compared to Head Office	2
Modify distribution and marketing approach to suit each region	2
Sales strategy in the region differs	2
Implementation strategy more flexible the farther from H/O	1
Existing local experience helped	1
Regional attributes impacted penetration strategy	1

Q4. Did they have to develop a specific region penetration strategy? What are the peculiar ones for your parts of the country?

LA3RM1: Yes, mainly sales and marketing strategy, financial reporting style, distributor credit limit significant change (specific penetration strategy for different regions) (sales and marketing strategy, financial reporting style)

LA3RM2: We had different plans for each region, (specific penetration strategy for different regions)

Categories	
Specific regional penetration strategy were developed	2
Customisation of sales and marketing strategy to suit region	1
Customisation of financial reporting style strategy to suit region	1
Customisation of distributor engagement model to suit region	1