Leadership at the primary school level in post-conflict Rwanda: A study of the historical background, recent developments, and current concerns of school leaders

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Declaration

This thesis is my own work and no part of it has been submitted for a degree at this, or any other university.

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Abstract

Based on the premise that leadership can only be understood within the context in which it is exercised, the study reported in this thesis aimed to develop an understanding of leadership at the primary school level in post-conflict, post-colonial and developing country contexts of Rwanda. It examined the historical background to, and recent developments in relation to, primary school leadership in Rwanda. It also investigated the current concerns faced by primary school leaders and the strategies adopted by them in order to deal with those concerns. Review of the school leadership literature indicated that this literature has been dominated by perspectives generated from Western and conflict-free environments. This being so, there has been a dearth of research and associated literature relating to leadership at the individual school level in post-conflict societies. Similarly, only limited research exists on school level leadership in developing countries. The study reported in this thesis has the potential to address these deficits.

The study was guided by the theoretical underpinnings of interpretivism. It employed qualitative methods of data collection including semi-structured interviews, document analysis and unstructured non-participant observations. Maximum variation sampling and purposive sampling were used for the selection of schools and interview participants. The latter comprised principals, deputy principals and those parents who chaired School General Assembly Committees. Data were analysed using grounded theory methods of data analysis, specifically the use of constant comparison through open coding. The ‘open-coded’ data were then analysed using the ‘analytic induction’ technique.

The outcomes of the study suggest that from 1894 until the genocide of 1994, the churches played a significant role in administering and managing primary schools. Owing to the nationalisation of schools, this role was challenged by the First Republic regime from 1962 until 1973. The study’s outcomes also indicate that primary school leadership did not witness any developments during the emergency reconstruction era (i.e. from 1994 until 1999). Nevertheless, important developments in relation to primary school leadership occurred during the reconstruction development phase (i.e. from 2000 until 2014).
The study’s results pertaining to the current concerns faced by primary school leaders suggest that these leaders encounter problems relating to conflict prevention, teachers’ and school leaders’ professionalism, financial/resourcing constraints, student attrition, and parental disengagement. In addition, the present study has revealed a range of strategies that are pursued by school leaders while dealing with these concerns. Some of the challenges identified can be directly attributed to the legacies of war and genocide which occurred in Rwanda in the early 1990s. However, other concerns are better understood against the context of poverty and a poor domestic economy characterising low income and developing countries, including Rwanda.

These results and the associated key assertions presented in the final chapter are pertinent to the literature and future research on educational leadership. They also have implications for policy and practice. On this, the study’s results are likely to be useful for educational leadership researchers, school leaders, education policy makers, and those in charge of preparing, developing, and implementing professional development programmes for school leaders and teachers in Rwanda, as well as in other post-conflict and developing countries.
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List of Acronyms

DEO: District Education Officer
DFID: Department for International Development
EDPRS: Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
EFA: Education For All
ESSP: Education Sector Strategic Plan
ICT: Information Communication Technology
IMF: International Monetary Fund
MDG: Millenium Development Goals
MINEDUC: Ministry of Education
MRND: Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement
NGO: Non-Government Organisation
NYBE: Nine Year Basic Education
OLPC: One Laptop Per Child
PEER: Programme for Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction
PEI: Province Education Inspector
PRK: People’s Republic of Kampuchea
REB: Rwanda Education Board
RPF: Rwanda Patriotic Front
SAC: School Audit Committee
SAP: Structural Adjustment Programme
SEI: Sector Education Inspector
SEO: Sector Education Officer
SEO: Sector Education Officers
SGAC: School General Assembly Committee
TEP: Teachers’ Emergency Package
UK: United Kingdom
UN: United Nations
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF: United Nations Children’s Fund
UNTAC: United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAET: United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UPE: Universal Primary Education
VVOB: Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand
(Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance)
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

It is generally acknowledged that the contingency theories of leadership that gained prominence during the 1970s and 1980s are still relevant to current leadership practice (Bush, 2008; Simpson, 1999). These theories hold that leadership is context-bound and that “context is the vehicle through which the agency of particular leaders may be empirically understood” (Gronn & Ribbins, 1996, p. 454). Indeed, these contingency leadership theories are particularly important for yielding insights into leadership as it is understood and practised in an extraordinarily challenging context (Bush, 2008) such as a post-conflict society. In the realm of educational leadership, some recent studies have examined the way context influences school leadership (Clarke & Wildy, 2004; Dempster, Carter, Freakley & Parry, 2004). There is also growing evidence that effective school leadership and management are crucial to school effectiveness and student learning (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). However, notwithstanding the importance attributed to school leadership and the work that has investigated the manner in which situational context and factors constrain/influence school leadership, the relationship between context and leadership continues to be severely under-theorised (Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Vroom & Jago, 2007). Therefore, it is important to elucidate this relationship, especially in a post-conflict country like Rwanda where the education system was debilitated in the wake of the civil war and genocide that raged in the country during the 1990s. Rwanda is also a small landlocked, post-colonial, and developing country facing multiple challenges. Mindful of these issues, the study reported in this thesis sought to generate an understanding of the historical background to primary school leadership, the recent
developments in primary school leadership, and of the current concerns of primary school leaders in post-conflict Rwanda.

This introductory chapter first presents the aims of the study. Secondly, the justification of the research focus is provided. Thirdly, a brief outline of the context of the study is presented. Following this, the literature relating to the study is reviewed. An overview of the research methodology is then provided. Finally, the structure of the thesis is presented. The context of the study, the literature, and research methodology are dealt with in a general way in this chapter, but they are discussed in greater depth in later chapters.

**Aims of the Study**

The study reported in this thesis sought to understand leadership at the primary school level in post-conflict Rwanda. It had three aims. The first aim was to generate an understanding of the historical background to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda from colonial times until the genocide of 1994. This was deemed important not only because such history is interesting in its own right, but also because contemporary issues are easily understood and interpreted when the past is taken into consideration (Aldrich, 1996). Analogously, one cannot understand current school leadership issues and practices in Rwanda without a clear understanding of how education in the nation has evolved over the years. A description and analysis of laws, or policies that governed the way primary schools were led and managed in Rwanda from colonial times until the genocide of 1994 were undertaken to fulfil this aim.

Secondly, the study sought to generate an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda from 1994 until 2014. The year 1994 marked the end of the four year civil war, which culminated in genocide throughout the country. The rationale behind the pursuit of such an aim arose out of the recognition that it is informative to know what the Rwandan
government did to resuscitate and develop education and, in particular, to shape primary school leadership after the 1994 genocide. Again, a description and analysis of changes, policies, and/or activities that have shaped primary school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda were undertaken to achieve this aim.

The third aim of the study was to generate an understanding of the issues which are of current concern to primary school leaders in Rwanda and of the strategies adopted by them in order to deal with those issues. The justification for pursuing this aim was that primary school leaders’ concerns play an important role in guiding their actions, and any attempt to improve primary school leaders’ leadership would fail if these concerns were to be overlooked.

**Justification for the Study**

Focusing the study on primary school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda was deemed important and relevant for academic and practical reasons. First, the quality of school leadership is critical to achieving the all-round development of children and universal compulsory primary education. Achieving universal primary education in Rwanda requires, among other factors, that primary schools throughout the country are effectively led. This requirement is amplified by the significance of school leadership. Indeed, the role of ‘quality’ school leadership in promoting students’ learning and organisational/school success is clear in the educational leadership research (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008; Marks & Printy, 2003; Watson, 2009). In addition, primary schools need good leadership in order to reap the benefits of a quality primary school education. These benefits include, for example, laying a solid foundation for the all-round development of children, and promoting the alleviation of poverty and economic development (Hannum & Buchmann, 2005). Psacharopoulos (1985) referred to these benefits nearly 40 years ago when he pointed out that primary education is the most
profitable educational investment opportunity in developing countries. Moreover, the all-round development of children can lead to the promotion of peace and tolerance that are highly needed in a post-conflict society like Rwanda. As Paulson (2011b) has pointed out, education in post-conflict settings is crucial to reconciliation and peace-building. The importance of education in post-conflict societies is also highlighted by the World Bank (2005) as follows:

Educational programming in post-conflict societies cannot be business as usual. Education has a critical role to play in the wider reconstruction of the society, from building peace and social cohesion to facilitating economic recovery and getting the country onto an accelerated development track. (p. 27)

Primary school leadership warrants, therefore, special consideration given that primary education in Rwanda is compulsory and because school leadership has a high potential to determine school outcomes.

Secondly, the justification for studying school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda relates to Clarke and O’Donoghue’s (2013) recent call for more research into school level leadership in post-conflict-societies. They (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013) point out that very little empirical research has been undertaken on the status of school leadership in post-conflict settings. This observation suggests that there are not enough examples of school leadership in post-conflict societies that can be used to develop theoretical models for informing leadership development in those complex situations.

The study reported in this thesis provides one contribution to filling the gap. It can contribute to the body of knowledge on school leadership more broadly in post-conflict societies. This is not to say that this study can claim generalisability as in the case of research conducted within the positivist paradigm. Rather, it can lead to “reader or user generalisability” (Burns, 1994, p. 327). That is, readers can relate to the study in order to understand their own and others’ situations.
The third justification, perhaps a corollary of the second, relates to the relationship between context and leadership. The lack of attention devoted to school leadership in post-conflict situations is partly attributable to the neglect by scholars of the importance of considering context and its influence on leadership practices. Indeed, the role of contextual influences in informing leadership practice has seldom been taken into account. As Vroom and Jago (2007, p. 22) have argued, “the field of leadership has identified more closely with the field of individual differences and has largely ignored the way the behaviour of leaders is influenced by the situations they encounter”. Gronn and Ribbins (1996) have made a similar point by calling for further research aimed at elucidating the relationship between school leadership and cultural, situational, and historical contexts. The consideration of context in leadership has the benefit of generating local knowledge on leadership instead of continuing to rely on Western knowledge and principles of leadership, which may not be applicable to all contexts (Miller, 1985).

Fourthly, the study can not only contribute to local knowledge about school leadership, but also can contribute to understanding school leadership in developing countries. Rwanda is not only a post-conflict country, but is also a developing country. On this, the study can be seen as a response to Oplatka’s (2004, p. 428) call for empirical exploration of school leadership in developing countries when he noted that “educational reforms and policies draw almost exclusively on perspectives of educational leadership taken from Western literature and practice, thereby giving an impression that Western models of principalship are universal”. Oplatka (2004) went on to comment that cultural context and politics may affect school leadership and management in developing countries. Hence, any research aimed at deepening our understanding of how cultural context and politics inform leadership theory and practice in developing countries is of paramount importance.
In addition to the above academic reasons, there were practical reasons that justified the focus of the research reported here. In this connection, the study can help to provide insights to guide and refine educational leadership practices in Rwanda and elsewhere. This suggestion aligns with Harber and Dadey’s (1993) point expressed over twenty years ago when they argued that it is desirable to understand the issues and problems faced by school leaders operating in different contexts in order to design leadership development programmes to meet their real, rather than imagined, needs.

For the Rwandan context in particular, the study reported in this thesis has the potential to contribute substantially to knowledge in the field of educational leadership in the following ways:

- It can provide a broad historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda;
- It can develop an understanding of the nature of the context within which school leaders work in post-conflict Rwanda and the strategies they use for dealing with the complexities of their work;
- It can inform the processes of preparation, development and support of school leaders in Rwanda;
- It can provide a valuable framework for researchers wishing to engage in related studies applying to other levels within the Rwandan education system and suggest developments for the future.
Overview of the Context of the Study

Rwanda is one of the smallest countries in Africa with 26,338 square km of land, yet it has a population estimated at 10,718,378 (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2012). Ninety percent of this population live in rural areas where they practise subsistence agriculture on a small, often fragmented, parcel of land (Nyirazinyoye, 2011). The Rwandan community is made up of three ethnic groups, “Hutu”, “Tutsi” and “Twa”, who have a common culture and language, Kinyarwanda. There have been political and economic divisions between these groups, shaping the Rwandan educational and political history (Gourevitch, 1998; Prunier, 1995). These divisions played a critical role in fuelling ethnic conflict that led eventually to the 1994 genocide, in which almost one million people, mostly Tutsis and some moderate Hutus, lost their lives (Moghalu, 2005). The country was also colonised by two European countries, namely Germany from 1894 until 1916 and Belgium from 1916 up until 1962 (Gourevitch, 1998; Prunier, 1995). As a result of this brief history, and in accordance with the justification of the study’s aims already mentioned, the study reported in this thesis was located in the broad context of colonialism and education, post-colonialism and education, old wars and new wars, education during violent conflict, and education in post-new war societies.

The legacies of colonialism and post-colonialism have had a major impact on the education systems of post-colonial countries (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Nguyen, Elliott, Terlouw & Pilot, 2009; Rizvi, Lingard & Lavia, 2006; Tikly, 2001). Similarly, the legacies of war and conflict have determined the status quo of education in post-conflict societies (Machel, 2001; Sinclair, 2002; World Bank 2005). These legacies and their influence on education are now briefly discussed.

In the colonial era, education policies and practices were shaped and influenced by the colonisers. Colonial influence in education seems to have been manifested in four
ways. The first colonial influence was manifested in the separation of school and society in colonised countries (Altbach, 1971; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Rizvi et al., 2006). This was reflected, for example, in the teaching of languages and values that did not reflect indigenous cultures in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Fletcher, 1936; Rizvi et al., 2006). The second colonial influence in education was manifested in the organisation of schools. There were two different school systems in the colonies: a metropolitan school system serving the children of colonisers and some local elites, and another system catering for the indigenous community (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Rizvi et al., 2006). Moreover, colonial education focused mainly on elementary or primary schooling as there were no secondary schools or universities in many African colonies prior to the 1930s (Altbach & Kelly, 1978). The third way in which colonial influence was manifested, at least in the French colonies, was by means of the radical centralisation of education under colonial control, a practice which was not so evident in British colonies (Altbach & Kelly, 1978). The fourth manifestation of colonial influence in education was the determination of curriculum content in line with the colonisers’ needs and beliefs (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Fletcher, 1936; Subedi & Daza, 2008).

Hence, in the post-colonial period, a post-colonial legacy has meant that many developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have not been able to pursue their own educational agendas. For example, the curriculum and textbooks have reflected the orientations of former colonisers, or of advanced countries which provide aid to the developing country. Furthermore, the domination of developing countries by Western powers is reflected in the use of the language of instruction of the former coloniser, the organisational structures of schools which reflect Western models, the imposition of Western education, the supply of educational materials, and in Western
involvement in curriculum development (Altbatch, 1971; Rizvi et al., 2006; Subedi & Daza, 2008).

The legacies of war and conflict have also had an impact on education systems in post-new war societies. New wars contrast with old wars. Old wars are wars that took place between states in Europe from the late 18th until the middle of the 20th century (Kaldor, 2005). These wars, Kaldor (2005) holds, were state-building. In old wars, states protected their own people to obtain legitimacy. Also, in old wars, the distinction between combatants and non-combatants was, at least in theory, prioritised to minimise civilian casualties (Kaldor, 2005). New wars, on the other hand, refer to wars that take place in the context of the collapse of authoritarian states under the impact of globalisation (Kaldor, 2005). These wars emerged after 1945 (Kaldor, 2005) and increased in number at the end of the Cold War (Kagawa, 2005; Sinclair 2002). In addition, new wars result in significant civilian causalities and sometimes ethnic cleansing as they are fought without complying with the Geneva and Hague Conventions (Kaldor, 2005). The four year civil war which ended with the 1994 genocide in Rwanda qualifies as a new war since it resulted in the collapse of the then authoritarian regime and depended heavily on global forces, which supported financially and militarily the warring factions (Melvern, 2000).

This brings one to consider education in post-new war societies. As the overwhelming majority of new wars are fought within countries, education systems in those countries become debilitated and face a number of challenges. In general, these comprise the lack of domestic revenue to run pre-crisis educational programmes, the destruction of educational infrastructure and buildings, the lack of qualified teachers, poor record keeping, corruption, lack of transparency in educational institutions, poor coordination and planning, and a substantial number of war-affected children and youth (Buckland, 2006). There are also challenges that seem to be specific to post-conflict
societies, especially when ethnic identity or religion were integral to the initial war. These challenges may relate, for example, to curriculum reform, the high politicisation of education, and the teaching of history. Such problems have tended to characterise education systems in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kreso, 2008; Torsti, 2009; Weinstein, Freedman & Hughson, 2007; World Bank, 2005) and Timor-Leste (Boughton, 2011; World Bank, 2005). Another country that has faced post-conflict education reconstruction challenges is Cambodia. In this country, the reconstruction of education was extraordinarily challenging because large numbers of educated individuals had been either killed or exiled during the four years of the Khmer Rouge regime (Clayton, 1998; Sovachana, 2012). In addition, a good number of teachers and students had been eliminated simply because it was deemed that they were the products of ‘feudal-capitalist’ institutions and could inconvenience the Khmer Rouge’s socialist agenda (Clayton, 1998; Sovachana, 2012).

Education in (post-) conflict situations has recently been given priority by scholars and international organisations. The discourse of emergency education entered the academic community and policy circles in the 1990s (Kagawa, 2005). It has been since then that the international community started to recognise education as the ‘fourth pillar’ of humanitarian aid in emergency situations, alongside water and food, shelter and health care (Machel, 2001; Sommers, 2002; Sinclair, 2002, 2007). The focus of the emergency education discourse has been on the negative impacts of conflict on children’s education and on their overall protection in situations of crisis (Kagawa, 2005; Machel, 2001; Sommers, 2002; Sinclair, 2002). More recently, however, there has been a shift away from the focus on ‘emergency education and humanitarian responses’ to the potential of education for preventing the reoccurrence of war and the role of education in fostering reconciliation and building sustainable peace in post-conflict settings (McGlynn, Zembylas, Bekerman & Gallagher, 2009; Paulson, 2011b).
The necessity of education after conflict is reflected in the intervention by UN agencies, the World Bank, NGOs, and post-conflict governments aimed at reconstructing education (Johnson & van Kalmthout, 2006; Sinclair, 2002; World Bank, 2005). On this, post-conflict educational intervention has targeted four broad areas. These areas include physical, curricular, ideological, and psychological reconstructions (Weinstein, Freedman & Hughson, 2007). The latter two areas are the most problematic and thus necessitate a much more thoughtful and careful intervention, than does the physical reconstruction process (Weinstein et al., 2007). The combination of these post-conflict education reconstruction processes are expected to build a ‘conflict-sensitive’ education system by promoting policies and practices that prevent conflict (Smith, 2005).

Notwithstanding the intervention by governments and the international community, some scholars argue that the voices of those affected by conflict at the local community level are seldom apparent in the reconstruction of education (Weinstein et al., 2007). As a result, educational change initiated by government officials and international aid agencies in post-conflict countries have often lacked sensitivity to the local school context. On this, Weinstein, et al. (2007, p. 42) argue that “educational change after mass violence suffers from untested assumptions, a dearth of focused research, [and] a gap between broad concepts and practice in the field”. These circumstances suggest that education in post-new war societies tends to be mainly informed by theoretical assumptions rather than by practices based on rigorous research evidence. This observation is especially pertinent to educational leadership in post-conflict settings.
Overview of the Literature

As previously mentioned, this overview of the pertinent literature is examined more deeply in Chapter Three of this thesis. Here, however, it is important to acknowledge that, although the importance of considering context in leadership is known, there is a paucity of research and associated literature relating to leadership at the individual school level in post-conflict societies. There is also limited research on school level leadership in developing countries (Oplatka, 2004; Otunga, Serem & Kindiki, 2008). The dearth of school leadership research undertaken in these societies is understandable, perhaps, since, over the past 20 years, most of research in educational leadership has been conducted in Western, developed, and highly and/or relatively stable societies (Oplatka, 2004; Otunga et al., 2008). Such research has provided insights into school culture and change management (Fullan, 2001; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992), the impact of school leadership on student achievement (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004), and the extremely important role of the principal in the overall running of the school (Huber & West, 2002). A review of the literature on educational leadership in post-conflict settings, however, indicates that very little empirical research has been undertaken at an international level into how school leaders in such complex contexts conceptualise their work (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013).

In developing countries educational leadership research has focused mainly on problems encountered by educational leaders. These problems relate to the amount and quality of education provided in light of the rapidly increasing number of school age children, the economic hardship that characterises most education systems, the scarcity of human and physical resources, the legacies of war and violence, corruption and nepotism, poor health conditions, poverty of families, and the inaccessibility of parents (Bush, 2008, Oplatka, 2004; Otunga et al., 2008). Another set of issues that characterises leadership practice in developing countries comprises school leaders not
being inclined to lead teaching and learning (Oplatka, 2004; Bush, 2008), the prioritising of management over leadership (Botha, 2004; Oplatka, 2004; Litz, 2011), the lack of a risk-taking culture and change leadership skills (Oplatka, 2004), and the predominance of autocratic leadership styles (Litz, 2011; Oplatka, 2004).

These challenges are compounded by the lack of formal leadership and management training for school leaders. Indeed, in most developing countries school leaders are not required to be trained managers (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Bush, 2008; Otunga et al., 2008). Rather, they are appointed based on their teaching experience and/or teaching qualification at the expense of leadership potential and skills (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Oplatka, 2004; Otunga et al., 2008). This situation has been criticised by scholars who argue that principalship requires special preparation given the changing role of school leaders in the twenty first century (Bush, 2008).

While school leadership research in developing countries is limited, it is even more limited in post-conflict countries. In the latter settings, school leadership at the micro-level of the school has been largely ignored as a subject for academic research (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013; Milligan, 2010). In the field of education and conflict, the majority of research has focused more on challenges faced by education systems at the macro-level of the national political context in the aftermath of conflict, than on the micro-level of the individual school context. Nevertheless, despite the scarcity of existing research on school level leadership in post-conflict societies, some of the challenges encountered by school leaders in such settings do seem to be known, although they are not always investigated in a systematic way (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). In post-conflict Sri-Lanka, for example, school leaders have suffered from the absence of effective professional development programmes. They have also been required to provide additional learning support to many students who miss school regularly, to deal with the incapacity of war-affected families to purchase school
materials and uniform for children, to work with old resources, and to support children with psychological problems caused by conflict (Earnest, 2013a).

Furthermore, notwithstanding that challenges affecting school leaders in post-conflict societies are reasonably well documented, there remains a lack of information about the strategies adopted by school leaders to deal with such challenges. This, it is felt, is attributable to a neglect of the role of contextual influences in informing leadership practice (Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Vroom & Jago, 2007). The premise underpinning the study reported in this thesis, therefore, is that leadership is context-bound (Clarke & Wildy, 2004; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996). In other words, context-sensitive leadership is responsive to the unique contextual complexities that characterise schools operating in post-conflict settings (O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010).

Even though the literature specifically connected with school leadership in post-conflict societies is scarce, a relatively abundant body of literature exists on education and violent conflict. Indeed, this is an emerging and pressing area of inquiry (Paulson & Rappleye, 2007; Smith, 2005), which bears various names, such as ‘education and fragility’ and ‘education and insecurity’ (Paulson, 2011a; Mosselson, Wheaton, Frisoli, 2009). Scholars and practitioners in the area have highlighted the role of education in contributing to, and fuelling, violent conflict (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Novelli, 2010; Paulson, 2011a) as well as the importance of quality education for peacebuilding, reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction and development (Buckland, 2006; Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2004; Paulson, 2011a; Paulson, 2011b; World Bank, 2005). At the same time, some scholars argue that research being undertaken in the field lacks rigour (Paulson, 2011a) and is informed by a narrow and technical approach to problem-solving, rather than a critical approach to inquiry (Novelli & Lopez Cardozo, 2008). The deficiency in references to theories of globalisation in education and conflict issues has also been highlighted (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008).
Overview of the Research Plan and Methodology

A number of studies have investigated how education can be restructured and developed to contribute to peace, reconciliation and development in post-conflict societies (Paulson, 2011a; Paulson, 2011b; World Bank, 2005). Most investigations, however, have focused on national education systems more generally and there has been very little research on school level leadership in such societies (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). More specifically, no holistic study has been undertaken on leadership at the primary school level in post-conflict Rwanda, despite some government policies concerning primary education and research that have focused on education more generally in the country. This deficit seems curious given the significance of school leadership and the importance of primary schooling. Thus, it is timely and appropriate to conduct research that promotes “a broad overview of educational problems” (O’Donoghue, 2007, p. 182) in order to inform school leadership policy and practice; a quest that is in accordance with the common view that research aimed at improving practice should provide a broad overview of the phenomenon being investigated (Hargreaves, 1993). Specifically, it is useful to take into account the historical background to the phenomenon of interest as well as the developments that have taken place in relation to that phenomenon in order to understand current issues presented by the phenomenon for the key stakeholders (Aldrich, 1996). The study reported in this thesis was based on the assumption that such inquiry is essential to inform initiatives aimed at improving practice. The latter assumption led to the development of the following interrelated central research questions regarding primary school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda:

- What is the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until the genocide of 1994?
- What developments have taken place in relation to primary school leadership in Rwanda?
since the genocide of 1994?

- What issues are currently of concern to primary school leaders in Rwanda, and how do they deal with them?

An outline of the theoretical framework informing these central research questions is now provided.

**Theoretical framework and the three research questions**

A theoretical framework can be considered as “the philosophical stance lying behind a methodology” (Crotty, 2003, p. 66). It determines a context for the research by portraying the researcher’s understanding of the world. The study reported in this thesis was an investigation into the historical background to, and recent development in, primary school leadership, and into issues of current concern for primary school leaders in post-conflict Rwanda. This necessitated a method of inquiry that enables interpretation of social phenomena (O’Donoghue, 2007). To this end, the interpretivist research paradigm was selected to underpin the study. The term paradigm refers to a set of assumptions about the world, and what constitute proper methods for investigating that world (Punch, 2009).

The study reported in this thesis falls within the interpretivist paradigm because it sought to reveal the meanings people assign to situations and behaviour, and which they use to understand their world (O’Donoghue, 2007). Within the overall paradigm of interpretivism, symbolic interactionism is the specific theoretical position that informed the study. This theoretical approach allowed the researcher to uncover meanings that individuals (school leaders) attach to such ‘things’ as people, institutions, concepts, policies, and how these meanings influence their actions (O’Donoghue, 2007).

The first and second research questions required the interpretation of the historical background to, and developments in, primary school leadership respectively. This was largely achieved by examining documents produced by the Rwandan government or by
scholars over the years. The third research question, which investigated the current concerns of primary school leaders as well as strategies adopted by them to deal with those concerns, was addressed through interviews. In order to address the first, second and third research question, guiding questions were developed. Such guiding questions are not specific questions to be answered. Rather, they are questions that suggest themselves at the commencement of the study as having the highest potential of generating data relevant to the central area of interest (O’Donoghue, 2007). From these guiding questions, an ‘aide memoire’ (Briggs, 2000; Burgess, 1984; McCann & Clark, 2005; Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander, 1990), was developed to initiate ‘conversation’. It was through interaction with the data that further questions emerged (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Some questions developed at the preliminary stages of this study became redundant as the study unfolded.

Grounded theory methods of data analysis, which are consistent with the principles of interpretivism and symbolic interactionism, were utilised in the study (O’Donoghue, 2007). They allowed describing and understanding human behaviour within the social contexts (Chenitz & Swanson, 1986) of the everyday experiences of school leaders. The first stage of grounded theory analysis, open coding, was used to commence data analysis. The ‘open-coded’ data were then analysed using the ‘analytic induction’ technique. The analytic induction technique then led to the formulation of general statements or propositions in relation to the three research questions.
The first research question

The first research question is historical in nature. It was aimed at generating an understanding of the historical background to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda. It was addressed through an analysis of sources comprising a wide range of public and private records and documents. This approach is consistent with Punch’s (2009) suggestion that “documents, both historical and contemporary, are a rich source of data for education and social research” (p. 158).

In dealing with this question, data were collected from primary documents held in the former National University of Rwanda’s library. Secondary documents pertinent to the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda were also examined. The outcome of the analysis of these sources was a comprehensive account of the background to primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994.

The second research question

The second research question was concerned with developing an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership in Rwanda since 1994. This question was addressed through the analysis of a wide range of sources comprising contemporary documents and public records, supplemented by individual interviews. Interview participants consisted of four Education Officers. These included two Sector Education Officers and one District Education Officer in the rural area, and one District Education Officer in the capital city. Education Officers were interviewed because it was considered that they were in the best position to communicate the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership.
The third research question

The third research question relates specifically to school leaders’ concerns encountered in their everyday work. It sought to develop an understanding of the issues that are of current concern to primary school leaders and of the strategies adopted by them to deal with those issues. For the purpose of this exercise, issues are taken as matters affecting, or having an impact on people in their everyday lives; they are matters that interest individuals, or capture their attention, because they are important or affect them.

In addressing the third research question, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with participants. The latter included principals, deputy principals and parents chairing School General Assembly Committees (SGAC). Furthermore, unstructured non-participant observation was also utilised as a means to stimulate further data collection questions during interviews.

The Structure of the Thesis

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the study outlined in the thesis. The structure of the remaining thesis is as follows. Chapter Two provides the broad context of the study, reviewing such aspects as colonialism and education, post-colonialism and education, old wars and new wars, education during violent conflict, and education in post-new war societies. The chapter concludes with a discussion of education in selected post-new war countries. Chapter Three reviews the main streams of literature relating to the study, namely: the literature on school leadership and management theory; the literature on models of educational leadership; the literature discussing challenges affecting school leaders in developing countries; the literature pertaining to leadership preparation, support and development of school leaders in developing countries; the literature concerned with the nature/type of leadership and management of school leaders in developing countries; the literature on the field of education and conflict; the literature concerning issues faced by school leaders in post-new war
societies; and finally the literature on existing studies that have focused on school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda. The chapter concludes by discussing the study’s original contribution to scholarship. Chapter Four outlines the research methodology adopted to facilitate an investigation of the three research questions. Chapter Five, Six and Seven report the outcomes of the study. Chapter Eight summarises the study and discusses the study’s outcomes. It also considers implications of the study for theory, further research, and for policy and practice.
CHAPTER TWO
THE BROAD CONTEXT

Introduction

The case for studying school leadership in post-conflict societies has been made in the previous chapter. In particular, it will be recalled that primary school leadership needs to be as effective as possible in order for primary schools to promote the all-round development of children in such societies. As an integral part of this development, it was mentioned that primary schools need to deliver messages promoting peace and reconciliation in order to build a more democratic and socially cohesive society. Chapter One also justified the decision to focus this thesis on generating theory on the historical background to primary school leadership from colonial times until 1994, the recent developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership, and on the issues which are of concern to primary school leaders in post-conflict Rwanda.

The study of the historical background to, and recent developments in, primary school leadership, as well as the current concerns of primary school leaders in post-conflict Rwanda, sits within a broader context. Internationally, the broad context within which the study is located relates to the notions of colonialism and education, post-colonialism and education, old wars and new wars, education during violent conflict, and education in post-new war societies. There is a strong belief that the past can have an impact on the present and, as a result, needs to be taken into consideration while dealing with contemporary issues (Aldrich, 1996). It is therefore useful to “look through the lens of colonialism to understand key elements of contemporary educational reality (Altbach & Kelly, 1978, p. 7). In line with this argument, educational developments in post-colonial countries have been shaped significantly by the legacies of colonialism. These legacies are also expected to have a major impact on the emerging education systems in the foreseeable future in many post-colonial nations. In a similar vein, the
legacies of war have had, and are likely to continue to have, an impact on primary school leadership in post-new war societies and on education generally. An awareness of this broader context is instructive for understanding the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda, the recent developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership as well as the issues that are of current concern for school leaders.

This chapter now examines a number of related areas in order to contextualise later considerations. First, a review of colonialism and education, and post-colonialism and education in the international perspective is presented. This is followed by an explanation of the distinction between ‘old wars’ and ‘new wars’ for the purpose of understanding the context within which ‘new wars’ take place and indicating why Rwanda qualifies as a post-new war society. A review of the context within which education takes place in violent conflict is then discussed under the aegis of education in emergencies, as a precursor to examining the context within which education takes place in post-conflict societies. The chapter concludes with an overview of education in selected post-conflict countries.

**An International Perspective on Colonialism and Education**

There seems to be no single agreed meaning for the terms colonial, independent, transitional, and neo-colonial society. As a result, there is a need to mention how colonialism is defined in the context of the study being reported in this thesis. In the context of the present research, colonialism is taken to be “a situation in which the coloniser rather than the colonised holds power for purposes the coloniser defines” (Altbach & Kelly, 1978, p. 2). In short, colonised people did not control the political, economic, or social, life of their nations as colonisers decided and shaped the future of the colonised nation. A colonial education system, then, was one in which colonised people did not determine the nature of schooling. That is,
they did not decide the amount and type of education, and who should access it, rather this was decided by foreigners (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Fletcher, 1936).

Three varieties of colonialism have been identified in the literature. These are classical or traditional colonialism, internal colonialism, and neo-colonialism. In traditional colonialism indigenous people were ruled by a distant Western country whose representatives determined key political, economic, and social issues, including the nature of schooling that was to be offered in the colonised country (Wah Lau & Kan, 2011). In internal colonialism, on the other hand, societies were not controlled by a foreign power. Rather, one sub-group of people in a self-governing society ruled another sub-group by controlling the society’s political, economic, and social life and determining the kinds of educational opportunities to be given to the lower social classes. For instance, a ruling powerful ethnic group could decide the amount and type of education for its members and determine another type of education to be offered to other ethnic groups (Altbach & Kelly, 1978).

Alongside the control of education by colonisers, there were other educational manifestations of traditional colonialism worldwide. The first educational manifestation was that of school/society relationship: colonial schools in Africa, Asia, and Latin America had very little connection with the colonised society during the colonial era (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Fletcher, 1936). That is, schools were disconnected from indigenous cultures through the languages and the values they taught (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Fletcher, 1936). The second educational manifestation relates to the organisation of the colonial schools. There existed metropolitan schools that aimed at serving the children of colonisers, and which charged high tuition fees that could not be afforded by colonised Africans and Asians (Altbach & Kelly, 1978). This gave rise to a
dualism that could be reflected in the existence of two distinct school systems in the colonies: a metropolitan school system for the coloniser and another for the colonised (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Ginsburg, 1973). In addition, colonial school systems mainly focused on elementary, or primary education, with the absence of secondary and higher education in most of the African colonies until the 1930s (Altbach & Kelly, 1978). Similarly, pointing to the work of Megarrity (2005), O’Donoghue (2009) notes that by 1960 very few Papua New Guineans were receiving primary education, and secondary and tertiary schooling were relatively rare. Another educational manifestation of colonialism was that of educational centralisation, especially in French colonies. Altbach and Kelly (1978) pointed out that unlike in British colonies, all education was centralised under government control in countries colonised by France, with curriculum development, teacher preparation and certification, students’ examinations, among others, being government functions. This ‘radical’ centralisation did not exist in British colonies. In British colonies, most schools were run by missionaries who sometimes were not English, and schools taught what societies administering them wanted as long as they did not interfere with colonial power (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Wah Lau & Kan, 2011). The last educational manifestation of traditional colonialism, which is mostly related to the first, was the cultural influence that was discernible in the language and curriculum: colonisers devalued indigenous culture by prioritising the teaching of their own language in schools and the content to be taught reflected colonisers’ educational needs (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Fletcher, 1936).

Notwithstanding the manifestations of colonialism, colonised societies reacted differently to the colonial influence. While some societies accepted without resistance the colonisers’ imperial imposition, others did not.
O’Donoghue (2009) provides an illustrative example of the reactions of Papua New Guinea (PNG), Australia and Northern Ireland, countries that used to be part of the British Empire. He points out that in these societies responses to colonial influence in education ranged from “acceptance and tolerance, to modification and rejection, depending on the country, the issue, and the historical period” (p. 787). During the 1950s, Papua New Guineans, for instance, resisted the adaptive education policy for they wanted to receive the same education as that which was prevailing in the colonisers’ country of origin (O’Donoghue, 2009).

Missionaries are credited with having introduced formal education to indigenous communities in Africa and in many parts of the world. Prior to the arrival of missions, education in African societies was totally informal, with children receiving education from parents, relatives and opinion leaders within the community (Lumby, Crow & Pashiardis, 2008). In the colonial era, most schools were administered by religious institutions. In Africa and PNG, matters related to education were handled largely by Christian missions (O’Donoghue, 2009). The church mainly established education policies which were aimed at creating a Christian community in Africa (Walker-Keleher, 2006). Colonial governments were less involved in education in the early years of colonisation, but they became involved later in the management and control of education because of persistent demands for education (Lumby et al., 2008). The British government, for example, became more actively involved in education in tropical Africa only from the 1920s as a result of the growing demand by Africans for education (Wah Lau & Kan, 2011). The reticence of colonial governments towards providing education in colonies in the first years of colonisation may find justification in the fact that “the priority [of colonisers] was establishing and maintaining basic control over the area rather than investing to any degree in
indigenous education” (O’Donoghue, 2009, p. 792). Moreover, although the general educational goals of colonial administration were similar to those of missions, there were some disagreements between colonial governments and churches with regard to the language of instruction, educational standards and school inspections (Smith, 1975).

As far as Rwanda’s colonisation is concerned, the country has been both a German and a Belgian colony. The Berlin Colonial Conference of 1885 divided Africa among the European powers in what came to be known as the ‘Scramble for Africa’ (Prunier, 1995). Thus, Rwanda came to be colonised by Germany from 1894 until 1916. Later, the country was colonised by Belgium from 1917 to 1962, an outcome of the fortunes of the First World War (Prunier, 1995). Consistent with the definition of traditional colonialism, Rwanda constituted a colony because German and Belgian colonisers had significant cultural, economic, military, and political influence over the country (Prunier, 1995).

Regarding the existence of internal colonialism in Rwanda, it is arguable that this variety of colonialism may have existed in the pre-independence era. Prior to, and during colonisation, the Tutsi ethnic group ruled the two other ethnic groups namely the Hutu and the Twa. During colonisation, Germans and Belgians reinforced the Tutsi kingship and collaborated with the Tutsi chiefs who were ruling on behalf of them (Prunier, 1995). Gourevitch (1998) goes further in describing this arrangement as “dual colonialism” since the colonisers collaborated with the Tutsi elite to rule other politically weaker groups of people. This was part of divide-and-rule colonial policy (Prunier, 1995). The third variety of colonialism which is neo-colonialism is discussed below according to post-colonialism and education.
An International Perspective on Post-colonialism and Education

Educational theories and practices in many post-colonial countries have been influenced by legacies of colonialism and post-colonialism. For example, as Wijewardena and Yapa (1997) put it, developing countries that were colonised by Britain for a long time borrowed their accounting education from the British education system. Similarly, Wah Lau and Kan (2011) have revealed that “the origins and form of secondary technical education in Hong Kong mirrored those of secondary technical education in the British tripartite school system” (p. 171). Also, as a post-colonial legacy, with the exception of Eritrea and South Africa, international aid agencies and the World Bank imposed structural adjustment policies which affected the way education was governed and financed in many post-colonial African countries in the late 1980s (Tikly, 2001). Tikly goes on to clarify this point as follows:

The fragility of the state and of the postcolonial status quo has ensured that most African states are much more susceptible to global forces than those of wealthier countries. This susceptibility provided the conditions for the imposition from the early 1980s of a new neo-liberal orthodoxy in the economy and politics that has disrupted indigenous postcolonial hegemonic projects. (p. 165)

The above influence of Western powers on colonised nations’ education systems in the post-colonial era can be equated with neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism is considered to be a situation in which non-Western countries, after gaining political independence, voluntarily or due to necessity continued to depend on American, European or Western derivative societies mainly through aid and loans (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; McKinnon, 2006). It refers not only to the perpetuation of past colonial practices but also to deliberate attempts by Western nations to keep their influence in their former colonies (Rizvi, Lingard & Lavia,
This is achieved by means of decisions granting, or refusing, loans, or aid to former territories: funding is tied to explicit conditions which are to be fulfilled by the country receiving aid (Nguyen, Elliott, Terlouw & Pilot, 2009; McKinnon, 2006).

In the educational arena, imposed conditions have reinforced neocolonialism in so far as Western countries impose a particular (Western) view of education and development, thus limiting the capacity of formerly colonised African, Asian, and Latin American countries to determine their own education agendas (Nguyen et al., 2009). On this, Rizvi et al (2006) point out that “residues of the colonial past continue to haunt [educational] realities of the postcolonial present” (p. 259). A concrete example of ongoing Western domination is the emphasis placed by UNESCO and other Western aid agencies on funding primary education at the expense of secondary and higher education in developing countries (Nguyen et al., 2009). This undermines educational research and innovation in developing nations, and prevents these countries from linking education to sustainable development and cultural heritage (Nguyen et al., 2009). In addition, in most of the colonised countries neocolonialism is reflected in school curricula and textbooks through the use of the language of the former coloniser as the language of instruction. Neocolonialism, as Altbach (1971) noted nearly 40 years ago, can also be exhibited in the structure and organisation of schools which reflect foreign models, in the technical assistance for curriculum design provided by Western experts, and in the supply of physical facilities and other educational materials.
**Rwanda as a post-colonial society**

Rwanda fulfills the conditions of a post-colonial country in which neocolonialism has prevailed. The country is a post-colonial society having been colonised from 1894 to 1962 and gaining its political independence in 1962. From this time it has constituted a post-colonial society. With regard to the manifestations of neocolonialism in post-colonial Rwanda, the nation has voluntarily or due to necessity depended on European aid for the development of its social and political sectors. This aid has been mostly accompanied by European experts. The mandate of these experts in Rwanda, as in other post-colonial countries, has been to provide advice on different socio-economic matters, and their support generally has required the country to strongly collaborate with the aid donor (Altbach & Kelly, 1978). In post-colonial Rwanda, for example, France and Belgium remained the main aid donors until 1994 and strongly influenced Rwandan socio-political domains with the French language being promoted throughout the nation. However, with the current regime that took power in 1994 there has been a remarkable shift away from France and Belgium as the main donors to new cooperations, including the United Kingdom (UK) Department for International Development (DFID) (Schweisfurth, 2006). Each donor has brought with the aid “a particular set of priorities and ways of working, and a particular historical relationship with Rwanda” (Schweisfurth, 2006, p. 698). Thus, neocolonialism has been a predominant influence in post-colonial sub-Saharan African countries including Rwanda.
The Lead-up to Genocide in Rwanda (1990-1994)

Only a glimpse of events leading to genocide is provided here to put the historical context and setting of the study that will be reported later in this thesis. A detailed history of the 1994 genocide is not the subject of this study. For detailed insights about the causes and consequences of the Rwandan genocide, and the role of the international community in the Rwandan crisis, see Barnett (2002), Melvern (2000), and Prunier (1995). Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the views and opinions expressed in this section are those of ‘seasoned’ scholars on Rwandan politics and history, and should not be attributed to the researcher.

Rwanda has three main groups of people, namely, the Hutus, who traditionally have been cultivators, and make up about 84 per cent of the population, the Tutsis who traditionally have been herders, and make up about 15 per cent of the population, and the Twa who traditionally have been hunters, and represent 1 per cent of the population (New Internationalist, 2002). There have been social and political divisions between these groups, shaping the Rwandan educational and political history (Gourevitch, 1998; Prunier, 1995, Kroslak, 2008). These divisions played a critical role in fuelling ethnic conflict that led eventually to the 1994 genocide (Kroslak, 2008; Moghalu, 2005). The events surrounding this genocide are now presented.

Approximately 120,000 Rwandan Tutsis fled to neighbouring countries as a result of the Hutu-led revolution of around 1959. In 1990, Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) composed mainly of children of Tutsis who had fled during the 1950s ignited a civil war against the Hutu-dominated (Second Republic) regime (Straus, 2006). Many RPF cadres had grown in Uganda and enjoyed a military and political support of Uganda (Barnett, 2002; Prunier, 1995).

The Rwandan government’s ties with some countries meant that it received military support from those countries to fight RPF troops. French soldiers intervened
just three days after the RPF attack. They first secured the airport and then assisted in training and expanding Rwanda’s military (Barnett, 2002; Kroslak, 2008; Melvern, 2000). Belgium and Zaire (current Democratic Republic of the Congo) also provided military assistance to the regular government army (Barnett, 2002). France was a very close ally of Rwanda to the extent that it had replaced Rwanda’s former coloniser, Belgium. Since the Second Republic regime took office in 1973, France offered “financial and military guarantees that Belgium could not provide” (Melvern, 2000, p. 24). The higher and quicker involvement of France was due to the “long-standing fear of being encircled by the Anglo-saxons (Barnett, 2002, p. 24). That is, France realised that the English speaking invaders, backed by the English-speaking Uganda, could cause the fall of French, the second language of Rwandans at the time (Barnett, 2002; Melvern, 2000; Prunier, 1995). Melvern (2000) added that Rwanda was also precious to France because Rwanda was located “on a political fault-line between francophone and anglophone east Africa” (p. 24).

In addition to the 1990 attack of RPF, the then incumbent government was threatened by external and internal pressures to democratise the country. The end of the cold war and the collapse of communism in Europe marked the antipathy/aversion for single party system rule, and Rwanda could not escape this political move (Kroslak, 2008). As a result, Western donors including France, the then strong Western backer of the regime, put pressure on President Habyarimana to end the absolute rule and power of his political party, Mouvement Révolutionaire National pour le Développement (MRND) (Kroslak, 2008; Straus, 2006). In 1991, these pressures resulted in the then Rwandan government accepting the multiparty democracy by permitting the creation of multiple parties (Barnett, 2002; Straus, 2006). The MRND party, which had ruled for nearly 20 years, was challenged by more than 15 newly created political parties which represented “a span of political and ethnic positions” (Barnett, 2002, p. 54). It indeed
faced a larger Hutu opposition in the south, south-west, and south-centre of the country, with the *Movement Démocratique Républicain* (MDR) becoming the most dominant opposition party at the time (Straus, 2006).

To address the challenge created by both the RPF invasion and the increased internal political opposition, MRND established a militia, *Interahamwe*, meaning (those who work and go together) and another extremist political party named the Committee for the Defense of the Republic (CDR) (Barnett, 2002; Prunier, 1995; Straus, 2006). CDR and *Interahamwe* soon became militarised, and their allies “spewed the most vile anti-Tutsi propaganda and eventually staffed the infamous Mille Collines Radio that agitated for genocide” (Barnett, 2002, p. 54). However, the government’s power diminished significantly to the extent that it allowed for the formation of a coalition government with the newly established political opposition (Straus, 2006). The coalition government comprised moderate political parties which called for negotiations between the government and the RPF rebels to resolve peacefully the war (Barnett, 2002; Kroslak, 2008; Melvern, 2000; Prunier, 1995). The government of France and that of the United States of America were also putting pressure on the government to accept peace negotiations (Kroslak, 2008; Prunier, 1995). Peace negotiations were held in the Tanzanian city, Arusha. Thus, the accords were referred to as the Arusha Accords.

The highly internationalised Arusha Accords resulted in an agreement between warring factions. They began in July, 1992. Tanzania, Rwanda’s neighbouring country, played a role of peace process facilitator in these negotiations. Other neighbouring countries of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Zaire (current DRC) were also present. In addition, there were observers from France, the United States, Germany, Belgium and Senegal. Canada, Britain, the Netherlands and the European Union delegated their local diplomats to monitor the process (Clapham, 1998). The Organisation of African Unit (OAU) and the United Nations (UN) were also represented at these negotiations.
Peace negotiations eventually ended in August, 1993 with the signing of a peace agreement between the Habyarimana’s MRND, the RPF, and the newly established opposition parties (Barnett, 2002; Kroslak, 2008). Unlike Hutu hardliners’ view of the situation, the signing of a peace agreement was good news for many ordinary and politically moderate people of Rwanda who viewed it as a move to national unity and reconciliation (Prunier, 1995; Destexhe, 1995).

Power-sharing arrangements were stipulated clearly in the agreement. According to the agreement, Habyarimana was to continue to be the President, but most of his power was given to the future Broadened Base Transitional Government (BBTG) which was to comprise 21 Ministers (Clapham, 1998; Prunier, 1995). In addition, while only five seats in this government were given to the Habyarimana’s MRND, five seats and the new position of vice prime minister were secured by the RPF. The remaining eleven posts were shared between the newly established political parties, namely, the MDR, the Parti Social Démocrate (PSD), the Parti Libéral (PL), and the Parti Démocrate Chrétien (PDC) (Clapham, 1998; Prunier, 1995). These opposition parties were also to contribute the Prime Minister (Kroslak, 2008; Prunier, 1995). Out of 70 seats in the prospective transitional assembly, the dominant parties MRND, RPF, MDR, PSD and PL, would each get 11 parliamentarians, and the PDC four, whilst eleven minor parties would each contribute one Member of Parliament (Prunier, 1995). With regard to the composition of the new Rwandan armed forces, Rwandan troops were to consist of 60 per cent incumbent government army and 40% RPF army, with an equal sharing at the officer-level positions (Kroslak, 2008; Moghalu 2005; Prunier, 1995).

UN forces became involved in monitoring compliance with the Arusha Accords. These forces were requested by the signatories to oversee fair implementation of the signed agreement (Prunier, 1995; Kroslak, 2008; Melvern, 2000). There was, however, a time delay in deploying the force. While according to the Accords the UN force was
to reach Rwanda 37 days following the August 1993 agreement, it took nearly three months and a half for the UN to dispatch the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) (Kroslak, 2008; Melvern, 2000; Prunier, 1995). Given the sourness of the political situation at the time, the delay in sending the force to Rwanda encouraged the hardliners who were against Arusha Accords (Kroslak, 2008; Melvern, 2000). In addition, the deployed mission was small in number compared to the number that had been sent in former Yugoslavia, Liberia, Somalia, and Mozambique (Clapham, 1998; Melvern, 2000; Moghalu, 2005). Of 7,500 soldiers required according to the mission commander General Roméo Dallaire from Canada, only a total of 2,548 (i.e a third of the needed force) was authorised (Kroslak, 2008). The mission comprised 400 soldiers from Belgium, 800 soldiers from Ghana, and 940 people (soldiers, logisticians, military police, and medical personnel) from Bangladesh (Melvern, 2000). French troops who had supported the Rwandan government since the RPF attack in October 1990 withdrew when UN peacekeepers reached Rwanda at the end of 1993 (Kroslak, 2008; Melvern, 2000).

The above context of the ill-equipped UNAMIR coupled with the warring parties’ reluctance to implement the Arusha Accords allowed for the collapse of the peace agreement. It became clear that the signed peace deal was not backed by Hutu extremists. Indeed, Hutu hardliners (CDR and MRND hardliners) felt that the president, Habyarimana, had betrayed them by signing the accord. They were bitterly hostile towards the agreement and feared losing power and privileges that were to emanate from the implementation of the Arusha Accords (Clapham, 1998; Kroslak, 2008). This hostility was apparent through MRND ministers not attending cabinet meetings and CDR members campaigning against the Arusha Accords (Kroslak, 2008; Prunier, 1995). In addition, the reinforcement of military positions by the warring parties
evidenced the lack of goodwill to implement Arusha agreements. Straus (2006) put it this way:

[Hutu] hardliners trained and armed militias; they strengthened loyal military units,…they distributed weapons; they ramped up the racist propaganda against the Tutsis; they prepared plans to assassinate high-level opposition politicians; and they trained militias to kill Tutsi civilians, especially in the capital city. For its part, the RPF imported weapons into Kigali and elsewhere reinforced their positions. Both parties—especially the Hutu hardliners—blocked efforts to install a new broad-based government, which was a key requirement of the Arusha Accords. (p. 42)

There was one RPF battalion in Kigali, Rwanda’s capital city. This RPF army was brought into the capital city to protect RPF politicians who were to participate in the new transitional government planned by the Arusha Accords (Straus, 2006).

Adding to the readiness for war and the big delay in the implementation of the Arusha Accords was the assassination of the Hutu president Habyarimana and the Burundian president, Cyprien Ntaryamira. The death of the presidents resulted from the shooting down of the aircraft that carried them. The presidential plane was shot while it was preparing for landing at Kigali airport in the Rwandan capital city (Melvern, 2000). This plane crash occurred on April 6, 1994 when Habyarimana was flying back to Rwanda from Tanzania where he had attended a summit with regional leaders (Kroslak, 2008; Prunier, 1995; Melvern, 2000). The summit was aimed at disapproving and addressing the delay in the implementation of the peace agreement (Kroslak, 2008). On board were also the aircraft crew, three French men, five of Habyarimana’s closest advisers, and two Burundian ministers (Melvern, 2000). It must be highlighted that there is still no evidence to suggest who was responsible for the shooting down of the presidential plane. Many conflicting theories have been advanced, but an analysis of
such theories is not the subject of this study. Regardless of who was responsible for the plane crash, Hutu hardliners quickly took control of the state and appointed an interim government headed by President Sindikubwabo Théodore (Kroslak, 2008).

Hutu hardliners then in a position of authority changed the fate of Rwanda. They assassinated many politicians from opposition parties and killed international peacekeepers (Straus, 2006). They ordered, for example, the killing of the prime minister and the 10 Belgian peacekeepers who were protecting her. Hardliners then “fomented mass violence against the Tutsi population in order to combat the RPF” (Straus, 2006, p. 50). By April 7 the killing of Tutsi civilians had begun in many parts of the country, especially in areas where hardliners were strongly supported (Straus, 2006). Although the genocide targeted Tutsis, mostly, in rural areas, some Hutus who refused to kill Tutsis were also killed as “examples for repeatedly resisting the killing and for personal vendettas” (Straus, 2006, p. 51). Approximately 800,000 people, mostly Tutsis, were killed between April and July 1994 (Straus, 2006). The murders were committed by the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi armed militias and by Hutu civilians killing Tutsi civilians (Prunier, 1995). Militia roadblocks in larger cities and in rural areas were constructed at road crossings and in commercial centres to hunt the Hutus’ “one enemy”, the Tutsis (Straus, 2006). Houses, churches, schools, and bushes were also searched for this purpose. The genocidal state encouraged Hutu civilians to kill Tutsis to prevent them from reinstating Tutsi feudal monarchy through RPF (Straus, 2006).

The media also played a big role in inciting the population to kill. Hutu hardliners’ Radio Télévision Libre de Milles Collines (RTLMC) launched a genocidal campaign against Tutsis and the politically moderate Hutus. It unleashed the most virulent racist propaganda against Tutsis and moderate Hutus. In fact, the radio broadcast “direct incitements to deliberately murder to avenge the death of our (sic)
president” (Prunier, 1995, p. 224). Prunier (1995) added that RTLMC was calling on Hutus to exterminate all Tutsis to obtain a ‘final solution’ to Rwanda’s political and security problems. The following evil message, for example, was broadcast by the radio:

You have missed some of the enemies in this or that place. Some are still alive.
You must go back there and finish them off. The graves are not yet quite full.
Who is going to do the good work and help us fill them completely? (p. 224)

While genocide was being carried out, the RPF forces were advancing and annexing successfully different parts of Rwanda. The genocide stopped in July 1994 as a result of the victory of the RPF army over the regular government army. When RPF won the war, hundreds of thousands of Hutu leaders, militias, soldiers and civilians fled to neighbouring countries probably fearing Tutsi-led RPF revenge, making one of the largest mass exoduses in the world since World War II (Destexhe, 1995; Kroslak, 2008; Prunier, 1995).

Regarding international community intervention, UNAMIR and the international community did not rescue victims nor did they stop the genocide. In fact, UN troops withdrew from Rwanda while the genocide was ongoing, and Western powers evacuated their nationals and left Rwandans in the hands of killers. Despite the dangerous political situation that was prevailing in Rwanda, the small UN mission was assigned a minor mandate in scope. Kroslak (2008, p. 44) noted that “UNAMIR was given the mandate of a minimalist peacekeeping mission, despite the fact that the inter-communal situation in Rwanda was very dangerous”. The force’s mandate included securing the capital city, monitoring compliance with cease fire agreement, monitoring security before and during elections that were to be held as part of the replacement of the transitional government, monitoring the implementation of a military integration agreement, monitoring the repatriation of refugees, and carrying out humanitarian
actions (Clapham, 1998; Moghalu, 2005). Although the mission commander requested that this mandate be enhanced to allow UN troops to disarm militias and protect civilians, the request was not approved simply on grounds of being inconsistent with the mandate (Kroslak, 2008). In addition, Melvern (2000) pointed out that the UNAMIR was under-staffed and ill-equipped:

[The mission] lacked everything from ammunition to sandbags, fuel and barbed wire. The mission lacked essential personnel; there was no public affairs officer, legal adviser, humanitarian or human rights experts….There were to be twenty-two armoured personnel carriers (APCs) and eight military helicopters to allow for a quick reaction capability. That was the plan. In fact, no military helicopters arrived. And only eight APCs were provided, of which five were serviceable. (p. 85)

The UNAMIR’s lack of important resources has been attributed to the United States’ increased unwillingness to support UN peacekeeping operations due to its military humiliation in Somalia at the time and to the Security Council permanent members’ “need to be less generous and more discriminating” to minimise costs and harm to peacekeepers (Barnett, 2002, p. 68). Attention is now turned to the delineation of the post-new war status of Rwanda.
The Post-New war Status of Rwanda

Old wars versus new wars

The study that will be reported later in this thesis seeks to generate theory on the historical background to, and recent developments in, primary school leadership as well as the current concerns of primary school leaders in post-conflict Rwanda. Throughout this thesis, the terms ‘post-conflict’ and ‘post-new war’ are used interchangeably. It is important to understand the context within which ‘new wars’ take place and to elaborate on the reasons why Rwanda qualifies as a post-new war society. The distinction that is made between ‘old wars’ and ‘new wars’ will help develop this understanding.

The terms ‘old wars’ and ‘new wars’ have been used in different ways by a number of political scientists. However, in this study the meaning assigned by Kaldor (2005) is used because it aligns with the context of the study. ‘Old War’ refers to “an idealised version of war that characterised Europe between the late 18th and the middle of the 20th century. ‘Old War’ is war between states fought by armed forces in uniform, where the decisive encounter was battle” (Kaldor, 2005, p. 2). In addition, ‘old wars’ were state-building and contributed to the rise of the modern nation-state because in these wars states monopolised planned violence and eliminated private armies or brigands, and established professional forces loyal to them. During ‘old wars’, the motto of the state was “protecto ergo obligo (I protect therefore I am obeyed)”, and thus the task of the state was to defend its people and territory against others in order to acquire legitimacy (Kaldor, 2005, p. 2).

Furthermore, ‘old wars’, according to Kaldor (2005), followed, at least in theory, the rules set in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the Geneva and Hague Conventions. The purpose of the Geneva rules was to minimise civilian casualties and to treat prisoners well, and these rules were critical to establishing the war’s legitimacy.
'Old wars’ reached their apex in the middle of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, and since 1945 these wars have been rare (Kaldor, 2005).

On the other hand, ‘new wars’ are wars that began in the second half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. In these wars, incumbents with economic superiority faced extremely persistent insurgents who sought to break their enemies’ political will through demoralising and consistent attacks. This concurs with Kaldor’s (2005) point of view when she describes new wars as:

Wars that take place in the context of the disintegration of states (typically authoritarian states under the impact of globalisation). These are wars fought by networks of state and non-state actors, often without uniforms, sometimes they have distinctive signs, like crosses or Ray-Ban sunglasses as in the case of the Croatian militia in Bosnia Herzegovina. They are wars where battles are rare and where most violence is directed against civilians as a consequence of counter-insurgency tactics or ethnic cleansing. They are wars where taxation is falling and war finance consists of loot and pillage, illegal trading and other war-generated revenue. (p. 3)

New wars, Kaldor (2005) adds, are wars in which any violence is legalised and distinguishing militaries from civilians is very difficult. Also, new wars lead to the breakdown of the state as reflected, for example, in the “declines in GDP, loss of tax revenue, and loss of legitimacy” (Kaldor, 2005, p. 3). The purpose of new wars, Kaldor (2005) concludes, is often to build new religious, ethnic, or tribal identities in a community.

Although Kaldor’s (2005) understanding of ‘old wars’ and ‘new wars’ received criticism related to the historical efficacy of her definitions, there is a need to understand that the distinction between ‘old wars’ and ‘new wars’ is not meant to be
historically accurate in every detail. Rather, the distinction helps our understanding of the context of what has been happening in post-new war societies and what we need to do about it (Kaldor, 2005). Moreover, Kaldor (2005) recognises that new wars are related to wars that occurred in the pre-modern period in Europe and outside Europe, and that it is possible to find some elements of new wars within old wars.

**Rwanda as a post-new war society**

With the focus of this study on primary school leadership in post-new war Rwanda, it is useful to understand how Rwanda constitutes a post-new war society. The genocide and ethnic cleansing that occurred in Rwanda can be understood according to Kaldor’s ‘new war’ theory. As noted earlier, Kaldor (2005) asserts that new wars occur in the context of the disintegration of authoritarian states under the impact of globalisation. The civil war which started in 1990 in Rwanda and the 1994 Rwandan genocide depended heavily on trans-national networks for support, finance and mobilization. These trans-national networks can be viewed as globalised forces which influenced the civil war in Rwanda. For example, the money allocated for developmental aid was given by the international aid agencies to the incumbent Hutu-dominated government which used it to purchase arms and rocket launchers that were used during the civil war (Melvern, 2000). Also, “the influx of weapons from foreign sources to the Rwandan government as well as to the RPF contributed significantly to the civil war as well as to the massacres in 1994” (JEEAR, 1996, p. 37). Therefore, the externally sponsored militarisation of both the RPF and the then Hutu-dominated government illustrates the role of globalisation in the war that took place in Rwanda.

Furthermore, subscribing to Kaldor’s (2005) position on new wars, the relationship between the conflict in Rwanda and the struggle for power by ethnic groups is evident. New wars may construct new sectarian identities leading to the loss of a shared political community (Kaldor, 2005). In Rwanda, the civil war intensified
divisions between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, and the Tutsis did not feel part of the pre-genocide Hutu-dominated government. Moreover, in the Rwandan conflict civilian victimisation was more deliberate instead of being a peripheral side effect of war. The high impact of conflict on the civilian population is also a feature of new wars (Kaldor, 2005).

In addition to justifying Rwanda’s categorisation as a post-new war country there is a need to determine when Rwanda entered the post-conflict phase. Post-conflict status is purported to start when hostile acts end, typically in the form of a peace agreement or cease-fire agreement, or when an international intervention ends the war, or when one of the local warring forces wins the war and captures power (Timilsina, 2007). In Rwanda, although a cease-fire agreement was signed and a UN mission intervened, hostilities ended as a result of the RPF winning the war against the then Hutu-dominated government in July, 1994. This is when the country started its post-conflict reconstruction journey.

The following section discusses the status of education during violent conflict. It will be followed by a discussion of education in post-conflict societies. Education during conflict is discussed under the broader umbrella of education in emergencies to which attention is now turned.
**Education in Emergencies**

Rationale for emergency education in the international discourse

While there is doubt about whether education should be provided in emergency situations and concerns that education programmes might be harmful during emergencies, there is increasing recognition that education is the ‘fourth pillar’ of humanitarian aid in such emergency situations, alongside water and food, shelter and health care (Machel, 2001; Sinclair, 2002, 2007). The recognition of the necessity of education in emergencies can be traced back to the 1990s when emergency education came to the fore in both academic and policy circles (Kagawa, 2005).

It is not difficult to understand why emergency education discourse was first apparent in the 1990s: “the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 unleashed a significant number of intrastate conflicts in the Balkans, Africa and South Asia” (Weinstein, Freedman, Hughson, 2007, p. 42). These conflicts were viewed by UNESCO as threats to the achievement of its Education For All (EFA) declaration of 1990, and especially to children’s right to education (Kagawa, 2005). The right to education had been specified in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Sinclair, 2002). It was around this time that UNESCO and other international organisations recognised that war and civil strife could prevent many of the world’s children from realising their right to education.

More recently, UNESCO’s 1990 EFA target, and particularly children’s rights to education, were re-iterated in the 2000 World Education Forum held in Senegal where countries, organisations and groups pledged to promote EFA and invest in basic education, whatever the circumstances (Kagawa 2005; Sinclair, 2002). Governments
and bodies represented at this forum pledged to promote, or facilitate access to education for refugee children, internally displaced children and children who are asylum seekers, without waiting for the arrival of stable and peaceful situations (Kagawa, 2005; Sinclair, 2002, 2007). The rationale behind this commitment, Sinclair (2007) holds, was the uncertainty with regard to war or the conflict cessation date as some conflicts can last years, or even decades.

Despite the fact that education is a fundamental human right, there is a number of well documented reasons for education in emergency situations. These reasons include (Sinclair, 2002):

- Education can help meet the psychosocial needs of crises-affected populations;
- Education can provide a channel for conveying survival messages and developing skills for conflict resolution and peace building;
- Education is needed to prepare for reconstruction, and social and economic development;
- Education can provide protection from harm; education can promote personal development and preparedness for responsible citizenship. (p. 27)

These educational benefits can justify the increasing attention paid to education in emergencies.

**Emergency education: conceptual definition**

Although defining education in emergencies is not without contestation (Kagawa, 2005), a guiding definition can at least be provided. Emergency education simply means education in emergencies. In this context, ‘emergencies’ are natural disasters (e.g. volcanic eruption, flood, earthquakes) and human-made crises (e.g. armed conflict, war, genocide) (Obura, 2003; Sinclair, 2002). To these categories, Pigozzi adds silent emergencies such as extreme poverty, the HIV/AIDS pandemic killer disease, and
children living on streets (Pigozzi, 1999). The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) incorporated all these elements (natural disasters, human-made crises and silent emergencies) in its definition of emergency education. It defines emergency education as education in situations of crisis created by disasters or conflicts which destabilise, disorganise, or destroy an education system, requiring support during crisis or post-crisis situations (UNESCO, 1999). This conceptualisation matches that of the World Education Forum held in Dakar in April 2000 and includes post-crisis education reconstruction in the scope of emergency education (Kagawa, 2005).

Nevertheless, there has been a debate about the inclusion of the whole process of post-conflict education reconstruction in the scope of education in emergencies. Sommers (2002), for example, argues that education reconstruction immediately after conflict and long-term post-conflict education reconstruction are separate areas that require different sets of experiences and literature. This observation is also made by Smith (2005) who points out that educational priorities and concerns may be quite different depending on whether education is provided within relatively stable and peaceful situations; during periods of intense conflict; as part of reconstruction after conflict or political transition; and as part of longer term peace and reconciliation processes. In this thesis, adherence has been made to the position of Smith (2005) in discussing education during conflict separately from post-conflict education. However, although experiences in the early phase of post-conflict reconstruction differ from those in the long term, the early post-crisis reconstruction phase has not been separated from the long-term post-conflict education reconstruction phase. This is because there is no consensus about definitions for each phase and agreement on when each phase commences and ends (Obura, 2003). Therefore, the early phase of post-conflict
reconstruction has been discussed under ‘education in post-conflict situations’, not within this section of education in emergency situations.

**Common challenges to education during conflict**

Reports on education during times of war indicate that courageous educators continue to provide education in these circumstances (Sinclair, 2002). Sinclair goes on to note that brave educators hold classes in the open air, in homes and basements, or in buildings that are profoundly damaged. In a similar vein, Smith (2005) points out that education for refugees, displaced persons and traumatised adolescents is particularly challenging and sometimes absent during intrastate conflicts in which internal fighting groups with no sense of accountability to the international community often overlook the Geneva Conventions about the rights of children. This leads to the deprivation of educational opportunities for many children during conflict and constitutes the major barrier to the achievement of the EFA goals alongside poverty, child exploitation, distance from home to school, and gender imbalance in school enrolment due to cultural factors (Acedo, 2011; Kagawa, 2005).

Furthermore, education in situations of conflict is challenged by the lack of experienced and trained teachers in human rights education and other important areas. As a result, it is unlikely that teachers discuss the basics of human rights with students because they do not have the necessary skills in this area (Smith, 2005). In addition, it may be difficult for teachers to raise conflict-related topics in class when they belong to communities in conflict. This difficulty arises from the fact that it is not easy for teachers to criticise the beliefs of their own community (Smith, 2005). Moreover, traumatised and sexually abused students need counseling, but unfortunately, as Smith (2005) highlights, many teachers located in zones ravaged by conflict lack experience and training in counseling.
These challenges call for rapid intervention by national governments aimed at ensuring that children attend schools during conflict. However, as many conflicts take place in low-income countries where conflict is combined with poverty, the United Nations (UN) agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play a vital role in supporting governments through aid and technical assistance to enable the functioning of basic services, including education (Sinclair, 2002; Smith, 2009). In all their endeavours, UN agencies and NGOs are urged to analyse the context within which the conflict has taken place because not all emergencies require the same intervention, and what has proved to be a successful response in one context may be inefficient in another (Sinclair, 2002). This observation is more poignant in the post-conflict education reconstruction era given the positive correlation between education and economic growth (Twagilimana, 1996). There is a need, therefore, to examine the context within which education takes place in post-new war settings. The following section is devoted to describing the experience of educational endeavour in post-new war societies.

**The General Context of Education in Post-new War Societies**

**Common problems and interventions**

In recent years many post-conflict nations have undertaken the task of reconstruction. Sinclair (2002) draws attention to the complexity of the education reconstruction process by providing figures of displaced persons, highlighting as an example the year 2000 when there were “12 large return movements of refugees and a total of almost 800,000 returnees”. It is also probable that in the same year a large number of internally displaced people rejoined their homes (Sinclair, 2002). Similarly, Grace Machel’s (2001) influential study on the impact of war on children reveals that during armed conflicts between 1986 and 1996 six million children were permanently disabled or seriously injured and a good number of children were separated from their parents,
psychologically and physically abused, while some other children were recruited into
the military. In particular, Machel (2001) asserts that many girls were raped and faced
other forms of sexual violence.

Conflict has a destructive effect on education, both in terms of the pain and
psychological impact on the students, educators, and communities (World Bank, 2005).
It causes the degeneration of the education system and the degradation of its
infrastructure (World Bank, 2005). Although problems hampering the provision of
education in post-new war societies may depend heavily on the extent of the damages
and ravages caused by war, there exist documented problems common to many post-
conflict settings. These problems, according to Buckland (2006), include:

- inability of recovering states to fund either capital or recurrent expenditure: few states
  have access to domestic revenue sufficient to keep systems running
- chronic shortages of qualified teachers - many have been killed or fled, and many of
  those who remain or return are often recruited by international agencies and NGOs
- oversupply of under-qualified or unqualified teachers
- the sheer numbers of war-affected youth, demobilised soldiers and young people who
  have not completed basic education
- poor record keeping, corruption and lack of transparency in education governance:
  salaries are often paid to ‘ghost’ teachers
- the ‘relief bubble’ in international financial support often subsides before a more
  predictable flow of reconstruction resources can be mobilised: relief agencies often
  scale back operations before development-focused agencies can be mobilised
- skills training for youth is seriously under-resourced: even when available, vocational
  training programmes often fail to prepare people for locally available employment
  opportunities
coordination challenges: as education involves an interface of humanitarian action and development in complex ways there is often a plethora of coordination mechanisms

- failure to develop successful initiatives to build the skills of young people and prevent their recruitment into military or criminal activity: youth are seen as a threat to stability and few programmes value young people as an important resource for development and reconstruction. (p. 7)

In addition, Buckland (2006) points out that international aid agencies prioritise basic education and offer little support to other levels of education. Consequently, in post-conflict societies secondary schools are offered minimal support by donors and there is a noticeably slow progress in re-establishing secondary and tertiary educational opportunities (Buckland, 2006).

Notwithstanding the relatively high neglect of secondary and tertiary education sectors, international aid agencies and post-conflict governments play a key role in reconstructing education systems (Weldon, 2010; World Bank, 2005). The 2000 Dakar Declaration recommended that educational reconstruction, or reform be tied to the overall development interventions aimed at rebuilding societies ravaged by conflict (Weinstein et al., 2007). The literature indicates that interventions aimed at reconstructing an education system in post-new war societies target four broad areas that need special attention. These areas include physical, curricular, ideological and psychological reconstructions, the latter two being the most problematic (Weinstein et al., 2007). The ‘physical’ reconstruction is concerned with the building of schools and is coupled with emergency repair strategies, the needs associated with refugee education and issues of landmine safety (Smith, 2005). The ideological reconstruction refers, for example, to the democratisation of the education system and teachers’ retraining. The psychological reconstruction, on the other hand, deals with issues of loss of morale and confidence, and issues related to depression and stress (Smith, 2005). Decoupling
curricular reconstruction from ideological and psychological reconstruction is very difficult since, for example, the democratisation of an education system should be reflected in the curriculum. That is, democratisation of an education system requires that new ways of thinking be incorporated into the curriculum. In addition, education for reconciliation, social repair and peace building, which is also a priority in post-conflict societies, is arguably reflected in the curricular, ideological and psychological reconstruction areas.

The issue of building a conflict sensitive education system

Another set of challenges characterising education in post-new war societies is discerned in post-war governments’ inability, or reticence to build a conflict-sensitive education system. Smith (2005) argues that post-conflict nations should strive to build ‘conflict-sensitive’ education systems by determining the likelihood of policies and practices to prevent, or contribute to conflict. This should be undertaken during the physical, curricular, ideological and psychological reconstruction processes mentioned earlier. Unfortunately, some post-conflict governments perceive education as a tool for ‘social control’ rather than as an empowering tool leading to socio-economic and cultural development (Smith, 2005; Macpherson, 2011). To illustrate this point, Smith (2005) points out that those possessing high authority and power in post-new war societies often tend to use education for their own purposes, and this is demonstrated by an analysis of the way educators are recruited, teachers trained and deployed, and in the determination of the curriculum. Other concerns that may arise include unequal access of all groups to education, lack of transparency in the distribution of resources across populations, and lack of representation of all groups in educational governance, all of which may lead to differentials in educational qualification and attainment between citizens (Shields & Rappleye, 2008; Smith, 2005).
Furthermore, curricular reconstruction should be given special attention. While curriculum materials focusing on teaching about democracy or tolerance may be introduced by NGOs, it is argued that the concepts of democracy, tolerance and peace education are taught in decontextualised and generic ways in many post-conflict nations, and thus do not take into account the local context and often lack sensitivity to local needs (Weinstein et al., 2007).

In particular, special consideration needs to be granted to the teaching of history and the choice of the language of instruction. History education has the potential to promote specific versions of history at the expense of others, and post-new war governments may fail to revise historical facts and to confront the past critically (Macpherson, 2011; Millo & Barnett, 2004). In addition, language policies should be sensitive to majority and minority groups to increase unity and at the same time respect diversity (Smith, 2005; Macpherson, 2011).

Finally, the content and values contained in textbooks may be controversial and the questions about who controls, or benefits from textbook content and production may arise. In order to address all the identified concerns, the role of the national government and the international aid agencies is critical.

**Lack of involvement of the local community in the education reconstruction process**

Despite the vital role played by post-new war governments and the international community in rehabilitating education, it is argued that the voices of the most affected by conflict (such as children, parents, teachers and school leaders) are rarely heard in the education reconstruction process. School policies and curriculum reforms are devised by government officials and international agencies in post-conflict societies (Weinstein et al., 2007). These policies have often lacked sensitivity to the local school context, prompting a lack of policy ownership on the part of local communities (Millo
& Barnett, 2004). Failing to hear the voices of those most affected by conflict may result in failure of educational change initiated by governments and international donors (Millo & Barnett, 2004; Weinstein et al., 2007). Weinstein et al. (2007), after examining schools in four societies that experienced profound violence in the 1990s, concluded that educational reform after violent conflict is characterised by untested theoretical assumptions and by the implementation of broad concepts and practices which lack research rigour. Thus, education in post-new war societies is mainly informed by theoretical assumptions and lacks rigorous research evidence. In addition, Kagawa (2005) contends that there is a significant power imbalance between national organisations and international donors, or aid agencies when it comes to interventions in the education sector. This is because it is challenging for international agencies to involve local organisations in decision-making processes (Kagawa, 2005).

**The Specific Context: Education in Selected Post-Conflict Countries**

To situate the study internationally, the ways in which education in specific post-conflict societies have been rehabilitated and reconstructed is now examined. The countries of Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Sierra Leone and South Africa are considered because their histories of conflict are in some respects similar to that of Rwanda. Timor-Leste experienced killings and its education system was shaped by the legacies of colonialism (Boughton, 2011). BiH experienced ethnic cleansing and genocide during the 1990s as did Rwanda. In a similar vein, Cambodia is examined because it experienced genocide and has had a relatively long history and experience of post-conflict reconstruction. Sierra Leone is a post-conflict African country as is Rwanda. Finally, South Africa has been selected not only because it is an African country, but also because it has experienced an identity-based conflict comparable to Rwanda.
Post-conflict education in Timor-Leste

Impact of conflict on education

In 1999, towards the end of the 24th year of Indonesian occupation, Timor-Leste experienced a relatively short, but very intense conflict in its struggle for independence. The withdrawal of Indonesia in that year was associated with a wave of violence in which “pro-Indonesia militia conducted a terror campaign, killing more than a thousand people, displacing three-quarters of the population, and destroying 75 per cent of the buildings and virtually all the infrastructure in the country” (Neves, 2006, p. 2). In late September 1999, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was formed to perform peacekeeping operations and administrative tasks to prepare Timor-Leste for self-governance (Boughton, 2011; Neves, 2006). The UN transitional administration lasted two and a half years and led to the restoration of Timor-Leste’s independence in 2002 (Boughton, 2011; Neves, 2006).

As in other conflict-affected countries, education was seriously debilitated. Public infrastructure was destroyed, “90 per cent of the schools were damaged, 80 per cent destroyed completely”, and almost all the Indonesian teachers who had come to help the process of ‘Indonesianisation’ departed, “precipitating the collapse of the Indonesian education system” in Timor-Leste (World Bank 2003, p. 2). The departure of Indonesian teachers left secondary schools with almost no trained, or qualified personnel as almost all secondary school teachers were Indonesian (Boughton, 2011; World Bank, 2005). In primary schools, however, 80 per cent of the teachers were Timorese and remained in the country (World Bank, 2005). In addition, the early reconstruction period was marked by an oversupply of underqualified, or unqualified teachers. It was also characterised by the existence of ‘ghost’ teachers who were paid without being on duty (World Bank, 2005).
As a result of the lack of teacher training, Timor-Leste continued to depend on the Indonesian curriculum and resources during the UNTAET administration period. This dependence compromised the quality of education. Delivering an Indonesian curriculum in the official languages of Portuguese and Tetum was very challenging and rendered the quality of education problematic (Boughton, 2011). While Tetum is the official and national language widely spoken by Timorese, most teachers are not fluent in Portuguese (Boughton, 2011). In addition, the increased number of students resulted in a high student-to-teacher ratio of 52:1 (World Bank, 2005).

**Educational developments under the UN administration and since independence**

Education reconstruction was not an easy task for the transitional government since it took place in parallel with the reestablishment of civil authority and administration. However, with the support from the World Bank and donor countries, UNICEF, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the education sector achieved some progress. By the end of the UN period, “700 primary schools and 100 junior secondary schools were functioning, and school enrolments had grown to 240 000, 25 per cent greater than in the last year of Indonesian rule” (Boughton, 2011, p. 185). In addition, international support combined with community action rehabilitated 86 per cent of classrooms and 80 per cent of furniture, and some books were delivered to students within the period of one and a half years after the commencement of the UN intervention (World Bank, 2005). The national university re-opened in 2000 and had around 5000 enrolled students of whom the majority had enrolled in teacher education (Boughton, 2011).

However, despite the focus on the reconstruction of schools, recruitment of teachers and school supplies, the transitional government did not reform the content of what was taught in schools (Shah, 2012). In addition, Millo and Barnett (2004) argue that although most of the UNTAET’s educational plans were successful, UNTAET did
not undertake a more profound transformation of education. Millo and Barnett (2004) argue that this was partly attributable to the education system being extensively damaged as a result of Indonesia’s brutal withdrawal in 1999. Another reason for the lack of profound transformation of education was attributable to UNTAET being viewed by the Timorese, who had not yet forgotten the bad experiences of Indonesian occupation, as another externally imposed governing body (Millo & Barnett, 2004).

Educational developments after independence were shaped by contradictions and disagreements around curriculum reform, language of instruction, the teaching of Timorese history and the place of religion in the curriculum. Curriculum reform, Shah (2012) argues, lacked civil society ownership and legitimacy, and this has undermined social cohesion and public trust. In addition, although the Independence Constitution recognised the complex language ecology of the country, the state prioritised Portuguese as a language of instruction over other languages and the primary school curriculum, it is argued, contains a simplified and diminished Timorese history (Shah, 2012). Furthermore, the exclusion of religion in the curriculum released in 2004 was contested by the church and civil society (Shah, 2012), causing the re-emergence of conflict that led to the political crisis of 2005 to 2007, with major educational consequences (Boughton, 2011).

It is reported that the motives for the disagreements around curriculum reform, language of instruction, history and religion teaching can be found in the legacies of colonialism and war. Reference to Boughton (2011) reveals that:

The three actors in the process, the Resistance, the Catholic church and the international community, approach the problems of educational development with ideas and practices formed from the very different experiences and roles they played during the colonial past, and the complex contradictory relationships they developed internally and with each other over time. (p. 178)
As a result, Boughton (2011) concludes that the education system being built is much contested as is the Timorese history itself. In addition, while a Cuban-led national adult literacy campaign increased the level of adult literacy in rural areas, there is a low retention rate in primary schools as less than 60 per cent of students enrolled in grade 2 reach grade 5 (Boughton, 2011). However, it is also argued that despite the low retention rate, significant progress has been made in primary schooling (Boughton, 2011).

Post-conflict education in Cambodia

Impact of conflict on education
Within nearly four years (1975-1979), the Khmer Rouge regime eradicated education in Cambodia. During this period schooling completely ceased and teachers were killed in a systematic manner (World Bank, 2005). Indeed, schools and universities were closed, and this was accompanied by the burning of books, the destruction of libraries, and the elimination, or exile, of the majority of Cambodia’s brightest, talented, and most educated individuals (Clayton, 1998; Duggan, 1996; Sovachana, 2012). Approximately 75 per cent of the teaching staff, 96 per cent of university students and 67 per cent of all primary students were assassinated (Clayton, 1998). Clayton (2005) points out that these people were killed because it was deemed that they were the products of ‘feudal-capitalist’ institutions and could, therefore, interfere with the Khmer Rouge’s goal of creating a purely agrarian-based socialist state.
Educational developments since 1979

From 1979 to 1989, the Khmer Rouge regime was replaced. The new regime called the People’s Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), assisted by the Vietnamese and its allies in the Eastern bloc countries, restored education making impressive progress. Schools and universities re-opened throughout the country, and professors, teachers, books, teaching materials and equipment were supplied by Vietnam and its allies (Clayton, 2005; Sovachana, 2012). The PRK also made efforts to identify and recruit former intellectuals and encouraged them to enter the sector of education (Sovachana, 2012). In addition, by 1990 “977 doctors, dentists, or pharmacists, 2196 senior secondary teachers, 1481 foreign language specialists, 474 technical engineers, 400 economists, and 184 agricultural engineers” had graduated from Cambodia’s higher learning institutions (Sovachana, 2012, p. 296). In this period, student enrolment rose from zero to 1.6 million (Sovachana, 2012).

Notwithstanding these developments, Cambodian education faced a number of reconstruction problems. The lack of sufficient school resources coupled with inadequate government funding affected the quality of education (Clayton, 2005). Also, Cambodia had to accept the prevailing socialist ideology of Vietnam and the Eastern bloc countries to receive aid from them. As such, Vietnamese language became compulsory from the beginning of the secondary cycle and university students were obliged to complete the five courses on the objectives of socialism taught by mostly Cambodians trained in Vietnam (Clayton, 2005; Sovachana, 2012). Furthermore, while there was no limit to the number of students accessing primary schooling, the government limited the number of students entering upper secondary schools and universities. This generated problems of corruption and favoritism as influential and rich parents used their power, or paid money, to secure places for their children at the upper secondary schools and universities (Sovachana, 2012). Educational development
was also undermined by ongoing civil wars between government troops and the Khmer Rouge combatants (Clayton, 2005; Sovachana, 2012).

During the early 1990s, Vietnam withdrew from Cambodia as a result of Western countries’ pressure. A peace agreement between Cambodia’s warring factions was signed in 1991 and elections were conducted to end the hostilities and tragedies which had undermined Cambodia’s development for more than two decades (Duggan, 1996). The UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was formed to oversee elections. The UN sponsored elections took place in 1993 and produced the first internationally recognised government since 1979. As in Timor-Leste, education reconstruction took place in parallel with civil authority and civil administration reestablishment (World Bank, 2005). During the UNTAC administration, and within five years after the 1993 elections, education authorities were expected to follow a laudable educational policy designed by international organisations, such as NGOs, international advisors and consultants (Ayres, 1998; Clayton, 2005; Duggan, 1996). However, the positive educational development prospects that were stipulated in this policy dissipated because the Cambodian government exhibited a lack of commitment to its agreements with the donor community (Ayres, 1998; Duggan, 1996). Consequently, educational goals were deliberately replaced by the immediate political priorities of those possessing high authority and power in the country (Ayres, 1998; Duggan, 1996).

From 2000 until 2012, Cambodia achieved impressive results in rebuilding its education system and the synergy between government and community donors led to some successful education reforms. Schools’ enrolment rates grew at all levels of education due to the abolition of enrolment fees in 2001, the provision of special incentives to poor girls and ethnic minority students, and the establishment of school block grant schemes. New teachers were also trained and recruited (Sovachana, 2012).
These developments, however, are not without challenges. Sovachana (2012) points out that although new teachers have been trained, the quality of teacher education needs to be seriously improved. Also, despite great progress being made in expanding access to education, the inequity between remote, rural and urban areas is still a major problem to be addressed (Sokhom, 2004; Sovachana, 2012).

Post-conflict education in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The impact of conflict on education in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Prior to the 1991 war, BiH was part of the six republics making up the Socialist Federal Republics of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in the Balkans region. Before the war it was ranked a mid-developed country with a highly developed education system (Kreso, 2008). This well-developed education system, however, was highly affected by war. Kreso (2008, p. 353) points out that “social systems and infrastructure were damaged or destroyed, including education, which was harnessed during the war to divide the country and then perpetuate these divisions”. Furthermore, as ethnic identity or religion emerged as an explicit dimension of the conflict in BiH, education reconstruction faced particular challenges regarding curriculum reform and language policy (World Bank, 2005).

The challenge that affected curriculum reform was the existence of three separate curricula as a result of divisions among people of BiH. An unfortunate outcome of the war was the division of the education system in BiH starting in 1992: three separate educational systems based on three curricula emerged (Kreso, 2008; Torsti, 2009; Weinstein et al., 2007). One curriculum was Serbian and was adopted mainly from Serbia. Another was Croatian and was ‘imported’ from Croatia. The third was Bosnian and resulted from modifications of the pre-war Republic of BiH curriculum (Kreso, 2008; Weinstein et al., 2007). The existence of three separate educational systems led to the divisions of students and schools along ethnic, or religious, lines. This fragmentation
hampered the educational progress that international organisations strove to bring to BiH (Kreso, 2008).

Moreover, the use of separate curricula gave rise to the utilisation of separate languages of instruction, separate history, religion, and geography textbooks, and separate alphabets and religious studies during the war and in the aftermath of the war (Kreso, 2008; Torsti, 2009; Weinstein et al., 2007). Religious education frequently fuelled conflict between students, a fact that has been attributed to the immediate introduction of religious education classes after the war without adequate preparation of teachers (Kreso, 2008; Weinstein et al., 2007). Similarly, textbooks underestimated particular faiths while favouring others in order to reinforce differences between people. Another segregating practice was found in regions inhabited by Croats and Bosniacs where two schools were housed under one roof. In these schools, Kreso (2008, p. 367) noted, children entered through different doors and used separate rooms of the building or had to come to the school in shifts. Policies aimed at suppressing the dividing and discriminating attitudes/practices in education were designed by the international community, but the implementation of these policies remained utopian (Kreso, 2008; Torsti, 2009).

Educational developments in post-war BiH

Educational developments in post-conflict BiH were undermined by a number of challenges. The main characteristics and ‘developments in reverse’ of the education sector in BiH comprise the highly politicised nature of education and its regulation by numerous laws, insufficiency of educational funding, lack of support for science and research in education, lack of will to adhere to European community educational and curriculum standards, shortage of qualified teachers and mediocre teacher preparation processes, outmoded equipment, high student-teacher ratios and poor adult literacy (Kreso, 2008).
Despite the above challenges, there remain opportunities for change in BiH. Although education in the final decade of the 20th century was characterised by highly segregating and divisive practices, it is likely that many parents and educated people are unhappy with these practices, and can thus help to reverse the situation (Kreso, 2008). In addition, it is probable that the lack of political initiatives to suppress division and discrimination in schools will be resolved through the government’s desire to become a member of the European Union (EU). In its efforts to acquire EU membership, education authorities will have to adhere to EU standards in education (Kreso, 2008).

Post-conflict education in Sierra Leone

Impact of conflict on education in Sierra Leone

The war against the government in Sierra Leone was ignited by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in 1991. It lasted more than a decade and ceased as a result of UN intervention. Educational challenges include the destruction of the education system, the problem of traumatised children and the wider community, and the problem of reintegrating a good number of former child soldiers into civil life (Bretherton, Weston & Zbar, 2005). The latter problem was particularly complex as almost half of the RUF combatants were children, of whom 25 per cent were girls (Betancourt, Simmons, Borisova, Brewer, Iweala & Marie de la Soudière, 2008). In addition, approximately 1.2 million people were displaced, infrastructure was severely damaged, and thousands of people lost their lives as a result of the conflict (Bretherton, Weston & Zbar, 2003). Specifically, about 70 per cent of Sierra Leonean schools were demolished completely or hosted rebels during the war, and others were seriously damaged and required rehabilitation (Hinton, 2009). War in Sierra Leone alienated children and youth from the values of the family and the culture of the country (Hinton, 2009). An additional concern for the country was that schooling continued, albeit with reduced public
support, in areas occupied by rebels and in zones not affected by the conflict (World Bank, 2005).

The conflict in Sierra Leone also affected teachers. A large number of primary school teachers were either killed or left the country during the war years (Hinton, 2009). This brought about a shortage of teachers in all classrooms. In addition, the qualifications and experience of teachers who were trained in refugee camps were not immediately recognised on their return to Sierra Leone (World Bank, 2005).

**Educational development in post-conflict Sierra Leone**

Educational developments have occurred in post-conflict Sierra Leone. The reconstruction and rehabilitation of schools were the priorities of the government and donor community. Five hundred schools, although not enough to accommodate all primary school-aged children, were constructed and rehabilitated from 2001 to 2007 (Hinton, 2009). Primary school enrolment doubled between 2001/2002 and 2004/2005 as a result of the abolition of school fees (Betancourt et al., 2008; Hinton, 2009). Enrolment also increased in junior secondary school, senior secondary school, and tertiary education (Hinton, 2009). Former child soldiers were provided with opportunities to follow short-term education and training programmes funded by NGOs and aimed more at providing them with basic literacy, vocational training, and life skills than at reintegrating them into the formal school system (Betancourt et al., 2008).

Notwithstanding the above developments, challenges remained. While school enrolments rapidly increased, the number of teachers did not. The Student Teacher Ratios (STR) were high in post-conflict Sierra Leone at 66:1 and 112:1 (Hinton, 2009). The latter ratio indicates the number of students per qualified teacher, while the former ratio takes into account both qualified and unqualified teachers. Also, the increase in enrolments should be interpreted with caution since there were still 25 or 30 per cent of children of primary school age (more than 240,000) who were out of school in 2006.
(Hinton, 2009). In addition, despite the rapid increase in school enrolments, there was a gross completion ratio of 65 per cent for primary school in 2004-5 (Hinton, 2009). Furthermore, notwithstanding the abolition of school fees, costs continued to play a significant role in family decisions regarding school attendance since parents still had to purchase uniforms, school supplies and pay community fees (Betancourt et al., 2008).

With regard to curriculum reform, Sierra Leone resumed schooling using existing curricula, textbooks and teachers. There have also been ‘ghost’ teachers in Sierra Leone who were paid while they were not actively teaching (World Bank, 2005). Furthermore, the teaching profession faced high attrition rates since many teachers left the profession, being attracted by good salaries paid by NGOs and international aid agencies (World Bank, 2005).

**Post-conflict education in South Africa**

**Education during apartheid in South Africa**

In Apartheid South Africa racial segregation was legalised and institutionalised. This legalisation and institutionalisation of segregation aimed at protecting white power and the white race (Beinart as cited in Weldon, 2010). Apartheid education was characterised by gross inequities. In the apartheid period, education was employed as a tool for division and repression (Weldon, 2010). Education policy was “based on the principles of trusteeship, non-equality and segregation” (Ashley, 1989, p. 19). Weldon (2010) points out that the Whites’ superiority and the Blacks’ inferiority were deliberately emphasised in the curriculum. Therefore, education prepared blacks to accept the inequality and injustices perpetrated against them (Weldon, 2010). These inequalities included per-student spending being far higher for Whites than for Blacks, and the salary of White teachers being higher than that of their Black counterparts, even when qualifications were the same (Books & Ndakalane, 2011). In addition, there was a
deliberate neglect of teaching science and mathematics to Blacks (Books & Ndلالane, 2011), with the education system for Blacks resting “on a racist anthropology designed to generate cheap labor for what remained a colonially organized economy” (Asmal & James, 2001, p. 186).

**Education in post-apartheid South Africa**

The elections that formally ended apartheid were held in 1994. Post-apartheid South Africa strove to remove the inequities of Apartheid education. In 1995 a national curriculum was established, nine years of basic schooling became compulsory, and a new school funding scheme was introduced (Books & Ndلالane, 2011). According to the provisions of this funding scheme, it was illegal for schools to dismiss students whose families could not or did not pay school fees, a decision which was further extended to granting full or partial exemptions to parents whose incomes were below thresholds fixed by the government (Books & Ndلالane, 2011). Infrastructure in schools improved significantly between 1999 and 2006. In the same period, the percentage of overcrowded schools fell from 51 per cent to 24 per cent of all schools (Books & Ndلالane, 2011).

Although good progress has been made in improving school infrastructure, some challenges have prevailed. While education is one of the greatest failures of the apartheid regime, it is arguably one of the greatest challenges of post-apartheid South Africa (van Schalkwyk, 1998). Books and Ndلالane (2011) summarise these challenges as follows:

Still, as of 2006, almost 12 per cent of South Africa’s 25,145 schools had no water, almost 17 per cent had no electricity, and just over 5 per cent had no toilets. Of the schools with toilets, 60 were using the “bucket system” and 8,509 had only pit latrines. In the Eastern Cape, one of the poorest provinces, 40 per cent of the schools were judged to be in poor condition. In the nation overall, only 7 per cent
of the schools had adequate libraries, and only 10 per cent of all secondary schools had functioning labs. Almost 70 per cent of the schools had no computers, and only 2 per cent were equipped for disabled learners. (p. 86)

As these challenges are also re-iterated by Legotlo (2014), it may be argued that they continue to be encountered by the education system in South Africa.

A further challenge is that of racism reflected in schools and universities. Weldon (2010) highlights that there have existed highly motivated racist actions in educational institutions from 1994 to 2010. Surprisingly, perpetrators of these actions, Weldon (2010) holds, are mostly young people who did not experience apartheid directly. As a remedy to this situation, Weldon (2010) suggests that appropriate teacher professional development programmes should be put in place for enabling teachers to engage with painful personal legacies of the past. This will assist the transformation of the society through the education system in succeeding as teachers are key agents of social change (Weldon, 2010).

**Conclusion**

This chapter began with a review of colonialism and education, and post-colonialism and education in the international arena. This review set the broader context within which education takes place in colonial and post-colonial eras around the world. A distinction between old wars and new wars followed to establish the reasons why Rwanda constitutes an example of a post-new war society. The focus then shifted to a review of the broader context within which education takes place during conflict. The chapter continued with the conceptualisation of challenges affecting education in post-conflict societies and illustrated by considerations of specific post-conflict countries.

As this chapter has demonstrated, contemporary educational realities in developing and colonised nations have been shaped by colonial and post-colonial legacies. Also, the legacies of war have significantly affected educational developments
in post-conflict societies. Such considerations help to contextualise the circumstances surrounding the historical background to, and recent developments in, primary school leadership as well as current concerns of primary school leaders in Rwanda, the focus of the study reported later in this thesis. Chapter Three will now provide a review of the relevant literature.
CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction
Since the end of the Second World War, new wars have become more prominent than previously with the collapse/breakdown of authoritarian states under the impact of globalisation (Kaldor, 2005). Since the end of the Cold War these wars increased dramatically and started to be considered a threat to efforts aimed at attaining the international objective of Education for All (EFA) (Kagawa, 2005; Novelli, 2011). In order to counteract this threat, over the past 20 years, the international community has collaborated with post-conflict societies to rehabilitate, reconstruct, develop and strengthen education systems (Barakat, Connolly, Hardman, Sundaram, 2013). The international community’s interest in reconstructing post-conflict education has also led to the 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report being focused on education and conflict issues (UNESCO, 2011).

The importance of education in (post-) conflict societies is well documented. Effective educational reconstruction in post-new war societies has been deemed to be indispensable for the attainment of peace and reconciliation, for future economic development and in order to meet Millenium Development Goals and EFA objectives (Davies, 2011; McGlynn, Zembijas, Bekerman & Gallagher, 2009; Paulson, 2011a; Paulson, 2011b; Sinclair, 2002; Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005; World Bank, 2005). In particular, during and after violent conflict schools and teachers have been earmarked for restoring a sense of normalcy in society, and for protecting children and adolescents physically, psychosocially and cognitively (Barakat et al., 2013). However, there is a need to be cautious about overstating the importance of education in situations affected by conflict. For example, there is still a need to elucidate the relationship between education and reconciliation in (post-) conflict situations. To illustrate this point,
Paulson (2011b, p. 3) notes that “while reconciliation and its methods remain murky and undefined in most situations affected by conflict, so too do the actual ways in which education might contribute”.

The recognition of the need to provide education in (post-) conflict situations has also raised academic interest in the rapidly growing field of education and conflict. However, research in this area is still very limited (Johnson & van Kalmthout, 2006). Indeed, it constitutes a “field in its infancy” (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005, p. 5). Most insights in the field have been derived less from rigorous research and scholarship in social sciences than from evaluations of the work undertaken by UN agencies, the World Bank and NGOs in societies affected by conflict (Paulson, 2011a). Therefore, there has been only a limited contribution from individual researchers from the academic community (Johnson & van Kalmthout, 2006; Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). Overall, insights point to the potential of education to fuel violent conflict (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2011; Novelli, 2010; Paulson, 2011a) as well as to promote peace, reconciliation and development in conflict and post-conflict settings (Buckland, 2006; Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2004; Davies, 2011; Paulson, 2011a; Paulson, 2011b; World Bank, 2005). Also, the focus of the literature on education shaped by mental health, human rights and international security activists/scholars, has tended towards the formulation of universally applicable sets of experience and has neglected country-specific political, cultural, social and economic context within which schools operate (Hart, 2011).

In general, then, school leadership within the broader area of post-conflict education has been largely overlooked as a subject for academic research. In the past 20 years, most of the educational leadership research has been undertaken in conflict free and Western societies. This has provided insights for such contexts into school culture, change initiation and management (Fullan, 2001; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992), the effect
of school leadership on students’ learning (Leithwood et al., 2004; Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008) and the vital role of school principals in the overall leadership and management of the school (Huber & West, 2002). The lack of sensitivity to other contexts, however, means there is limited research on school leadership in post-new war and developing countries.

Chapter Two of this thesis provided an overview of the context within which education takes place during and after conflict. This chapter provides further contextualisation through a review of the existing literature. First, a general account is provided of educational leadership theory, with a focus on school leadership and management, and on models of educational leadership. This is followed by the provision of a more detailed picture of school leadership in developing countries. The more specific body of literature relating to the field of education and conflict is then presented. This is followed by an overview of the challenges affecting school leaders in post-new war societies. Finally, a brief commentary on existing studies dealing with school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda is presented.

Educational Leadership Theory in General

Understanding school leadership and management

Leadership has been viewed and defined in many different ways. Despite its popularity, the term leadership is elusive to both capture and define. Hoy and Miskel (1987, p. 270) point out that “definitions of the concept are almost as numerous as the scholars engaged in the study”. Similarly, Bass (1990, p. 11) laments the lack of a formal and standardised definition by suggesting that there are “almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept”. However, given the well-documented and evidence-based relationship between high quality school leadership and school effectiveness (Bush, 2007; Bush & Glover, 2003;
Hallinger & Heck, 1998), the positive correlation between quality leadership and student learning (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008; O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010; Watson, 2009) and the impact of quality school leadership on school improvement (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1998), it is important to provide a working definition of this complex concept.

Almost all definitions of leadership have a central element in common: leadership involves the process of influence. This is consistent with Vroom and Jago’s (2007) point when they comment that:

One thing that all leaders have in common is one or more followers. If no one is following, one cannot be leading. One person, A, leads another person, B, if the actions of A modify B’s behavior in a direction desired by A. Note that this definition of leading is restricted to intended influence. Eliminated are instances in which the influence is in a direction opposite of that desired by A or in which changing B’s behavior was not A’s intention (p. 17).

Nevertheless, understanding leadership as ‘influence’ is “neutral in that it does not explain or recommend what goals or actions should be sought through this process” of influence (Bush & Glover, 2003, p. 4). Adopting this stance, Bush and Glover (2003) provide a relatively comprehensive definition of school leadership:

[School] leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision. (p. 8)

In light of the above, school leadership is conceptualised as ‘influence’, ‘vision’, and ‘values’. 

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This brings one to consider the concept of ‘management’. Whereas Bush and Glover (2003) link leadership to values and purpose, they link management to the implementation of policies and the maintenance of current activities in a school. The distinction between leadership and management has also been elucidated clearly by Cuban (1988) when he linked leadership with change and identified management as a maintenance activity. He distinguished leadership from management as follows:

By leadership, I mean influencing others’ actions in achieving desirable ends. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently they initiate change to reach existing and new goals. Occasionally they lead in order to preserve what is valuable, such as, protecting core school functions ... Such leadership, when it occurs, takes as much ingenuity, energy, and skill as starting an innovative programme. (p. 20)

On the other hand, “management is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements” (Cuban, 1988, p. 20). In addition, while managing well often requires leaders to exhibit leadership skills, the overall direction is the prioritisation of maintenance over change (Cuban, 1988).

Notwithstanding the considerations above, West-Burnham (2013, p. 10) argues that “there is still no deep consensus as to the boundaries of leadership and management”. This being so, any distinction between leadership and management does not have to be accurate in every detail. Rather, it should serve to guide our thinking on the managerial and leadership aspects inherent in studies such as the one that is reported in this thesis. It is also helpful at this juncture to consider that school effectiveness and improvement are embedded in Bush and Glover’s (2003) definition of school leadership. This is evidenced by their view of leadership as an influence leading to the attainment of school goals. While the addition of effectiveness to the definition of leadership has been questioned by Podolny, Khurana and Hill-Popper (2005), it may be
argued that leadership in educational settings needs to lead to effectiveness and improvement.

Connecting school leadership to school effectiveness and improvement has led to the description of leadership behaviours that, it is felt, can help to produce successful educational outcomes. As a result, a diverse range of definitions of leadership models which attempt to portray leadership behaviours and practices associated with school effectiveness and improvement has been put forward by scholars in the field (O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010). These models vary depending on modes, types, form, situational context of influence and the nature of interaction between leader and follower making influence possible (Vroom & Jago, 2007). A very brief outline of six such models of educational leadership will now be discussed. Distributed leadership has not been included in the discussion because its “varying descriptions show more divergence than similarity” and a normative approach to distributed leadership tends to dominate the literature on the concept (Timperley, 2005, p. 3).

**Models of educational leadership**

**Managerial leadership**

The focus of managerial leadership is on tasks, behaviours and functions in an organisation. Managerial leadership follows the assumption that organisational members’ behaviour is highly rational (Bush & Glover, 2003). In addition, influence is exerted “through positional authority within the organisational hierarchy” (p. 20). This approach to leadership has been criticised for overlooking the concept of vision characterising most educational leadership models. Furthermore, schools tend to find the managerial leadership model to be very convenient in situations where they were operating in centralised education systems since it focuses on the implementation of
externally imposed imperatives and policies, especially those set by high authorities within the bureaucratic hierarchy (Bush, 2007).

Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership is based on the exchange of rewards between leader and subordinate. It is regularly found to be in operation in political settings where elected leaders adopt a programme aimed at rewarding voters from a certain group for their support during elections (O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010). Singer and Singer (1990) conceptualise transactional leadership as occurring when “a leader motivates subordinates by exchanging rewards for services rendered. The concern of such leaders is typically to clarify subordinates’ goals and to arrange contingent rewards as inducements towards goal attainment” (p. 387).

Sergiovanni (1991) takes a similar view and provides a detailed definition of transactional leadership. He puts it this way:

In transactional leadership, leaders and followers exchange needs and services in order to accomplish independent objectives . . . This bargaining process can be viewed metaphorically as a form of leadership by bartering. The wants and needs of followers and the wants and needs of the leader are traded and a bargain is struck. Positive reinforcement is given for good work, merit pay for increased performance. (pp. 125-126)

Bass and Riggio (2006) include ‘management-by-exception’ as an additional feature of transactional leadership. Management-by-exception relates to leaders intervening only when followers fail to meet the agreed standards and goals. Transactional leaders, Bass and Riggio (2006) hold, do not easily allow followers to deviate from the existing procedures and routines that already exist. This suggests that transactional leadership may not be suitable for change management and initiation.
Such leadership in schools is commonly perceived as being evident in the superintendent’s relationship with principals, teachers and parents (O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010). In addition, this leadership approach can also be evident when interaction between teachers and administrators is occasional, brief and limited to the exchange transaction of some valued resource (Miller & Miller, 2001).

The transactional leadership style has often been contrasted with transformational leadership (Bush & Glover, 2003). The latter approach to leadership is reputed to be more effective than transactional leadership with regard to raising the commitment of followers and fostering effective school leadership (Palmer, Walls, Burgess & Stough, 2000). It has also been reported that transformational leadership tends to be exhibited to a greater extent by women rather than men leaders (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & van Engen, 2003).

Transformational leadership

While transformational leadership has been conceptualised in different ways, there seems to be a consensus as to its central meaning. Unlike transactional leaders, transformational leaders motivate and inspire followers to perform beyond rewards and self-interests in order to achieve organisational goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006; O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010; Singer & Singer, 1990). Transformational leadership is generally defined as the leader’s ability to raise to a higher level the commitments and capacities of followers in order to achieve organisational goals, which result in greater productivity (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999).

This leadership approach has been conceptualised according to three broad categories of leadership practices, namely setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organisation, with each having specific leadership dimensions and behaviours (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). The ‘Setting Directions’ category includes the leadership dimensions of “building school vision, developing specific goals and
priorities, and holding high performance expectations”, while the ‘Developing People’
category encompasses the dimensions “providing intellectual stimulation, offering
individualized support, and modeling desirable professional practices and values”
(Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006, p. 205). Included in the third category, ‘Redesigning the
Organisation’, are the dimensions “developing a collaborative school culture, creating
structures to foster participation in school decisions, and creating productive community
relationships” (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006, p. 205). Furthermore, each of these
leadership dimensions has highly specific and detailed practices encouraging contextual
responses connected with school leaders’ work (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Leithwood
& Jantzi, 2006).

Alongside the above school-specific model of transformational leadership
(Leithwood et al., 1999), there is also Bass’s (1985) model of transformational
leadership. This has been applied by researchers in both school and non-school contexts.
The Bass model comprises four categories of transformational leadership behaviours:
idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised
consideration (Barling, Slater & Kelloway, 2000).

As far as the benefits of transformational school leadership are concerned, there
does exist some empirical support for the effects of this kind of leadership in school
contexts. The available evidence suggests that transformational leadership practices are
most suitable for leading schools facing significant challenging circumstances (Bass &
Riggio, 2006; Eagly et al., 2003; Leithwood et al., 1999), and contribute to
organisational and student outcomes when it is exercised by school principals
(Leithwood, Tomlinson & Genge, 1996). Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) also found some
empirical evidence to suggest that transformational leadership can have significant
effects on teachers’ classroom practices. However, the effect of transformational
leadership practices on student achievement is essentially indirect (Leithwood & Jantzi,
It would seem, therefore, that there is a need to be cautious about the direct effect of this model of leadership on student achievement.

**Moral leadership**

Moral leadership is based on the cultural or spiritual values and beliefs of leaders (Bush & Glover, 2003). It is closely related to the transformational leadership model, but with a stronger emphasis on values (Bush & Glover, 2003). On this, Sergiovanni (1991) highlights the moral dimension of school leadership linking it to the transformational model of leadership:

> The school must move beyond concern for goals and roles to the task of building purposes into its structure and embodying these purposes in everything that it does with the effect of transforming school members from neutral participants to committed followers. (p. 323)

He goes on to add that “the embodiment of purpose and development of followership are inescapably moral”.

However, moral leadership does not coexist easily with managerial leadership in organisations, including schools. It is therefore the task of school leaders to try to match moral imperatives with managerial imperatives if schools are to survive and become true learning organisations (Grace, 2000).

**Instructional leadership**

Instructional leadership has attracted the attention of researchers particularly in contemporary situations dominated by educational accountability and standards-based reforms. It typically “assumes that the critical focus for attention by leaders is the behaviour of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students” (Leithwood et al., 1999). This view of instructional leadership has been criticised for being too ‘narrow’ (Reitzug, West & Angel, 2008). It does not recognise, for instance, the impact of other organisational variables such as school culture on the
behaviours of teachers (Southworth, 2002). As a result, there is a distinction between narrow and broad views of instructional leadership (Marks & Printy, 2003). Southworth (2002) points out that broad forms focus on issues concerning the organisational and teacher culture, whereas narrow forms only focus on teacher behaviours which enhance students’ learning. With the current shift towards learning rather than didactic teaching, the term ‘leadership for learning’ is often more preferred in school leadership literature than instructional leadership (O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010).

Hallinger (2005) draws attention to three dimensions of the principal’s instructional leadership role: defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger, 2001 cited in Hallinger, 2005). He goes on to say that these three dimensions form a model of instructional leadership which has been used most frequently in empirical investigations. The first dimension comprises two functions, namely, framing the goals of the school and communicating the goals of the school (Hallinger, 2005). This concerns the principal’s role in working with staff members to make sure that the school has measurable, clear goals which focus on students’ academic progress. It is the task of the principal to communicate these goals so that they are known and supported by members of the school community (Hallinger, 2005).

The second dimension which is about management of the instructional programme focuses on the coordination and control of instruction and curriculum. It consists of three leadership functions, namely, “supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring students’ progress” (Hallinger, 2005, p. 226). Principals are expected to engage in monitoring, stimulating, and supervising teaching and learning in the school in order to perform the above three leadership functions. Also, these functions require principals to have expertise in teaching and learning, and to be committed to the school’s improvement (Hallinger, 2005).
The third dimension concerns the promotion of a positive school learning climate. It comprises such functions as the protection of instructional time, promotion of professional development, maintenance of high visibility, providing incentives for teachers and learning, and developing high expectations and standards for teachers and students (Hallinger, 2005).

These functions mentioned above that are embedded in the three dimensions of the instructional leadership role of the principal are similar to Marks and Printy’s (2003) set of activities characterising “instructional leadership conventionally understood” (p. 373). These activities include (a) developing the school mission and goals; (b) coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (c) promoting a climate for learning; and (d) creating a supportive work environment. Marks and Printy (2003) argue that teaching and learning are directly and indirectly promoted when principals emphasised these activities.

The models of leadership that have been discussed are not impartial as each seeks to provide a complete picture of school leadership. It is arguable, however, that there is no one single best leadership type and that none of the models above represent the totality of school leadership (Bush & Glover, 2003; Bush, 2007; O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010). This is not to say that these models are irrelevant. Rather, they provide helpful insights that can assist in understanding the nature of school leadership in a variety of societies and contexts.

Understanding the nature of leadership required of schools in the specific context of post-new war societies also warrants attention being paid to other forms of leadership. This is because current educational leadership literature is somewhat silent about the nature of leadership required in those societies (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). At this point, therefore, it is instructive to examine the contingent model of leadership.
Contingent leadership

The contingent leadership model recognises the wide variations in school contexts and requires school leaders to adapt leadership styles to those contexts, instead of relying on a standard leadership model (Bush & Glover, 2003; Bush, 2007; Bush, 2008, Clarke & Wildy, 2004; Yukl, 2002; Vroom & Jago, 2007). Bush and Glover (2003) refer to contingent leadership as an ability of school leaders to effectively deal with the problems they encounter by adapting their leadership approaches to the specific context within which their schools operate. Yukl (2002, p. 234) concurs with this line of thinking and highlights that effective leaders “are flexible and innovative in adapting to fluid situations and rapidly changing events”. Yukl goes on to add that effective leaders seek to understand situational constraints and act in light of them to reach organisational effectiveness.

Vroom and Jago (2007) have identified three propositions regarding the leadership process in any organisation. The first proposition is that “organisational effectiveness (often taken to be an indication of its leadership) is affected by situational factors not under leader control” (Vroom & Jago, 2007, p. 22). This means that although school leaders often receive admiration for success, and blame for failure, school effectiveness is a result of the action of many and is influenced by situations such as government policies, the availability of resources, teachers’ commitment, and community support to list just a few situational variables. The second proposition is that “situations shape how leaders behave” (Vroom & Jago, 2007, p. 22). This means that leaders are affected by their environment and by fairly stable characteristics predisposing them to certain behaviours (Vroom & Jago, 2007). The third proposition is that “situations influence the consequences of leader behaviour” (Vroom & Jago, 2007, p. 23). This means that the effects of what leaders do depend on the situation. That is, popular leaders’ actions such as delegation, trust in people, customer care, shared
decision-making that are effective in one situation may become completely ineffective in a different situation.

A study conducted by Larkin (1973) conducted over 40 years ago revealed that the school community context (lower class and middle class communities) and some internal aspects of the school as an organisation influence leadership behaviours and styles of teachers in classrooms. More recent studies have explored the ways in which context affects the work of school leaders. For example, Dempster, Carter, Freakley, and Parry’s (2004) study of contextual influences on school leaders in Australia revealed that school principals are required to deal with micro and macro-contextual influences while taking important decisions. The study suggested that “decentralization, intensification and complexification [of school principals’ work] are now all part of the contemporary school context and these circumstances have a significant influence on the way principals go about their decision making” (p. 164). Similarly, Hallinger (2003), after reviewing the empirical and theoretical development of the transformational and instructional leadership models, concluded that the efficacy or appropriateness of these models is linked to factors existing in the local school context as well as in the external milieu. The global educational reforms context, Hallinger (2003) added, has also affected the way in which these models have been conceptualised. Furthermore, Hallinger emphasises the importance of considering context in order to understand school leadership. In doing so, he has pointed out that “it is virtually meaningless to study principal leadership without reference to context” (p. 346). Likewise, Leithwood, Louis, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2004), after synthesising research connected with the impact of school leadership on student learning, have highlighted the need for considering certain elements of organisational context such as the geographical location of the school, the level of schooling and school size to understand school leaders’ work.
Notwithstanding the recent literature that has examined the manner in which context influences school leadership, there is still a need for further research aimed at theorising clearly the relationship between context and school leadership. As Gronn and Ribbins (1996) have commented:

The significance of context continues to be badly undertheorised in leadership, but that, if re-conceptualized as the sum of the situational, cultural, and historical circumstances that constrain leadership and give it its meaning, context is the vehicle through which the agency of particular leaders may be empirically understood. (p. 454)

Similarly, Vroom and Jago (2007) highlight that although situational or contextual variables inform leadership practice, the role of the situation in leadership is seldom taken into account. These authors point out that “the field of leadership has identified more closely with the field of individual differences and has largely ignored the way the behaviour of leaders is influenced by the situations they encounter” (Vroom & Jago, p. 22). This observation needs to be taken very seriously by those interested in leadership at the school level in developing countries and in post-conflict situations. This is because leadership in such situations is extraordinarily challenging for organisations, including schools, with school leaders often being required to adopt a leadership style which is different from the one they might use in less complicated and/or relatively stable situations (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013).
School Leadership in Developing Countries

Most of the literature on educational leadership and management has been generated in developed nations and provides insights into conditions and realities of education as they prevail in developed countries (Harber & Davies, 1997; Oplatka, 2004; Otunga, Serem & Kindiki, 2008). In contrast, there is limited empirical research and literature on school leadership in developing countries. At this point in the discussion, it is useful to define the term ‘developing countries’. There is no single definition of this term. Throughout this thesis, however, Oplatka’s (2004) description of a developing country has been embraced as a general guide:

‘Developing countries’ here refers to the countries outside of Europe and North America with a few exceptions (e.g. Australia, New Zealand, Japan, etc.). These countries were ruled by Europeans for a long time, their economy is more agricultural-based, and they are usually characterized by high mortality rates, high birth rates, high levels of poverty and large gaps between rich and poor. (p. 428)

Notwithstanding the similarities detailed here, developing countries do not all have the same cultures, political systems, economies and visions (Oplatka, 2004). Accordingly, the outcomes of any study on school leadership relating to one developing country do not necessarily apply to another developing country.

In the remainder of this section of the chapter the literature on developing countries has been reviewed according to three themes, namely the challenges facing school leaders in developing countries, school leadership preparation, development and support in developing countries; and the nature/type of leadership and management of school leaders in the developing world. Particular reference has been made to African countries because of their comparability with Rwanda, the focus of the study reported later in this thesis.
Challenges facing school leaders in developing countries

Although challenges facing school leaders in developing countries vary from one country to another, there exists a range of problems common to almost all developing nations. These problems differ greatly from those faced by school leaders in developed and industrialised countries (Harber & Davies, 1997). They can be categorised in terms of the following seven dimensions: demographic, economic, resources, violence, health, and culture (Bush, 2008; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Harber & Davies, 1997) and parental inaccessibility (Otunga et al., 2008).

Demographic considerations

A daunting challenge affecting school leaders is that of ensuring that all children receive education in the light of the ever-increasing number of those in the school age population (Bush, 2008; Harber & Davies, 1997). According to Birdsall, Levine, and Ibrahim (2005), approximately 121 million primary school age children were not enrolled in school in 2005. The situation was worst in African and South Asian countries. The recent Millennium Development Goal Report (United Nations, 2012), however, provides a more promising picture, suggesting that from 1999 to 2010 there was a net enrollment rate increase of 8 per cent up from 82 to 90 per cent in many developing regions, but the rate in Sub-Saharan Africa remained low, at 76 per cent.

For long it has been known that the low enrollment problem is mainly caused by governments’ inability to afford to pay for education for all, parents’ lack of capacity to pay school fees, child labour, and persistent traditional beliefs that girls do not need to go to school to become good wives and mothers (Harber & Davies, 1997). More recently, it has been realised that there is also a high drop out rate of children from poor families (Bush, 2008; Onguko, Abdalla & Webber, 2012). Adolescent pregnancy has been found to be one contributing factor in this regard (Bush, 2008; Harber & Dadey, 1993; Onguko et al., 2012). In 2005 it was estimated that “just 51 per cent of children
(46 per cent of girls) complete primary school” in Africa, and “74 per cent of children (and just 63 per cent for girls) do so” in South Asia (Birdsall et al., 2005, p. 338). This situation challenges school leaders “who are forced to mentally adjust to accommodate these difficulties and at the same time counsel the classroom teachers to do likewise (Otunga et al., 2008, p. 377).

Economic and resource considerations

Global economic changes have created economic hardship that is significant both for school leaders and for education in general in developing countries. Many developing countries have been affected by global economic changes which undermine the quality and quantity of the education provided (Tikly, 2001). Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) which require states to decrease funding of relevant sectors including health, welfare and education, have been imposed on developing countries by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Otunga et al., 2008). This has resulted in a decrease in the budget allocated to the education sector in such countries and has led to a low quantity and quality of education input (Carnoy, 1995; Tilak, 1997). For example, in implementing SAPs policies Kenya lowered expenditure on education and other critical services, with teachers’ pay being highly affected (Otunga et al., 2008). This resulted in many teachers in Kenya having more than one job in order to make ends meet. This, in turn, has had an effect on their teaching morale and has contributed to absenteeism and arriving late to school (Bush, 2008; Otunga et al., 2008). Consequently, there has been a significant impact on the role of school leaders in curriculum and learning. Also, given the economic difficulties affecting schools, school leaders in developing countries often face problems connected with the development of educational infrastructure, the provision of teaching and learning materials, and human resources development (Otunga et al., 2008). Furthermore, in addition to dealing with
financial hardship caused by the implementation of SAPs, school leaders in developing countries are often required to meet the economic needs of poor students (Bush, 2008).

A lack of physical and human resources is another contextual challenge faced by school leaders in developing countries (Harber & Dadey, 1993; Kitavi & van der Westhuizen; Maiyo, Amunga & Ashioya, 2009). In this connection, Kitavi and van der Westhuizen (1997) have found that school leaders in developing nations, including many located in Africa, face a broad repertoire of problems. These include the inability of students to buy textbooks, scarcity of school equipment, scarcity of physical materials, absence of staff accommodation, and a lack of playgrounds. These circumstances are particularly challenging for countries which have managed to attain high student enrolment rates as teachers work in overcrowded and underfurnished classrooms (Otunga et al., 2008; Rogers & Vegas, 2010). In addition, a lack of water, latrines and electricity has been documented (Bush, 2008; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Harber & Davies, 1997). This situation seems to be common in many developing countries given that it is also experienced by South Africa, the most economically stable country in the African continent (Bush & Oduro, 2006).

Harber and Dadey (1993) drew attention over twenty years ago to a further contextual challenge relating to the shortage of qualified teachers, especially in primary schools in Africa. On this, Bush (2008) reported more recently that many primary school teachers have not completed secondary school education in sub-Saharan Africa. Small island states, Bush (2008) adds, also suffer from a shortage of human resources. This, in turn, requires school leaders to innovate and apply practical strategies to overcome the problems pertaining to the existence of limited resources (Otunga et al., 2008).
Health and cultural considerations

In keeping with the extreme poverty characterising many developing countries, school leaders often have to operate in schools catering for hungry students. Bush (2008) notes that in such countries many families suffer from a food crisis and malnutrition. Also, many children and teaching staff may suffer from such killer diseases as malaria and HIV/AIDS (Bush, 2008; Harber & Davies, 1997). For example, in Zambia it has been estimated that the number of teachers dying as a result of having HIV infection is greater than that of graduating teachers (Gachuhi, 1999). Nowadays school leaders in many developing countries are urged to collaborate with NGOs and government bodies to support HIV affected learners (Otunga et al., 2008).

It has also been noted for some time that corruption and nepotism can be common enough in developing countries and can directly or indirectly hamper school leaders (Bush, 2008; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Harber & Dadey, 1993). In addition, tribalism may be prevalent in educational institutions in many West African countries, including Togo, Nigeria, Liberia and Ghana (Harber & Dadey, 1993; Moriba & Edwards, 2009). In these countries, some school leaders are appointed through tribal and political patronage, and it is reported that often those who are recruited in this manner may lead schools as dictators and authoritarians (Moriba & Edwards, 2009). Another cultural dimension that requires attention is the low level of girls’ education. This is particularly the case in Somalia, in some West African countries, and in parts of East Africa where some communities do not value education of girls (Otunga et al., 2008; Warrington & Kiragu, 2014). The low level of girls’ education is also considered a barrier to women’s participation in educational leadership and decision making positions in many developing countries (Oplatka, 2006). For example, women in Uganda are under-represented in school administration and leadership (Sperandio & Kagoda, 2010).
Violence

Violence is an additional problem faced by school leaders in developing countries. Harber and Davies (1997) argue that wars and violent unrest have characterised many developing nations, especially those located in Africa. Otunga et al. (2008, p. 378) point out that violence can prevent schools in parts of Africa from running smoothly, and this can have a negative impact on the work of school leaders. These authors go on to comment that school leaders in some African countries have faced violence (sometimes deadly violence) while performing their duties. Examples of African countries which have encountered war and violent unrest in recent times include Burundi, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbambwe and Angola (Otunga et al., 2008).

Inaccessibility of parents

The inaccessibility of parents must also be contended with by school leaders in developing countries. The reasons for this inaccessibility are threefold. First, parents can be inaccessible because they are busy looking for money to pay school fees and buy textbooks for their children (Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997). Secondly, the poverty of many parents means they spend much of their time searching for the next meal of the day (Otunga et al., 2008). Thirdly, the illiteracy and ignorance of some parents means they do not appreciate the significance of education for their children (Otunga et al., 2008). As a consequence, school leaders can often make important decisions affecting children without prior consultation with parents. This lack of consultation can then lead to conflict between them and the parents involved (Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997).

Notwithstanding the previous discussion, it could be argued that much of the literature on education in developing countries overstates the problem of underprovision and poor quality of education, and does not provide enough information on strategies
used by educationists to deal with those problems. Over emphasising challenges can be dangerous as it may hinder academic discussion and constructive debate. Moreover, the lack of knowledge about strategies adopted by school leaders while dealing with school issues indicates a lacuna in the existing research that needs to be filled.

While it is true that the context/conditions within which most schools operate in developing countries remain problematic, it is fair to say that significant progress has been made in some countries in terms of increasing life expectancy, primary school enrolment, food production, and increasing females’ access to education (Harber & Davies, 1997, Otunga et al., 2008). At the same time, it needs to be kept in mind that not all school leaders in developing nations face the challenges outlined in this section. In this connection, Harber and Davies (1997) point out that some schools located in rich zones in large cities in such countries function in conditions similar to those prevailing in developed countries. That said, as the overwhelming majority of people in developing countries are poor and live in the countryside, they experience many, if not all, of the above outlined problems (Harber & Davies, 1997).

**School leadership preparation, development and support in developing countries**

Evidence from the literature suggests that formal leadership and management training is often not available for pre-service principals in most developing countries (Arikewuyo, 2009; Bush & Jackson, 2002; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Harber & Davies, 1997; Oplatka, 2004; Otunga et al., 2008). As a result, principals are not required to be trained managers. Rather, they “are often appointed on the basis of a successful record as teachers with an implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership” (Bush & Oduro, 2006, p. 362). Otunga et al. (2008) make a similar point by alluding to the dearth of deliberately planned programmes for leadership preparation for school leaders in most developing countries, a situation that is aggravated by financial constraints. The argument that principals in most developing
countries are appointed on the basis of their teaching qualification and experience at the expense of leadership potential and skills is also stated by Mestry and Singh (2007) and by Mathibe (2007).

While possessing a teaching qualification and an appropriate professional background are critical to effective school leadership, it is arguable that school principals also require a rigorous and specific preparation for the principalship. Bush (2008), for example, suggests that the principalship is becoming a very demanding occupation and thus requires specific preparation. He lists four reasons for this: the role of school principal has expanded; the school contexts are increasingly complex; there is a need to recognise leadership preparation as a moral imperative; there is an increasing realisation that effective leadership preparation and development make a difference. The increasing recognition that effective school-level management is connected with school improvement also highlights the desirability of initial preparation for school level leaders.

Recently, some developing countries have initiated formal leadership preparation programmes for aspiring school leaders. In Kenya, for example, school leadership preparation programmes are now offered by universities, systemic authorities and consultants (Onderi & Croll, 2008). It has been concluded, however, that some of these programmes have been developed in an ad hoc manner and do not meet the professional needs of aspiring and practising principals in the country (Asuga & Eacott, 2012; Onderi & Croll, 2008). Similarly, research undertaken in Kenya and Tanzania by Onguko, Abdalla and Webber (2008) revealed the insufficient capacity of educational institutions in these countries to prepare new school principals or to provide ongoing professional development for practising school leaders. Furthermore, the authors, after analysing principal preparation programmes, found gaps in areas of instructional leadership, educational technology, and visioning.
In South Africa, an Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE) qualification is being offered by universities and it is expected that new principals will obtain this qualification within three years of appointment (Bush, 2011; Mestry & Singh, 2007). In the Middle East region, apart from Israeli and Lebanon, the majority of countries used to follow a theocratic approach to school leadership preparation and development as school leaders were expected to reproduce a traditional Islamic society that is in line with the local interpretation of Islam (Macpherson & Tofighian, 2008). However, most countries in this region, except for Sudan and Yemen, are ‘Westernising’ school leadership by offering programmes in American and European school leadership skills and practices with local universities (Macpherson & Tofighian, 2008).

An overview of school leadership preparation in Latin America has deliberately focused on three large countries in the region, namely, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. In Brazil, it is mandatory for school administrators to hold a degree or a graduate degree in pedagogy. This degree is offered by many higher education institutions in the country and consists of components in school administration, education management, education policies, and organisation of the education system (Ventura, Costa & dos Santos, 2008). Also, specialist degrees in educational administration and supervision are provided in those institutions (Ventura et al., 2008). In Chile, the study of school administration has been introduced in the curricula of some higher education institutions providing degrees in pedagogy, but there are no specialist degree programmes aimed at preparing participants to become effective school managers (Ventura et al., 2008). Similarly, in Argentina, educational management and policy is included in some education degrees, but they remain generalist degrees (Ventura et al., 2008).

Relatedly, in-service training opportunities for newly appointed school leaders are often seen as part of induction (Bush, 2008; Bush & Oduro, 2006). Opportunities in this
regard for leadership development and support exist in some developing countries, including Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana, but they are not extensive (Bush, 2008). These professional circumstances have posed challenges for principals who are required to manage and lead schools effectively without management and leadership skills. In South Africa, however, in-service professional development has accelerated with the introduction of what is known as the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership programme. This has been offered since 2007 as an in-service programme to principals, deputy principals and members of school management teams aspiring to the principalship (Bush, 2011; Bush, Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2011). Similarly, in Ghana there are attempts to make in-service professional development available to many school principals. For example, since 2009, a University of Cambridge team, in partnership with the University of Cape Coast, and financially assisted by the Commonwealth Education Trust, has introduced a ‘leadership for learning’ professional development programme. The first cohort of students in this programme consisted of 125 principals (MacBeath & Swaffield, 2013). The very positive evaluation of the impact that this first cohort had in the workplace has convinced the Ghanaian government to provide financial support for the programme and extend it nationwide (MacBeath & Swaffield, 2013).

In most Middle East countries, practising school principals are expected to learn on the job, attend Ministry of education leadership trainings, and upgrade their academic qualifications (Macpherson & Tofighian, 2008). In Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, in-service training for school leaders focuses on school practices and projects, as well as on educational policies designed by the central government (Ventura et al., 2008). In addition, in Brazil, a “Progestão program” consisting of “an in-service course, with both in-room classes and web-based classes” has been adopted in many states
(Ventura et al., 2008, p. 334). The course lasts 270 hours and is very practical, using theory to solve real and situational problems faced by schools (Ventura et al., 2008).

**Leadership and management styles of school leaders in developing countries**

There is a paucity of research and associated literature about the type of leadership employed by school leaders in developing countries. This is attributable to the fact that little academic attention has been paid by scholars to the study of school leadership in the diverse cultural and national contexts that characterise developing countries (Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997; Oplatka, 2004; Simkins, Sisum & Memon, 2003).

Oplatka (2004) in his analysis of the principalship in developing countries, identified the absence of leadership for learning, the prioritisation of management and maintenance over leadership, and the lack of change initiation as being significant deficiencies of school leadership in these contexts. Each of these deficiencies will now be considered in turn.

**The absence of leadership for learning**

While school leaders in many Western countries are increasingly engaged in activities aimed at fostering the development of leadership for learning (O’Donoghue & Clarke, 2010; Southworth, 2002), their counterparts in the developing world are rarely involved in such activities (Oplatka, 2004). Given the fact that in many developing nations education systems are highly centralised, and education and the principalship are given little value, student learning and achievement are not a priority for school leaders. Oplatka (2004) put it this way:

The highly centralised systems in developing countries, coupled with the minor importance attached to principalship and education, appear to create a narrow definition of the role that is largely expressed by the over-emphasis accorded
administrative-managerial functions and the relatively small amount of attention given to instructional tasks. (p. 432)

Similarly, Bush (2008) found that school leaders in many developing countries tend to overlook the exercise of leadership for learning.

School leaders in many developing countries spend the majority of their time performing administration and management-related activities instead of devoting much attention to the practice of leadership for learning. This problem is more prevalent in African countries than in South East Asian countries, where principals tend to emphasise the practice of instructional leadership (Oplatka, 2004). In addition, as noted earlier, the context within which schools operate in developing countries and associated cultural dimensions shaping the role of school leaders, can undermine the practice of leadership for learning in those nations (Harber & Dadey, 1993; Oplatka, 2004).

Prioritisation of management and maintenance over leadership

Research over twenty years ago suggested that school principals in some developing countries spend a good deal of time maintaining discipline, ordering equipment, determining staffing needs, scheduling activities and tasks, managing school finance and resources, allocating staff, and ensuring that members of the teaching staff keep records accurately (Chapman & Burchfield, 1994; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003). In other words, they are both managers and administrators (Botha, 2004). Making a similar observation, Oplatka (2004) noted that many African school principals were interested in performing simple managerial tasks and striving to satisfy basic needs and functions which differed from those of their counterparts in the Western world. Furthermore, due to economic difficulties faced by schools, fundraising was reported as another administrative function mainly performed by principals in some developing countries (Oplatka, 2004). For example, school principals in Botswana, China, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa engaged in fundraising activities to gain access to facilities such as the
telephone, clean water, and physical materials (Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997, Oplatka, 2004). There is little evidence to indicate that matters have changed much since these observations were first made.

It seems that popular effective leadership approaches such as transformational leadership, instructional leadership, distributed leadership, democratic leadership reported as being applied by school leaders in developed countries are seldom found in the literature pertaining to school leadership in developing countries (Litz, 2011). School leadership in developing countries has often been associated with autocratic leadership styles, rather than democratic ones (Litz, 2011; Oplatka, 2004). It is not known whether these effective leadership approaches are totally absent in developing countries. This is because educational leadership research focuses more on the experiences generated from developed and Western countries than on the experiences from developing nations (Moorosi & Bush, 2011).

The lack of change initiation

The incapacity of school leaders in developing countries to initiate and lead educational change has also been documented. While school leaders in Western countries often initiate and lead change in their schools, school leaders in many developing countries do not have a great proclivity to engage in reform (Litz, 2011; Oplatka, 2004). This may be attributable to the bureaucratic rules and structures dominating many governments in developing countries, which do not give opportunities for school leaders to take risks and thus engage in change initiation and management (Bush, 2008; Simkins et al., 2003). In these circumstances, change tends to be initiated by policy makers and school leaders are urged to implement externally imposed policies, rules, and procedures (Bush, 2008; Oplatka, 2004).

The above depiction of leadership exercised by school leaders has not changed a great deal in the wake of recent decentralisation reforms introduced in many developing
countries (Oplatka, 2004). Although education decentralisation has shown many promising results, some school leaders in these nations have not yet adopted democratic ideals associated with decentralisation (Khanal, 2010). That is, school leaders’ leadership practices are still rooted in the traditional bureaucratic culture, which undermines change initiation and prioritises management over leadership (Khanal, 2010). In addition, much research aimed at promoting a better understanding of how decentralisation policy has affected the leadership and management styles of school leaders in developing societies is needed.

Many post-new war societies are arguably located in developing countries. Despite similarities between these societies, post new-war societies are, as outlined in Chapter Two, unique in their own way and thus need to be considered separately from developing countries. Attention is now turned to the literature concerning school leadership in post-new war societies.

**School Leadership in Post-New War Societies**

**Education and conflict**

The content of this sub-section is significantly different from the preceding discussion around ‘education in emergencies’ in Chapter Two of this thesis, although there may be some slight overlap. While the discussion of ‘education in emergencies’ focused on the rationale for education in emergency situations and on education during conflict in a general way, attention is now turned to the more specific body of literature on, and on the critics in, the field of education and conflict.

During the past 20 years three streams of research seem to have dominated in studies of education and conflict. The first stream of research has focused on the impact of war on education systems generally. This literature has been extensively discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis. Another stream of research, which is the focus of much of
the existing literature in the field, has focused narrowly on the potential of educational access and expansion to prevent, or promote, conflict (Novelli, 2010). A third body of research has focused on the complex and multifaceted role of education in (post-) conflict societies (Buckland, 2006; Davies, 2004; Gallagher, 2004; Novelli & Lopez-Cardozo, 2008; Paulson, 2011a).

The literature concerned with the relationship between educational access and conflict holds that increasing and expanding access to education have the potential to prevent the re-occurrence of conflict. Nevertheless, while increasing educational opportunities and access can provide positive possibilities, including a rapid post-conflict economic recovery and the restoration of a sense of normalcy in the community (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005), the claim that educational expansion and access is the only condition for sustainable peace has been questioned in a number of studies (Bush & Saltarelli 2000; Davies 2004; Davies, 2011; Paulson, 2011a; Smith, 2005; Smith & Vaux 2003; Stewart, 2005). In these studies, it is argued that education is highly connected to numerous root sources of a conflict, including the identity and culture of social groups, the distribution of resources among social groups, and access to political power by those groups (Degu, 2005; Smith, 2005; Stewart, 2005). As a result, it is unlikely that long-lasting peace can be brought about solely through funds being put into education to increase access. Rather, the root causes of a conflict that are connected to education should be taken into consideration in post-conflict reconstruction processes. In particular, inequalities and injustices of the pre-conflict education system should be acknowledged and addressed as part of post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation (Laplante, 2008).

Unlike the above narrow view of education in (post-) conflict situations, the broad view recognises that education is connected to more than one cause of conflict, making its relationship with conflict a complex one. Since 2000 the focus of the literature has
been on the complex link between education, peacebuilding and statebuilding, and on how education can bring about broad social changes and transformation conducive to a sustainable peace and development (Novelli, 2010; Paulson, 2011a; Paulson, 2011b; Smith, 2005). The influential works such as those of Bush and Salterelli (2000) and Smith and Vaux (2003) have been instrumental in elucidating the two faces, positive and negative, of education in ethnic conflict. Davies (2004) went beyond this line of thinking in explaining the complex relationship between education and conflict:

Education indirectly does more to contribute to the underlying causes of conflict than it does to contribute to peace. This is through reproduction of economic inequality and the bifurcation of wealth/poverty; through the promotion of a particular version of hegemonic masculinity and gender segregation; and through magnifying ethnic and religious segregation or intolerance. Schools are adaptive, but they tend toward equilibrium rather than radical emergence; hence at best they do not challenge existing social patterns that are generative of conflict. At worst, they act as amplifying mechanisms. (p. 203)

In this context, scholars have also argued that it is not the education system per se, but rather its structure and content which can either fuel and contribute to conflict, or promote peace and reconciliation (Davies, 2004; Gallagher, 2004; McGlynn et al., 2009; Paulson, 2011a; Smith, 2005).

The structure of the education system can foster conflict when it is fragmented and segregationist as, for example, in case of post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina, where three separate educational systems coexisted (Kreso, 2008; Torsti, 2009; Weinstein et al., 2007). There is also a growing agreement that a post-conflict education system characterised by the decentralisation of educational reforms and financial control promote community ownership and capacity building, thus increasing the potential for a better functioning of schools (Davies, 2011). With regard to the content of the education
system, academic attention in recent years has been paid to school curricula and textbooks used in post-conflict societies (World Bank, 2005). These curricula and textbooks may carry messages that fuel conflict and can be barriers, therefore, to attaining sustainable peace and reconciliation (Paulson, 2011a; Paulson, 2011b). Of particular importance is the nature of the teaching of history and the nature of the language of instruction in ethnically divided post-conflict societies (Paulson, 2011a; Paulson, 2011b; Torsti; 2009). Moreover, peace education, human rights education, and inclusive citizenship education are the three widely known curricular approaches that can be incorporated into a school curriculum to contribute to peace building after war (Cunningham, 2013; Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). Nevertheless, teachers in post-conflict situations tend to be familiar with teaching using authoritarian teaching methods, which pose a challenge to the teaching of these subjects (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005).

Critics within the field of education and conflict also point to the existence of theoretical assumptions, and the gap between broad concepts and practice in the field. Weinstein, et al. (2007, p. 42) put it this way: “educational change after mass violence suffers from untested assumptions, a dearth of focused research, a gap between broad concepts and practice in the field”. This concurs with Tomlinson and Benefield’s (2005, p. 8) observation that while there exist many research gaps in the emerging field of education and conflict, the most significant gap is that existing between research and practice. The research-practice/policy gap is also acknowledged by Karpinska, Yarrow and Gough (2007). Similarly, Paulson (2011a) has drawn attention to the lack of research rigour in the field. In addition, the neglect of country-specific politics, culture and economy has promoted the tendency to formulate universally applicable sets of experiences (Hart, 2011; Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). It is also argued that much of the existing research in the field of education and conflict has adopted a narrow,
pragmatic, technical approach to problem-solving and has lacked a critically informed approach to inquiry (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008). Furthermore, the lack of linkage between globalisation theories and insights from the field of education and conflict has been highlighted (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008).

Another criticism of the field is that there is a lack of a fine conceptualisation of education and conflict. This is reflected in an ‘alphabet soup’ of terminologies used to refer to the field of ‘education and conflict’. These terminologies include, for example, ‘education in crisis situations’, ‘emergency education’, ‘education for reconstruction’, ‘education and instability’ and finally ‘education in fragile states’ (Karpinska, et al., 2007). In line with this range of terminology, there is growing tendency to substitute the term ‘education and conflict’ with the term ‘education and fragility’ or ‘education in fragile states’ (Kirk, 2011; Kirk, 2007). A fragile state has been defined as “a state where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor” (Kirk, 2011, p. 16). This definition is based on predictions about the likelihood of a country becoming a fragile state, and it is arguable that not all fragile states have experienced violent conflict. To put it another way, the cause of fragility characterising low-income and poorly performing countries is not necessarily violent conflict. For example, the legacies of imperialism and globalisation can fail a state, or make it successful (Kirk, 2011). In addition, fragile states are not only low-income countries, but can also be middle income countries. Indeed, in 2013 almost half of the fragile states were middle income (OECD, 2013). Therefore, although the ‘fragility’ lens opens a new and broad avenue promoting international concern for education and development, it is arguable that the ‘conflict’ lens should be maintained because of its potential to portray specifically (post-) conflict contexts without encompassing all poor, poorly performing, and middle income states.
Challenges for school leaders in post-new war societies

As there is a dearth of research on school leadership in post-conflict societies, it is only possible to review some of the challenges affecting school leaders in those societies. One of these challenges relates to the importance placed on the role of education in post-new war societies. This has been discussed in a number of ways within Chapter Two of this thesis. The problems and challenges affecting education systems in post-conflict settings have also been outlined in that Chapter. These problems, it will be recalled, include a lack of domestic revenue to keep education systems running, a chronic shortage of qualified teachers, an oversupply of under-qualified or unqualified teachers, a high number of war-affected youth, poor record keeping, corruption, a lack of transparency in education governance, under-resourced skills training for youth, coordination challenges, and the existence of few development and reconstruction programmes that involve young people (Buckland, 2006). Issues pertaining to curricular reconstruction, peace education, and history education have also been found challenging for post-conflict societies (Smith, 2005; World Bank, 2005).

A number of more recent empirical studies have examined school leadership at the individual school level in post-conflict settings. For example, Earnest’s (2013a) study of school leadership in conflict-affected districts of Sri Lanka revealed a number of challenges for school leaders in that nation. These include the school leaders’ requirement to provide additional learning support to many children who fail to attend school regularly, dealing with the inability of war-affected families to pay for school materials and students’ uniform, working with depleted resources, and dealing with psychological problems caused by the conflict. The lack of effective professional development programmes for school leaders has also been highlighted (Earnest, 2013a).

Another study by Goddard and Buleshkaj (2013) on school leadership in post-conflict Kosovo identified some of the challenges for school leaders at the individual
school level. These challenges include those related to strategic planning, professional
development, educational management and administration, and school principal
selection (Goddard & Buleshkaj, 2013).

A further set of difficulties for school leaders is to be found within post-conflict
Timor-Leste. School leaders in this country lack clear and consistent policies for
guiding them while making decisions (Beck & Araujo, 2013). They are also challenged
by their schools’ poor sanitation, the lack of basic infrastructure, the existence of poor
playgrounds, and the scarcity of technological materials which could assist them to
dispense a more holistic education for their students. Similarly, a lack of effective
professional development in areas of curriculum implementation, as well as a shortage
of textbooks to support curriculum implementation, hamper teaching and learning in the
classroom (Beck & Araujo, 2013). Relatedly, school leaders encounter difficulties in
supporting many teachers who are not proficient in the Portuguese language, which is
the language of instruction in Timor-Leste from primary school onwards (Beck &
Araujo, 2013; Macpherson, 2011). Other problems include corruption, an unattractive
salary for teachers and for school leaders, mismanagement of school grants, and high
repetition rates in rural schools (Macpherson, 2011).

The challenges just described are also evident to a certain extent for school leaders
in post-conflict Angola. In particular, school leadership challenges in Angola comprise
school leaders’ lack of initiative, the approval of violence, and the lack of teacher
professionalism and motivation (Davies, 2013). School leaders’ lack of initiative is
reflected, for example, in the reluctance of school principals to travel to town to collect
textbooks, or other teaching materials. The acceptance of violence is evidenced by the
existence of corporal punishment and other forms of violence in schools. Finally, the
lack of teacher professionalism is manifested through a high level of absenteeism, abuse
of authority, and sexual harassment of girls (Davies, 2013). However, it is difficult to
confirm specifically if the above challenges are attributable to the conflict and its causes, or to the combination of poverty, corruption and the lack of equity that characterises all fragile states including Angola (Davies, 2013).

A number of challenges faced by school leaders in post-conflict Lebanon have also been identified. These challenges are fourfold. They relate to poverty, trauma, curriculum reform and school culture (Maadad, 2013). Owing to poverty and an associated lack of political will for change, school leaders in Lebanon operate in very poor conditions, characterised, for example, by a lack of basic classroom equipment such as desks, furniture for sitting, and blackboards (Maadad, 2013). With regard to trauma, it is noted that people, especially children remain traumatised despite the war having ceased in 1990. Maadad (2013) depicts this situation as follows:

An entire society still lives in denial. Some do not talk about what happened, some are afraid to return to their villages and original homes and some are disabled physically and scared. Others are still grieving the loss of family members, friends and neighbours, and others yet again are refusing to even step outside of their homes. (p. 134)

This suggests that school leaders and teachers encounter such challenges as counseling traumatised students and managing their behaviours. Yet many staff often have not received any counseling training (Maadad, 2013). In regard to curriculum reform as a challenge for school leaders, they are required to support many teachers who have difficulties in the use of learner-centred teaching methods prescribed in the new curriculum. This task is not performed well as they themselves often do not have sufficient information about the new curriculum (Maadad, 2013). In addition, the teaching of new subjects available in the new curriculum requires additional resources that are not available in schools (Maadad, 2013). As far as school culture as a challenge is concerned, school leaders struggle to shift from the traditional view according to
which teachers know everything and cannot be challenged, to the ‘modern’ view in
which teachers are considered to be facilitators of teaching-and-learning processes
(Maadad, 2013). In addition, school principals’ power and autonomy are limited in the
context of bureaucratic culture that characterises Lebanese public schools. School
leaders may also be required to deal with the diverse cultures existing within schools by
promoting multicultural understanding between children (Maadad, 2013).

Notwithstanding the identification of the above challenges, much more research
needs to be undertaken in the area of school leadership in post-conflict societies. While
some challenges affecting school leaders in post-conflict settings seem to be reasonably
well known, school leadership literature is silent about the strategies adopted by school
leaders to deal with them. In particular, little is known about what kind of leadership is
required at the individual school level in post-new war societies. This concurs with
Clarke and O’Donoghue’s (2013) recent observation that very little empirical research
has been undertaken at an international level into how school leaders in post-conflict
societies conceptualise their work. Most research in the field of education and conflict,
it seems, has largely focused on education at the macro-level of the national political
context in societies affected by conflict. School leadership at the micro-level of the
school in those societies has, on the other hand, been relatively neglected as a subject
for academic research (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013; Milligan, 2010).
School Leadership in Post-new war Rwanda

Regarding the specific literature on Rwanda, very few empirical studies exist that are focused specifically on school leadership in the post-conflict era. Only four empirical studies have been located. Nkurikyumukiza’s (2010) thesis, *Educational leadership and management of change in higher education: Implementation of module-based teaching and learning at National University of Rwanda*, investigated the nature of the leadership exhibited by managers and lecturers for the successful implementation of change in the academic programme at the National University of Rwanda. Kambanda’s thesis, *The role of high school principals in leading and managing their schools: A Case study of Huye District in Rwanda*, investigated how high school principals shape their schools’ culture in order to promote students’ and staff professional learning. Another study is that of Irechukwu (2010), entitled *School management positions and women empowerment: A Rwandan case*. It examined the capacity of women principals to effectively manage secondary schools. Neither of these three studies focused on school leadership at the primary school level in post-conflict Rwanda. Of particular importance is the work by Earnest (2013b), entitled *Challenges for school leadership in a transitional, post-conflict nation*. Although this work revealed a number of challenges faced by school principals in post-conflict Rwanda, it did not provide insights into strategies employed by school principals to deal with those challenges. In addition, there is no consideration of developments, if any, that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda.

Some empirical studies that have focused on education more broadly in post-conflict Rwanda, however, do exist. For example, Twagilimana (1996) described policy alternatives for constructing an expanded Rwandan secondary education system without aggravating inequalities and compromising education quality. Obura (2003) examined post-war education policy in Rwanda, and found it promoted national unity and
reconciliation, prioritised equal access to education, promoted inclusive education, and abolished the ethnic quota system. At the same time, she (Obura, 2003) pointed out that post-war education in Rwanda was challenged to provide accessible and relevant education for the poorest and child-headed households. Bridgeland, Wulsin and McNaught (2009) assessed the progress, needs and shortcomings of primary education, secondary education and tertiary education in post-conflict Rwanda. Schweisfurth (2006) investigated global and cross-national influences on education in the country. The World Bank (2004) also undertook a comprehensive and detailed review of education in the country and reported on enrollment trends and student flow patterns at all levels, as well as on education finance, service delivery in primary, secondary and higher education, and on education and the labour market. Finally, Karangwa, Miles and Lewis (2010) and Karangwa (2006) investigated community level responses to disability and the implications of the community responses for the inclusion of children with disabilities in schools.

**Conclusion**

Scholars in the emerging field of education and conflict have not paid enough academic attention to the area of school leadership in post-conflict societies. As a result, school level leadership in post-new war countries has largely been ignored as a subject for academic research (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). This proposition also holds for educational leadership at the individual school level in developing countries since most of the research in educational leadership has been conducted in relatively stable, industrialised and developed nations (Harber & Davies, 1997; Oplatka, 2004; Otunga et al., 2008).

While common challenges affecting school leaders in both post-conflict and developing countries seem to be known, there is a significant research lacuna as it relates to the strategies adopted by school leaders in order to deal with the complexities
of their work. It is also arguable that the well documented challenges are not always researched in a systematic way (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). There is, therefore, a perceived need to investigate school leadership in post-conflict settings. This endeavour could result in the development of an array of possible effective approaches to reconstructing post-conflict education systems that could be put to the test in a range of countries (Barakat et al., 2013). At the same time, care should be taken while implementing those approaches because not all post-conflict situations face the same challenges and require the same intervention. In other words, what has worked successfully in one context may not work in another context (Sinclair, 2002). This reiterates a need to conduct research aimed at elucidating the relationship between context and leadership in distinctive settings.

As Rwanda is both a post-conflict and a developing country, the study reported in this thesis, which focuses specifically on the historical background to and recent developments in primary school leadership as well as current concerns of primary school leaders in post-conflict Rwanda, is one contribution to understanding the influence of context on leadership practices. In a similar vein, it represents a contribution to addressing the research gap that has been identified in the existing literature relating to strategies adopted by school leaders to deal with the distinctive challenges they face in post-conflict settings.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction
The review of the literature relating to school leadership in post-new war societies and developing countries presented in the previous chapter indicated that little is known about the strategies adopted by school leaders to deal with the contextual complexity in which schools in these societies are located, and that no holistic study has been undertaken on primary school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda. The study reported in this thesis is one contribution to addressing this deficit. Three aims were pursued in the study. The first aim was to develop an understanding of the historical background to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994. The second aim was to develop an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda from 1994 until 2014. The third aim was to generate an understanding of the issues which are of current concern to primary school leaders in Rwanda and of the strategies adopted by them in order to deal with those issues. The researcher’s intention was that the combination of these three aims would provide a detailed understanding of the complexity of school leaders’ work in a specific post-new war setting, and contribute new insights into the strategies and leadership adopted by school leaders to deal with the challenges they encounter.

The rationale behind the pursuit of these three research aims was presented in Chapter One. Briefly, it will be recalled that over the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of new wars which has highlighted the need to recognise the impact of war on education and the impact of education on conflict (Bush & Saterelli, 2000; Smith, 2009). The response has been in the form of initiatives undertaken by the World Bank, international aid agencies, and NGOs to assist
governments in education rehabilitation and reconstruction. This activity has brought about increased academic interest in education and conflict issues. However, despite the growing research relating to education in post-(conflict) situations there has been little investigation that has been undertaken into school leaders’ work at the micro-level of the school in those contexts (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). In addition, there has been only scant research focused on school level leadership in developing countries. Accordingly, it was decided that, as a response, the study reported in this thesis would be undertaken on leadership at the primary school level in post-conflict Rwanda.

This chapter relates to the research design and methodology of the study. It is presented in five sections. First, the nature of the interpretivist research paradigm and the associated theoretical approach of symbolic interactionism that underlies the study is outlined. Secondly, there is an overview of the selection of schools, the selection of study participants, and of data collection and analysis methods utilised in the study. Thirdly, consideration is given to the way in which the selected theoretical perspective relates to each of the three research questions. This is followed by an overview of the strategies adopted to ensure trustworthiness of the research. Finally, the ethics of the study are discussed.
Theoretical Framework

**Interpretivist paradigm**

The study reported in this thesis was located in the interpretivist paradigm. This is because the nature of the research questions required a method of inquiry that enables interpretation of social phenomena (O’Donoghue, 2007). The term ‘paradigm’ refers to a set of ideas about the world, and what constitute appropriate methods for investigating that world (Morgan, 2007; Punch, 2009). Interpretivists aim to reveal the diverse meanings people assign to situations and behaviour, and which they use to comprehend their experience (O’Donoghue, 2007). They believe that human experiences and actions carry meanings and have to be interpreted within a social context (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). The interpretivist inquirer is, therefore, required to understand the social and cultural contexts from which the data are generated in order to reflect accurately the actual meaning held by the data (Creswell, 2003; Lincoln et al., 2011).

Adopting an interpretivist paradigm necessitates that the researcher be interested in the subjective meanings held by participants, namely, the way in which they understand their world and the way in which they attribute meanings to it (Cresswell, 2003; Sarantakos, 2005). Meanings are co-created between the researcher and the researched (Lincoln et al., 2011). They are gathered through such methods as interviews, document analysis and observations which are consistent with interpretivism (O’Donoghue, 2007). Notwithstanding the use of these methods, the researcher is the primary data collection and analysis ‘instrument’ in interpretivist studies (Russell & Kelly, 2002; Watt, 2007). Another characteristic of the interpretivist approach is that it can generate a vast amount of data about a small number of participants.

Blackledge and Hunt (1985) have elaborated on four major assumptions that underpin an interpretivist approach to qualitative inquiry. These assumptions involve everyday activity, freedom, meaning, and modification: that society is founded on the
everyday activities of individuals making it up, that there is a certain degree of freedom and autonomy in people’s everyday activities, that the meanings people assign to their actions and to those of others are produced in a social context, and that meanings are subject to modifications leading to change in views and understandings (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). Each of these assumptions has influenced the study reported in this thesis, and thus warrants some discussion.

First, everyday activity of individuals is the foundation of society (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). School systems, for example, keep running due to the daily activities of students, teachers, school leaders, education officers, and other educational professionals (O’Donoghue, 2007). It follows from this that if these activities are altered there will obviously be changes in education and ultimately in society. Therefore, in order to reveal school leaders’ issues of concern and strategies they adopt to deal with those issues, one must begin by understanding their everyday activities.

Secondly, there is a degree of autonomy in every activity performed by people (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). The argument that individuals have some freedom over their actions and that they are independent to create their patterns of action was asserted by Blumer (1969). Nevertheless, acting autonomously does not mean that there are no constraints on the way people act; nor does it suggest that individuals are not influenced by their background (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). Rather, Blackledge and Hunt (1985) suggest, people can and do create their own activity to some extent. In the context of the study reported here, everyday life for school leaders is created by these school leaders and other stakeholders acting together and producing their own roles and patterns of action (O’Donoghue, 2007).

Thirdly, meanings are produced through interaction with others (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). In other words, the meanings people attribute to their actions and to those of others are formed socially (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). Creswell (2003) agrees with
this perspective and adds that these meanings are constructed socially, historically, and culturally. He put it this way: [meanings] are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals’ lives” (Creswell, 2003, p. 8). It follows from this that the researcher’s interpretations are shaped by his/her own background (Creswell, 2003; O’Donoghue, 2007). This requires researchers to acknowledge how their interpretation is influenced by their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Creswell, 2003).

Finally, meanings are negotiated, and through this process of negotiation, individuals can modify their perspectives (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). This suggests that people’s perspectives on a phenomenon are not static. Rather, they are subject to modification, leading to change in views and understandings (O’Donoghue, 2007). Therefore, over time, people who are employed in particular environments such as a school can come to have common understandings of a phenomenon (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985). In particular, reaching a common understanding involves a continuous process, and eventuates with time.

These four assumptions bring about an awareness of the relevance of generating theory on how people conceptualise, perceive and interpret their world. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p. 17, 18), it is important to “understand the subjective world of human experience” [and] “the multifaceted images of human behaviour that are as varied as the situations and contexts supporting them”. To put it another way, it is crucial to understand participants’ perspectives on a phenomenon. Perspectives are defined as “frameworks through which people make sense of the world” (Woods, 1983, p. 7). They are regarded as “interrelated sets of words used to order physical reality” (Charon, 2001, p. 4). The assumption that underpins the study reported in this thesis is that examining perspectives from people and historical sources
would result in generating theory in relation to the three central research questions. Theory here refers to “an integrated framework of well-developed concepts and the relationships between them that can be used to explain or predict phenomena” (O’Donoghue, 2007, p. 51). Effort was made for theory generated to make sense to school leaders to whom it applies (Cohen at al., 2011).

**Symbolic interactionism**

Within the overall paradigm of interpretivism, symbolic interactionism is the specific theoretical position that was deemed appropriate to inform the study. Blumer (1969) identifies five principles of symbolic interactionism:

- Human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that these things have for them.
- The meanings of such things are derived from, and arise out of, the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows.
- These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he (sic) encounters.
- The actor selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and transforms the meanings in light of the situation, in which he (sic) is placed at the direction of his action.
- Meanings are used and revised as instruments for the guidance and formation of the action. (pp. 2, 5)

These principles align with the interpretivist view that meanings are produced over time and through interaction with other persons (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985; Creswell, 2003). O’Donoghue (2007) relates symbolic interactionism to interpretivism as follows:

A researcher adopting a symbolic interactionist theoretical approach when conducting research within the interpretivist paradigm is concerned with revealing the perspectives behind empirical observations, the actions people take
in the light of their perspectives, and the patterns which develop through the interaction of perspectives and actions over particular periods of time. (p. 20)

The above indicates that the symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective is a variant of interpretivism

The symbolic interactionist theoretical approach was appropriate for the study reported in this thesis because it allowed the researcher to uncover meanings that individuals (school leaders, education officers) attach to such ‘things’ as people, institutions, concepts, policies, and how these meanings influence their actions (O’Donoghue, 2007). Considered in terms of the specific focus of the study, these individuals, according to symbolic interactionist principles, acquire meaning from their own experience of leading schools and of leading education related activities at different administrative levels. Furthermore, because they are constantly interacting with the world that meaning may be confirmed, transformed, reinforced, or changed in light of the school, local, and national contexts (O’Donoghue, 2007). As a result, at the level of the school, for example, school leaders’ challenges and the strategies they adopt to deal with them can be best understood through an analysis of the related symbolic processes that shape the school/organisational culture. Overall, school leadership, according to a symbolic interactionist view, is driven by the way issues related to school leadership are socially constructed in school, locally and nationally.

**Selection of schools**

The study was carried out in Rwanda. To focus on Rwanda was justified as the country is an example of a post-conflict society. Due to constraints of time, finance, and accessibility, the study was limited to primary schools located in two districts in the country. These districts are different in terms of their geographical location. While one is located in a rural area, another is situated in the capital city. This selection was considered appropriate because investigating primary school leaders’ concerns within
two different geographical locations was to result in uncovering as wide a scope of perspectives as possible (Creswell, 2008). Moreover, for the sake of undertaking an in-depth study (Punch, 2009), the study was further limited to three primary schools in each district. Thus, six primary schools were selected in total. Additionally, in order to access multiple perspectives of participants (Creswell, 2008), the size of the school was significant. Small, medium and large schools in the urban and rural areas were chosen. The study, therefore, focused on six primary schools categorised as small rural, medium rural, large rural and small urban, medium urban and large urban. The categorisation of schools as small, medium, or large, was based on the number of students in primary school level (Anderson et al., 2010).

In Rwanda there is a Nine Years of Basic Education (NYBE) programme which is free and compulsory for all citizens. This compulsory education consists of primary education lasting six years and lower secondary education lasting three years (Ministry of Education, 2013). NYBE schools accommodating both the primary school level and the lower secondary level are led by a school principal and a deputy principal (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). There are also some primary schools which do not cater for the lower secondary school level. Unlike NYBE schools, which have a principal and a deputy principal, such primary schools without the lower secondary school level are usually led by one principal (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). In order to collect data for addressing the third research question, only NYBE schools were selected. However, as the focus of the study was on primary school leadership, interviews focused on primary school education. The rationale for selecting NYBE schools arose out of the need to incorporate deputy principals in the sample. In fact, most insights/perspectives into school leadership have come from the principal, with other school leaders at the school level being neglected in school leadership research (Day, Harris & Hadfield, 2010).
Each school was considered as a case. This study thus followed the view of case study as a strategy for doing research. Punch (2009, p. 119) points out that “a case study is more a strategy than a method”. This concurs with Goode and Hatt’s (1952) understanding of a case study when they pointed out, many years ago, that a case study is not a specific technique. Rather, it is “a way of organising social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied” (p. 331). As each school was instrumental in learning about school leaders’ work, the research design of this project qualifies as a collective case study (Stake, 1994), or a multiple case study (Yin, 1994). The researcher used case study strategy for several reasons. First, the use of a case study enables the researcher to focus on a single phenomenon (school leadership). Secondly, case study design allows the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of participants’ perspectives in their natural settings. Thirdly, it allows the researcher to describe holistically the contextual complexity within which participants (school leaders) work. Fourthly, as Punch (2009) put it, it allows the researcher to collect data from multiple data sources.

Table 4.1: Types of schools selected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Rural district</th>
<th>Capital city (urban district)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small (less than 500 primary school students)</td>
<td>Rural district</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capital city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (between 500 and 1000 primary school students)</td>
<td>Rural district</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capital city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (more than 1000 primary school students)</td>
<td>Rural district</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capital city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selection of participants

While Research Question One was exclusively addressed through the analysis of documents, research question Two was investigated primarily by means of document analysis supplemented by interviews with education officers and a senior education advisor on school management. The third research question was investigated mainly by means of interviews with school leaders. These comprised principals, deputy principals, and School General Assembly Committee (SGAC) representatives. The latter were interviewed because they are officially expected to be involved in school leadership, although they do not intervene directly in the school’s everyday activities (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). In Rwanda, the SGAC members represent the School General Assembly (SGA), which is the supreme organ responsible for monitoring/overseeing learning, teaching, welfare, and following-up school development plans (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). The SGAC members include four parents of whom two act as chairperson and vice chairperson of the SGA, the head teacher, two teachers representing their peers, and two students representing their colleagues. Thus, the SGAC representatives selected were parents who were acting as either chairperson or vice chairperson of the SGA. Although parents selected did not occupy a paid leadership position in schools, they were officially required to participate in leading and managing the school. The inclusion of parents in the sample finds further justification in the widely accepted view that parents are aware of the educational needs of their children and are required to contribute to their education (Sarason, 1995). In addition, the involvement of other key education stakeholders in studies of school leadership is critical to the advancement of research in the field as most investigations in this area have so far tended to examine principals’ perspectives on school leadership (Day, Harris & Hadfield, 2010).
As the school leaders mentioned above were selected from schools, one can draw an analogy according to which ‘mini-cases’ (school leaders) were selected from ‘cases’ (schools) (Stake, 1994). The researcher considered school leaders (mini-cases) with some attributes of interest within each school (Stake, 1994). In line with this thinking, maximum variation sampling strategy was used for the selection of participants for interviewing in relation to research questions two and three. This strategy allowed the researcher to select purposively school leaders and education officers who possessed, or exhibited a very wide range of characteristics, or behaviours in connection with the phenomenon of interest (i.e. school leadership and school leaders’ work) (Cohen et al., 2011). Consistent with this notion, the professional experience and the gender of the school leaders as well as the education officers were critical to obtaining a wide variety of perspectives. This sampling approach aligns with the sampling for diversity that characterises most qualitative studies (Creswell, 2008).

Furthermore, due to the exploratory nature of the research, a senior education advisor was interviewed. Although he was not directly involved in school leadership, this employee knew about issues pertaining to school leadership and management in Rwanda since he had been following up the implementation of school management projects. He was, therefore, interviewed to supplement insights from school leaders and education officers. The position held by all participants interviewed, their number and location of their workplace are set out in Table 4.2.
### Table 4.2: Participants interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Capital city</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector Education Officers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Education Officers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Education Advisor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Data collection methods

Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and unstructured non-participant observations. These data-gathering methods are most appropriate for a study adopting a symbolic interactionist theoretical approach within the interpretivist paradigm (O'Donoghue, 2007). Data were largely obtained by means of a thorough document analysis for the first research question and by means of document analysis supplemented by interviews for the second research question. The third research question was investigated by means of interviews only with principals, deputy principals and parents chairing School General Assembly Committees. Unstructured non-participant observation was not used as a formal data gathering method. Rather, it was informally utilised to inform interviews and to help the
researcher become sensitised to the contextual complexity characterising school leaders’ work.

**Interviews**

Semi-structured in-depth interviewing, which allows participants to react and comment on the researcher’s guiding research questions (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013), was adopted. This approach was an appropriate data collection method for the study reported in this thesis for three reasons. First, semi-structured interviews have proved to be most effective in enabling researchers to gain access to “people’s perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality” (Punch, 2009, p. 144). It follows that a semi-structured interview is the most suitable data-gathering tool for a study aimed at investigating the perspectives of people on a phenomenon (O’Donoghue, 2007). Secondly, semi-structured interviews were appropriate to be held in a post-genocide challenging context. This is because semi-structured interviewing is flexible and provides participants with the opportunity to express their views in their own terms (Bryman, 2004). Hence, it allowed participants to have freedom to discuss potentially emotional and/or sensitive personal issues connected with Rwanda’s horrific past. The third reason why semi-structured interviewing was suitable is that it allowed the researcher to have control over the flow and progress of interviews (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). This was particularly important given that the available time for data gathering was limited.

Twenty three individual interviews were conducted in total. These comprised 18 interviews (one interview with each of the three participants in each of the six schools) for addressing the third research question and five interviews to supplement documentary data in the case of the second research question. An aide memoire was developed to guide interviews. Notes were taken during interviews and inductive inferences were made from these notes to guide the researcher on issues or further
details to ask in subsequent interviews (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Each interview was recorded on a digital recorder. The recordings were then transcribed to begin data analysis. The transcription of interviews was followed by their translation from Kinyarwanda to English. This translation was required because, with the exception of one interview which was conducted in English, all the interviews were conducted in Kinyarwanda. When given the opportunity to choose between French, English, or Kinyarwanda, for being interviewed almost all participants reported being most comfortable with Kinyarwanda, the first and national language shared by all Rwandans.

Document study

The use of documents as a tool of data collection is hardly new in research. In this connection, Punch (2009, p. 158) explains that “documents, both historical and contemporary, are a rich source of data for education and social research”. Document analysis was used to address the first and second research questions for two reasons. First, the study of documents is consistent with the interpretivist approach to inquiry. This observation is supported by Hudson and Ozanne’s (1988) view that interpretivists often undertake a descriptive analysis of historical documents to gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of interest. Similarly, Bowen (2009) agrees with this and adds that documents can be used as the only data source in interpretivist studies. The second reason why documentary evidence was sought is that other data gathering methods were somewhat unable to provide historical insights about the phenomenon (i.e. historical background to, and developments in, school leadership). Therefore, the review of historical documents was the most effective way of collecting data since past events could no longer be observed (Bowen, 2009).

The researcher studied relevant documents in order to know what is going on, or what has taken place. Documentary evidence was obtained from historical and contemporary records and both primary and secondary documents were analysed. It is
also noted that due to the Belgian and French influence in education before the genocide of 1994 in Rwanda, all documents examined to address the first research question had been written in the French language. The researcher, therefore, had to translate from French to English relevant pieces of data in relation to the historical background to school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994. Details about the documents reviewed are contained in a subsequent section on the data gathering process in this chapter.

Unstructured non-participant observation

In a non-participant observation, the researcher studies participants, or settings, from the ‘outside’ (Sarantakos, 2005), while in an unstructured observation, the researcher does not use prespecified categories and explores the setting or participants’ perspectives and actions in a natural open-ended way (Punch, 2009). Unstructured non-participant observation was employed as a means to inform interviews, and to stimulate further data gathering questions. It also helped the researcher to become sensitised to the contextual circumstances influencing school leaders’ work.

Data analysis methods

Grounded theory methods of data analysis were employed in the study. These methods are consistent with the interpretivist approach to inquiry (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Grounded theory analysis emphasises “the conceptualisation of the data, and the generation of conceptually abstract categories grounded in the data (Punch, 1998, p. 218). It is undertaken by reducing raw data into concepts that are designated to stand for categories (Punch, 2000). The concepts are inductively inferred from the data. This inductive inference is referred to as the process of abstraction (Punch, 1998). The outcome of grounded theory analysis may be a set of propositions showing connections between concepts which are more abstract than the data themselves (Punch, 1998).
In accordance with the interpretivist research approach, data collection and analysis proceeded simultaneously (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Conducting data analysis during data collection helped the researcher to undertake an effective coverage of the research topic (Sarantakos, 2005). Analysis began immediately after collecting the first set of data and after transcribing the first interview. These early analyses were used to prompt further data collection by theoretical sampling (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1996; Punch, 2009). Theoretical sampling here refers to “the idea that subsequent data collection should be guided by theoretical developments that emerge in the analysis” (Punch, 2009, p. 133). Data gathering stopped when no new patterns of information were emerging from participants’ accounts (Punch, 1998; Punch, 2009).

Open coding
The first stage of grounded theory analysis, open coding, was used to commence data analysis. Open coding is concerned with ‘fracturing’, or ‘breaking open’, the data to generate conceptual labels and categories for use in theory building. The purpose is to use data to “generate conceptual categories in the data, at a first level of abstraction” (Punch, 2009, p. 183). These categories are called substantive codes and are more abstract than the data they describe (Punch, 2009). At the beginning of analysis, different pieces of data were constantly compared with each other to help generate abstract categories. This constant comparison is the method on which grounded theory analysis relies (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1996). It helped the researcher to explore similarities and differences in the data. It was undertaken concurrently with questioning the empirical data about the more abstract concepts held in the data (Punch, 2009). This questioning enabled the researcher to find the theoretical possibilities that are suggested by the data. The developed categories were tested against the data to ensure they were empirically grounded (Punch, 2009; Sarantakos, 2005). The relationship between concepts and categories emerging from the data was illustrated using codes and
theoretical memos (Punch, 1998). Then, the emerging categories were checked back with participants in order to ensure that they represented their perspectives on the phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The verification of data and of emerging categories with participants or peers is referred to as member checking and contributed to ensuring the trustworthiness of the study (Creswell, 2008).

Analytic induction

After completing open coding, a mode of data analysis called analytic induction was used. Analytic induction is aimed at producing “complete and universal statements about social phenomenon” (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 351). It entailed seeking causal explanations for the emergent categories developed through open coding by pursuing and accounting for negative cases/evidence in the data (Katz, 2001). The steps followed while applying analytic induction are described by Katz (2001).

Adapting the theoretical framework for the three research questions

The first research question

The first research question of the study reported in this thesis was aimed at developing an understanding of the historical background to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994. This question is historical in nature, and as a result, data were obtained primarily through an analysis of sources contained in a wide range of public documents and records. The interpretivist research paradigm informed the work of the researcher in reviewing these sources.
**Data gathering**

Data relied upon to address the first research question were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The former comprised, for example, the *Loi du 27 Août 1966 sur l'éducation nationale de la République Rwandaise* (République Rwandaise, 1966), the *Arrêté présidentiel n° 175/03 fixant le règlement général de l'enseignement Rwandais* (République Rwandaise, 1967), the *Loi organique n° 1/1985 sur l'éducation nationale de la République Rwandaise* (République Rwandaise, 1985a), the *Loi n° 14/1985 portant organisation de l’enseignement primaire, rural et artisanal intégré et séconaire* (République Rwandaise, 1985b), the *Arrêté présidentiel n° 509/13 fixant le règlement général de l’enseignement primaire, rural et artisanal intégré et séconaire* (République Rwandaise, 1985c), the *Arrêté présidentiel n° 369/13 portant statut des établissements libres subsidiés d’enseignement primaire, rural et artisanal intégré et séconaire* (République Rwandaise, 1986), and the *Convention scolaire entre l’Etat Rwandais et l'Eglise Catholique du Rwanda* (République Rwandaise, 1987). Secondary sources of data included, among others, *L’école coloniale au Rwanda* (1900-1962) (Erny, 2001) and the document entitled *the role of education in violent conflict and peacebuilding in Rwanda* (King, 2008). The analysis of these data sources enabled the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of the history of primary education in general and of primary school leadership specifically from 1894 up until 1994.

As the study was exploratory, it was not possible from the outset to come up with a list of all sub-research questions necessary to guide the research with regard to the first research question. Nevertheless, some guiding questions were developed. They are set out in table 4.3 below.
These guiding questions were not specific questions to be answered. Rather, they were those that suggested themselves at the beginning of the study as having the greatest potential to generate data relevant to the central area of interest.

A set of more specific questions, an *aide-mémoire* (O’Donoghue, 2007; Punch, 2009), was developed from the guiding questions. An example of an initial *aide-mémoire* resulting from the translation of the guiding question 1.1 into a set of more specific questions is provided in table 4.4.

### Table 4.3: The Development of Guiding Questions from the First Central Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Research Question</th>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994?</td>
<td>1.1 What were the influences that shaped primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Under what conditions and circumstances were primary schools led in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994?</td>
<td>1.3 What are the continuities and changes that can be perceived to have existed in primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 When and why did changes occur in primary school leadership up to 1994, and who/what influenced these changes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4: The Development of Aide-memoire Questions from the First Guiding Question of the First Central Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Research Question</th>
<th>Examples of Questions from the Initial Aide-memoire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 What were the influences that shaped primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994?</td>
<td>1.1.1 Which laws, policies and practices governed the way schools were led and managed from 1894 until 1994?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1.2 Who were the stakeholders involved in shaping primary school leadership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1.3 What was the role of the stakeholders involved in shaping primary school leadership?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar aide-mémoire questions were developed for the other guiding questions. The aide-mémoire questions served as a starting point for investigating the phenomenon. As unforeseen issues unfolded, giving rise to new questions, these were pursued until the subject was studied thoroughly.

**Data analysis**

According to Bowen (2009, p. 28), document analysis entails “finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthetising data contained in documents”. Documentary data were systematically and logically analysed by the researcher utilising the grounded theory methods outlined earlier in this chapter. In particular, general ideas, concepts and themes were sought from the data and were used as a basis for making generalisations about the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda. An example of the coding process that led to those generalisations is provided in table 4.5 below.
The document is an extract from a Presidential order 369/13 dedicated to the clarification of the status of subsidised private schools (*Republique Rwandaise, 1986*). The order is dated 11th June 1986 and was utilised in addressing Guiding Question 1.1: Which were the influences that shaped primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Open Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le personnel enseignant et administratif des Etablissements libres subsidiés est recruté par leur propriétaires. Ces derniers doivent présenter pour approbation et nomination, la liste du personnel accompagnée du curriculum vitae au Ministre ayant le degré d’enseignement concerné dans ses attributions au moins 30 jours avant le début de l’année scolaire.</td>
<td>The teaching and administrative staff within subsidised private schools is recruited by their owners. The latter must submit for approval and appointment the staff’s list and curriculum vitae to the relevant Education Minister at least 30 days before the start of the school year.</td>
<td>The school owner recruiting the teaching and administrative staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Directeurs des Centres Scolaires de l’Enseignement Primaire et des Centres de l’enseignement Rural et Artisanal Intégré Libre Subsidiiés, sont cotés au premier échelon par le propriétaire du centre, au 2e par l’inspecteur de secteur, au 3e par l’Inspecteur d’Arrondissement.</td>
<td>The performance of directors of subsidised primary schools and rural and integrated education centres is first appraised by the owner of the school or centre, secondly by the sector education inspector, and thirdly by the Province Education Inspector.</td>
<td>The school owner to seek approval and appointment of prospective personnel from the Education Minister Bureaucratic compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les associations propriétaires des établissements libres subsidiés d’enseignement primaire, rural et artisanal</td>
<td>The owners of such subsidised private schools as primary schools, rural and integrated education centres, and of secondary schools have a period of three months with effect from the publication of this order to provide to the relevant Education Minister with their National Representatives.</td>
<td>The owner of the school intervening in performance appraisal of school leaders Traditional organisational hierarchies reflected in top-down performance appraisals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The owners of subsidised private schools to be represented at the national level School leaders’ compliance with</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This document is one among the many that were analysed. It provides insights into how school leadership in the 1980s was influenced by the church, the owner of most subsidised primary schools in Rwanda at the time. The influence of the church in school leadership and management was manifested, for example, in the substantial role it played in the recruitment and performance appraisal of school personnel, including school leaders, and in the involvement of its representatives in national education affairs. However, as indicated in the next chapter (Chapter Five), from the day of independence in 1962 until the late 1970s the church’s influence in education was challenged by the state which took over its schools and attempted to control the entire primary school system.

The second research question

The second research question of the study reported in this thesis aimed to develop an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership in Rwanda from the genocide of 1994 until 2014. In this context the term ‘development’ refers to facts, policies, events, or activities that have shaped primary school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda. As with the first research question, the interpretivist paradigm informed the work of the researcher in addressing the second research question, this time through the examination and interpretation of documentary and interview data.
**Data gathering**

Documentary data were gathered from contemporary and official records. The main primary data sources examined included the Rwanda education sector policy (Ministry of Education, 2003), laws governing the organisation of education (Republic of Rwanda, 2003, 2012), the education sector’s strategic plan 2010-2015 (Ministry of Education, 2010), and other relevant Ministry of Education and Ministry of local governance documents. The main secondary data sources reviewed comprised such documents as *the promotion and protection of children’s rights in post-genocide Rwanda* (Cantwell, 1997), the *Never again: educational reconstruction in Rwanda* (Obura, 2003), and other relevant academic papers and international publications.

Interview data were collected through five individual interviews with sector and district education officers as well as with a senior education advisor in school leadership and management. It must be highlighted that the main data gathering method for the second research question was document analysis. Interviews only assisted either in confirming/supporting data obtained from documents, or in exploring and discussing broad issues pertaining to school leadership.

As the study was exploratory, it was impossible from the beginning to come up with an exhaustive list of sub-research questions to guide the data collection process for the second research question. However, some guiding questions were developed from the central research question as shown in Table 4.6 below.
Table 4.6: The Development of Guiding Questions from the Second Central Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Research Question</th>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What developments have taken place in relation to primary school leadership in Rwanda since 1994?</td>
<td>2.1 What strategies has post-conflict Rwanda implemented that have led to the status quo of primary school leadership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 What have been the reasons behind, and influences on, the strategies implemented to establish current primary school leadership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 What are the continuities that can be perceived to exist between pre-conflict primary school leadership and current primary school leadership in Rwanda?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4 What are the changes that can be perceived to exist between pre-conflict primary school leadership and current primary school leadership in Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5 When and why did changes occur in primary school leadership up to 2014, and who/what influenced these changes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As previously indicated in the case of the first research question, these guiding questions were not specific questions to be answered. Rather, they were those that suggested themselves at the beginning of the study as having the greatest potential to generate data relevant to the central area of interest. Guiding Question 2.1, for example, was translated into a set of more specific questions in the initial aide-memoire, as shown in the following table 4.7.
Table 4.7: The Development of Aide-memoire Questions from the First Guiding Question of the Second Central Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Question</th>
<th>Examples of Questions in the Initial Aide-memoire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What strategies has post-conflict Rwanda implemented that have led to the status quo of primary school leadership?</td>
<td>2.1.1 What policies and practices has post-conflict Rwanda implemented that have led to the current situation regarding primary school leadership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1.2 What management bodies have been responsible for the implementation of these policies?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar aide-memoire questions were developed for the other guiding questions.

*Data analysis*

As with the previous central research question, grounded theory methods of data analysis described earlier in this chapter were again applied. The researcher systematically and logically examined the documents obtained in the course of the research. Interview data were also analysed to supplement insights generated from documents. In particular, the open-coding process described earlier in the chapter enabled the researcher to generate conceptual categories, themes, and concepts from documentary and interview data. The generated concepts, categories, and themes were used as a basis for making generalisations. An example of the coding process is illustrated in table 4.8 below:
Table 4.8: Open Coding for a Document Gathered in the Course of Examination of Written Data

The document is an extract from the law 23/2012 governing the organisation and functioning of nursery, primary and secondary education. The law was published in the Official Gazette n° 31 of 30/07/2012 and was utilised in addressing the Guiding Question 2.1: What strategies has post-conflict Rwanda implemented that have led to the status quo of primary school leadership?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Open Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The School General Assembly shall be the supreme organ in terms of learning, teaching and welfare. It monitors the overall operation of the school and take a keen interest in the school development… The School General Assembly shall get assistance from the School General Assembly Committee to implement its decisions.</td>
<td>A perceived leading role entrusted in the School General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School General Assembly Committee shall be composed of the following: four (4) parents including the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the School General Assembly; the school owner or his/her representative; the head teacher (principal) of the school who serves as ex officio non-voting rapporteur; two (2) teachers representing their peers; two (2) students who are members of the School General Assembly. At least thirty percent (30%) of members of the School General Assembly Committee must be females.</td>
<td>A School General Assembly Committee to represent the School General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School General Assembly Committee shall have the following responsibilities: to convene and preside over the School General Assembly; to monitor the implementation of the decisions taken by the School General Assembly; to monitor compliance with laws, orders and instructions governing the school; to take part in the management of the school assets; to analyze the school action plan;</td>
<td>A high representation of parents in the School General Assembly Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The leadership of the school committee is mainly in parental hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No voting rights for the school principal in the school committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A perceived leading and managerial role entrusted in the School General Assembly Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to follow up the discipline and conduct of school authorities, teachers and students; to analyse major problems facing the school and propose solutions; to perform such other tasks as assigned by the School General Assembly; to submit a report to the School General Assembly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The school General Assembly Committee is accountable to the School General Assembly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This transcript illustrates the composition and power of the School General Assembly Committee, the hallmark of school-based management. It also indicates that parents are expected to play a significant role in leading and managing schools. As elaborated on in Chapter Six of this thesis, the introduction of school-based management in the post-2000 period can be considered a ‘development’ in relation to primary school leadership in Rwanda because it is one of the characteristics of the shift from a centralised education system to a decentralised one.

**The third research question**

The third research question of the study reported in this thesis aimed to develop an understanding of the issues that are of current concern to primary school leaders in Rwanda. The strategies adopted by these leaders to deal with those issues were also investigated. Concerns are taken as matters affecting, or having an impact on people in their everyday working lives; they are matters that interest individuals, or capture their attention, because they are important or affect them.
Data gathering

Data gathered for addressing the third research question were obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews with school leaders. As with the first and second research questions, this research question is also exploratory. This being so, it was not possible at the commencement of the research to come up with a list of all sub-research questions designed to guide the investigation on this third research question. Some guiding questions, however, were developed from it and are laid out in the following Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: The Development of Guiding Questions from the Third Central Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Research Question</th>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. What issues are currently of concern to primary school leaders in Rwanda, and how do they deal with them?</td>
<td>3.1 What are the challenges and influences that primary school leaders face as they perform their work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 What is the nature of the context within which these challenges and influences arise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 What are the strategies primary school leaders adopt to deal with the complexities of their work and the reasons behind those strategies?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As with the previous two central research questions, these guiding questions were not specific research questions to be answered. Rather, they were questions that suggested themselves at the beginning of the study as being the most productive guides to collecting data connected with the central areas of interest.

From the guiding question 3.1 a set of subordinate questions was developed to make an initial aide-memoire as indicated in table 4.10 hereunder.
Table 4.10: The Development of Aide-memoire Questions from the First Guiding Question of the Third Central Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Research Question</th>
<th>Examples of Questions from the Initial Aide-memoire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 What are the challenges and influences primary school leaders face as they perform their work?</td>
<td>3.1.1 What challenges currently concern school leaders?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1.2 What are the causes and factors behind these challenges?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1.3 How have these challenges affected school leaders’ work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar aide-memoire questions were developed for the other guiding questions.

Data analysis

Interview data were systematically and logically analysed following the first stage of grounded theory analysis, open coding. This coding process has been described earlier in this chapter. It enabled the researcher to reveal general ideas, categories, and themes. These were used as the basis for making generalisations about the data. An example of the way data analysis was undertaken is illustrated in the following Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Open Coding of Interview Transcript 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Transcript</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Open Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Njyewe hari ikindi njyambona guhinduka kwa systeme ya education bya hato na hato. Hari ukuntu dutangira bakavuga batu uyu mwaka mu burezi programme imeze gutya twageramo hagati bagahindura. Hari n’igihe twigeze gutangira muri lower primary batubwira</td>
<td>I have realised that the endemic changes affecting the education system are a problem. Sometimes the programme we follow at the beginning of the [academic] year promptly changes when we reach the middle of the same year. For</td>
<td>Education change perceived as a problem affecting school leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unexpected curriculum change
Example, there was a time when we were told that lower primary school students should study all lessons in Kinyarwanda except the English language lesson, and we taught children following this guideline. But after finishing the second trimester, we were requested to teach all lessons in English. A child who started schooling studying in Kinyarwanda and who is now going to study in English will face serious problems. More importantly, the change in the language of instruction was not accompanied by the delivery of textbooks written in English. This poses problems relating to the lack of didactic materials. Also teachers did not receive adequate training to raise their English language competency and therefore they do not master this language. Just see, it is only after years of struggle that REB has introduced a mentoring system to help teachers who have difficulties related to the mastery of the English language. You can see that the unexpected change of the system hampers the quality of education as expected.
This extract illustrates how the implementation of endemic education change is problematic for school leaders. In particular, the participant draws attention to the challenges associated with the prompt switch in the language of instruction. Such challenges, according to the participant, include teachers’ lack of proficiency in English (the new language of teaching), the deterioration of the quality of teaching and learning, and the shortage of teaching materials resulting from the lack of prior preparation of schools for change implementation.

**Recording and Storage of Data**

Data recording is an integral part of data collection, especially in qualitative research (Yin, 2011). The researcher is therefore required to select/apply an effective and organised way for recording and storing his/her data (Groenewald, 2004). The interviews were audio-recorded on a digital voice recorder. They were transcribed, coded and stored as hard and electronic copies. Similarly, documentary data were coded and filed. As categories and themes were generated from the data, they were also filed. The coding and storage of transcripts and documents not only enabled the efficient analysis of the data, but also allowed the tracing back of all categories and themes to the data. This ensured accessibility of all data connected with the study.
Trustworthiness of the Research

For research studies to inform theory, or practice, they must be considered trustworthy. In other words, research findings and conclusions must appear plausible to researchers, educators, and other readers. As a result, it is very important that the findings of the study reported here provide a true and honest interpretation of the historical background to and recent developments in primary school leadership, and current concerns of school leaders. Trustworthiness must therefore be established throughout the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the present study, Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) criteria for assessing trustworthiness in qualitative research were considered. They are dependability, confirmability, transferability and credibility (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These criteria are appropriate for evaluating the quality of qualitative research conducted according to interpretivism, rather than positivism for which such criteria as validity, reliability, and objectivity are applied (Guba, 1981).

Credibility

Credibility is concerned with the truth value of the data. Qualitative data are credible when they are/provide accurate descriptions or interpretation of people’s experiences and actions (Sandelowski, 1986). The task of the researcher is to represent those experiences and views obtained from participants as adequately as possible. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest a range of strategies that can be adopted to establish credibility. These include such strategies as spending an extended period of time with participants, corroborating evidence from different data sources, member checking, and peer examination (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

These strategies were applied to build up the credibility of the study reported in this thesis. Regarding prolonged engagement with participants, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that researchers spend an extended time period with participants in order to build rapport with them, leading to checking their perspectives on the
phenomenon being investigated. The study reported here consisted of 23 interviews, each lasting approximately 60 minutes. This period of time, coupled with periods of informal observations, was sufficient to allow the researcher to build rapport with participants and identify recurrent themes/patterns relevant to the investigation with them.

In addition, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that using different data sources in research strengthens credibility. Establishing evidence from different individuals is referred to as data-source triangulation, which is distinct from methodological triangulation that consists of corroborating evidence from at least three methods of data collection (Creswell, 2008; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). In the study reported in this thesis, data-source triangulation involved corroborating evidence from such different individuals as head teachers, deputy head teachers, and SGAC representatives. Evidence was also corroborated from a wide range of documents used for addressing the first and second research questions. In other words, data-source triangulation was used to cross check data collected from different groupings of participants and documents. In addition, in relation to the third research question, collecting data from across the six schools provided an opportunity for cross-checking (Burgess, 1982). These strategies enhanced the credibility of the outcomes of the study.

Furthermore, member checking was used to address issues of credibility regarding the study. This procedure consists of verifying the data and emerging theory/themes from the participants (Creswell, 2008). Throughout the study, interview transcripts were checked back with participants to ensure the accurate translation of participants’ perspectives into data. Also, the identified categories/themes from data were taken back to participants to ascertain whether they reflected their experiences accurately (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
Another strategy adopted to ensure credibility of the study is peer examination. Lincoln and Guba (1985) termed this ‘peer debriefing’. This method involves discussing the study and its results with people who are familiar with methods of qualitative inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the study reported in this thesis, peer examination consisted of discussing formally or informally the emerging concepts and themes with supervisors and fellow doctoral students. Such discussions enhanced the credibility of the study.

**Transferability**

Transferability refers to the degree to which the outcomes/results of a study can be generalised to other conditions, contexts, or settings (Seale, 2002). In a study conducted within interpretivism, generalisability, as defined by positivists, cannot be claimed by researchers (O’Donoghue, 2007). This view concurs with Yin’s (2011, p. 98) argument that generalisability of qualitative research’s results is difficult, and probably impossible, due to the “uniqueness of human events” and the “particularistic” nature of qualitative research. As the aim of the study was to generate theory on the historical background to and recent developments in primary school leadership as well as the issues that are of concern to a particular group of people who are unique in their own settings, it is argued that the generalisability of the study’s results to other situations would be unlikely.

Another school of thought, however, suggests that readers can ‘generalise’ qualitative research results. Although the study reported in this thesis cannot claim generalisability as in the case of research conducted within the positivist paradigm, it can lead to reader or user generalisability (O’Donoghue, 2007). In other words, readers will be able to relate to the study in order to understand their own and others’ situations (O’Donoghue, 2007). In order to achieve this type of generalisability, the researcher is required to provide a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, pp. 6, 7) of the setting and
phenomenon being studied, so that readers can be enabled to decide on the applicability of the results of the study to other situations. Thick description, Yin (2011) adds, can move “the interpretation away from researcher-centric perspective, portraying instead the people, events, and actions within their locally meaningful contexts (p. 213). In the study reported in this thesis, a detailed and rich account of the context within which school leaders work provided the ‘thickness’ of the description to allow possible transferability to other contexts.

**Dependability**

Dependability refers to the extent to which findings of a particular study are not altered when the study is replicated with the same (or similar) participants in the same (or similar) context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish dependability, the researcher is required to provide an ‘audit trail’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This procedure involves the provision of a logical and clear documentation of the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). On this, data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods must be described accurately as part of the audit trail establishment (Kielhofner, 1982). In the study reported in this thesis, dependability was enhanced by clearly describing data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods to guide researchers who may intend to replicate the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, the requirements of an audit trail were met as the following materials were collected and stored: interview recordings, interview transcripts, relevant documents used to address research question One and Two, and written field notes and memos.
Confirmability

Confirmability is concerned with the degree to which the conclusions and interpretations of the study emanate from data rather than from the researcher’s “biases, motivations, and interests” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). It involves another person other than the researcher following the sequence of activities in the study to understand how and why the study’s conclusions were arrived at. It follows from this that, as in case of dependability, an audit trail is required to establish confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, data and interpretational confirmability were established through adopting an audit strategy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To this end, audio recordings, field notes, and interview transcripts were kept.

Ethical Considerations

The proposal for the study reported here was approved by The University of Western Australia’s Human Research Ethics Committee prior to the commencement of the research. The researcher was also granted permission by the government of Rwanda to conduct research in the country. The nature of the study reported in this thesis dictated that the researcher be placed in intimate contact with the study’s participants. The researcher faced ethical issues pertaining to what to record, how to avoid risk and harm, and how to protect participants’ privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. How these issues were addressed is reported in the following commentary.

The main ethical issue encountered was the protection of anonymity, privacy and confidentiality of the study’s participants. The political context within which the present research was embedded was quite complex. Some school leaders provided information that may be the subject of highly politicised debate. In addition, many school leaders act as representatives of the ruling Party in the local administrative Sector and are expected to be role models to the local community. To this end the researcher was careful that he did not reveal names of the participants involved in the study. This was done by
assigning pseudonyms to participants. Informed consent of participants was obtained at the outset of the study. Thus, a statement explaining the nature and purpose of the research, interests of the researcher in the study, issues of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality was given to the participants, who read it and gave it back to the researcher after having signed it. Participants were also assured that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the research design and methodology employed in the study reported in this thesis. First, the interpretivist research paradigm that underlies the study was discussed. Secondly, an overview of the selection of schools, the selection of study participants, and of the methods utilised for data collection and analysis in the study was provided. Thirdly, a consideration of the way in which the selected theoretical perspective was adapted to address each of the three research questions was presented. Following this, issues pertaining to the recording and storage of data were described. The strategies adopted to ensure trustworthiness of the research were then discussed. Finally, there was consideration of the ethical issues encountered in the study and the strategies used to deal with them. The next chapter, Chapter Five, will now present the understandings generated in relation to the first research question.
CHAPTER FIVE
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO PRIMARY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FROM COLONIAL TIMES UNTIL 1994

Introduction

The Rwandan education system owes its origin to the arrival of European missionaries in the country at the beginning of the twentieth century. Since the establishment of the first school in 1900, the education system has undergone many changes initiated by different political regimes that have been in power. Each regime attempted to implement its own ideology and strategies to address chronic educational problems. Hence, changes in political regime entailed changes in the rules and regulations governing the provision of education, causing changes to schooling policies and practices. These changes, however, should not be overstated since there have also been important continuities in educational policy and practice throughout the colonial period attributable to differing post-colonial governments.

In light of the above, it is instructive to refer to the historical periods in which political regimes administered the country in order to appreciate the history of education generally and of school leadership specifically. The four regimes and their associated periods of rule comprise the colonial regime that ruled the country from 1894 until 1962, the First Republic from 1962 until 1973, the Second Republic from 1973 until 1994, and the current political regime which has been in power since 1994. These regimes, except the latter, will be used to chart the history of primary school leadership in Rwanda. The recent developments in relation to school leadership that were set in train by the current political regime will be the focus of the following chapter (i.e. Chapter Six).
Much of the available literature on Rwanda has focused on the 1994 genocide and on the reconstruction of the country in the aftermath of the conflict. This is especially true since this landlocked, small country was much less known in the international arena before the tragic events of 1994 (Erny, 2001). As a result, there is scant literature relating to the history of school leadership prior to 1994. Nevertheless, sufficient material exists to address the first research question of this study, namely, ‘What is the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994?’ It is this question which is the concern of the remainder of the chapter.

The chapter is in three parts. The first part of the chapter provides an historical overview of Rwanda. It describes the historical, social and political contexts within which governments administered the country from the colonial period until 1994. The second part of the chapter is concerned with the development of the Rwandan education system in general, with particular emphasis on the development of primary education, from colonial times until 1994. Throughout this period, primary schooling was introduced, resisted, accepted, ‘nationalised’, democratised and ruralised (Erny, 2001; King, 2008).

The third part of the chapter deals specifically with the history of primary school leadership from colonial times through to 1994 (i.e. during the colonial administration, the First and Second Republics). This period was marked by the churches’ monopoly over the administration and management of primary schools, the nationalisation of schools which challenged the churches’ school management role and created conflict between the state and churches, and the state’s control of education provided by churches as evidenced by a series of state and church protocols signed between 1925 and 1987. These protocols were important in shaping the way in which primary schools were administered and managed.
Given that many historical documents were destroyed during the war and genocide in 1994, there has been a strong reliance on secondary sources in the first part of the chapter and in the exposition of education and school leadership during the colonial period. Primary sources have been used mainly to provide insights into the nature of education and school leadership in the post-independence period.

**Historical Overview of Rwanda**

**Colonisers’ settlement and administration (1894-1962)**

Rwanda was colonised at different times by two different European countries; firstly Germany followed by Belgium. The Germans occupied the country from 1894 until 1916 in accordance with the resolution emanating from the Berlin conference of 1885 (Kiwuwa, 2012). After Germany’s defeat in the First World War, the colony fell under Belgian military rule in 1916, and in 1923 it was ceded officially to the Belgians who administered Rwanda under the League of Nations Mandate (Kiwuwa, 2012; Lemarchand, 1970). After the end of the Second World War in 1946, Rwanda became a United Nations trust territory that continued to be administered by Belgium until the day of independence in 1962 (Kiwuwa, 2012; Prunier, 1995).

It seems the country was not overly envied by colonisers for it did not present any economic and strategic interest/advantage to them (Bridgeland, Wulsin & McNaught, 2009; Erny, 2001; Hanf, Dias, Mann & Wolff, 1974). On the contrary, Rwanda’s large neighbouring nations, namely, Tanganyika (currently Tanzania) and the then Belgium Congo (currently Democratic Republic of the Congo) attracted largely Germans and Belgians respectively. The colonial nations’ minimal interest in the occupation and administration of Rwanda may be explained insofar as Rwanda and Burundi were administered together as Ruanda-Urundi, with Urundi (current Burundi) being especially ‘cherished’ as it became the capital city of these two territories and was given
at least basic public infrastructures. To make this point clear, on the day of independence that came after 68 years of colonial rule, Rwanda did not have an international airport, university, central bank, nor any building which the post-independence government could use to administer the nation (Hanf et al., 1974). In contrast to Rwanda, many poor countries were left by colonisers with at least a rudimentary central government facility (Hanf et al., 1974).

Another criticism made against the colonisers that is reported commonly in Rwanda’s colonial history is that they intensified ethnic divisions among ethnic groups composing the population of the country. Rwanda has three main groups of people: the 

**Hutu** representing 84 per cent of the population, the **Tutsi** representing 15 per cent, and the **Twa** representing less than 1 per cent of the population (Kiwuwa, 2012). Prior to the arrival of the colonisers, almost all political and economic powers were in the hands of the minority Tutsi (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Kiwuwa, 2012). The political system was an absolute monarchy, and the monarch, his counselors and more than 80 per cent of chiefs of districts were Tutsis (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Hanf et al., 1974). The Germans encouraged and reinforced the dominance of the minority Tutsi over the Hutus; a situation that did not change under Belgian colonial administration, except in the late 1950s when the Belgians channeled their military and political support to the majority Hutu (Barnett, 2002; Gourevitch, 1998; Kiwuwa, 2012).

The political and military support of one group over another by the colonisers was aimed at, it is held, weakening any inter-ethnic organisation against the undesired colonial control (Destexhe, 1995; Kiwuwa, 2012). In a similar vein, the Germans and Belgians maintained the authority of the king and local chiefs in order to acquire legitimacy through the implementation of indirect rule (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Kiwuwa, 2012). This strategy of indirect rule permitted the minority group to rule on behalf of the colonisers (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Gourevitch, 1998; Kiwuwa, 2012; Lemarchand,
The impact of Tutsi-favouritism was that in subsequent years ethnicity became a justification for social and political privileges (Buckley-Zistel, 2009). Similarly, Meeren (1996) expressed nearly twenty years ago that the ethnic conflict in Rwanda has derived essentially from the way in which “oppositions and rivalries, in terms of political power and social and economic privilege, have polarised and have been interpreted in the context of ethnicity” (p. 253).

It can be argued that although the terms Hutu and Tutsi were not coined by colonial administrators, increased tensions between these groups of people were fuelled by European colonisers. This can be evidenced by the fact that before colonisation Hutus and Tutsis cohabited relatively peacefully and married each other. Gourevitch (1998) and Kiwuwa (2012) made a similar point when they pointed out that these social groups did not engage in civil war, or genocide comparable with the 1959 social unrest and/or the 1994 genocide, until the arrival of the colonisers. The earlier civil war in 1896, which had involved two Tutsi clans, the Bega and the Banyiginya, as a result of a disputed succession to the throne does not fall under Hutu-Tutsi antagonism (Lemarchand, 1970).

The political problems and power imbalances between Rwanda’s groups of people will not be tackled in any depth at this point, this being outside the central aim of the thesis. However, reference will be made to those problems in identifying key elements of the history of school leadership and education in Rwanda.
The First and Second Republics (1962-1994)

The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of the decolonisation of Africa. After World War II, colonised people throughout Africa started to oppose colonial presence in their respective countries. At the same time, European colonisers, weakened by the Second World War, started to question the adequacy of their methods of administration, the outcomes of their actions, and even their presence in colonies (Erny, 2001). The reaction of colonised people against colonial rule could be identified through the existence of liberal ideas of indigenous elites, the creation of reform movements and political parties, and the awareness by indigenous elites of human rights and freedom of speech (Erny, 2001).

In Rwanda, anti-colonial struggle was slightly different from that occurring in other African countries. Initially, the Hutus concentrated more on putting an end to the absolute Tutsi monarchical regime than on seeking to obtain independence (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Kiwuwa, 2012). In 1957, Hutu intellectuals, with the support of the Catholic church, expressed their disagreement with Tutsi hegemony (Buckley-Zistel, 2009). In particular, they published a document, entitled The Bahutu Manifesto: A note on the social aspects of the indigenous racial problem in Rwanda (Destexhe, 1995; Kiwuwa, 2012) in which they exposed “the humiliation and socio-economic inferiority of the Hutu community (Prunier, 1995, p. 45). The democratic-egalitarian views of the Hutus led to the 1959 revolution, which coupled with the referendum on monarchy in 1961, resulted in the abolition of the monarchy (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Kiwuwa, 2012; Prunier, 1995). This event gave birth to the First Republic. It is noted that the 1959 revolution was accompanied by violence directed towards Tutsis, and this violence forced a good number of Tutsis to flee into adjacent countries (Barnett, 2002; Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Kiwuwa, 2012). It is also noteworthy that Rwanda became a republic a year and half before gaining its political independence from Belgium in 1962.
Becoming a republic before gaining political independence may explain the robust support the Hutu population obtained from the Belgian colonisers and missions in their fight against the Tutsi kingdom (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Kiwuwa, 2012).

The First Republic failed to address the ethnic question. Rather, it exacerbated ethnic inequality by introducing an ethnic quota system in the public service (Kiwuwa, 2012; Kroslak, 2008). The ethnic quota in Rwanda was a system by which people had to take up jobs/positions based on ethnic group membership. That is, people were employed in accordance with the proportion of Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa ethnic groups in the country (Erny, 2003; Hanf et al., 1974; Kiwuwa, 2012). In line with the ethnic quota principle, the Hutus secured 84 per cent of positions/jobs in public sectors, while the Tutsis were given 15 per cent of positions, which were subsequently reduced to 10 per cent (Erny, 2003; Hanf et al., 1974). Identity cards, which had been introduced by the Belgian colonial administration since 1933 (Barnett, 2002; Meeren, 1996), were used to confirm ethnic membership. While quotas were normally applied in public sectors to protect the minority against a potential majority monopoly, it seems that this was not the case in Rwanda: the Hutu government did not introduce the ethnic quota to protect the Tutsi minority, but rather to prevent the reoccurrence of Tutsi domination (Erny, 2003; Kiwuwa, 2012).

Apart from the continuation of ethnic polarisation, the First Republic enjoyed relative political stability in the mid-1960s. However, since the early 1970s this stability was undermined by the emergence of south-north regional rivalry amongst Hutu politicians. While involvement of people from the south and centre of the country was welcome in the political scene, involvement of those from northern regions was not. In fact, Hutus from the south and centre were privileged and comprised that majority in the then ruling political party in the government, and in the overall administration of the country (Erny, 2003; Hanf et al., 1974; Kroslak, 2008). Regional tensions among
politicians, coupled with another violent and politically motivated anti-Tutsi campaign (comparable to the 1959 scenario), plunged the country into a chaotic situation (Hanf et al., 1974). To restore order, in July 1973 a military coup, orchestrated by northern army officers overthrew the First Republic regime, and Major General Juvenal Habyarimana from the north of the country became president of the Second Republic (Prunier, 1995).

The Second Republic managed to solve some problems that had prevailed in the First Republic. The political immobility, the lack of diplomatic relations with other countries, and the quasi-stagnant economy that characterised the First Republic were relatively well addressed by the second (Kroslak, 2008; Prunier, 1995). At the economic level, for example, the Second Republic raised *per capita* income. While Rwanda’s *per capita* income had been higher than that of only two countries in the world under the First Republic, its *per capita* income became higher than that of eighteen countries under the Second Republic (Prunier, 1995). Rwanda’s *per capita* income of US$300 in 1987 was roughly comparable with that of the People’s Republic of China (US$310) (Prunier, 1995). This economic progress, however, declined slightly due to the gradual dropping of the price of coffee in late 1980s, which made Rwanda rely more heavily on foreign aid and loans by accepting the imposed World Bank structural adjustment programme (Kroslak, 2008). Other internal successes at this time included improvements in the mortality rate, hygiene and medical care services (Prunier, 1995). In addition, unlike Rwanda’s isolation from the outside world under the First Republic, the Second Republic attended Franco-African summits and co-founded the Economic Community of the Great Lakes (CPGL) (Kroslak, 2008).

Notwithstanding its success in addressing some of the shortcomings of the previous regime, the Second Republic has been criticised for being authoritarian and for continuing ethnic discrimination (Kroslak, 2008). After outlawing political parties, president Habyarimana created a unique and authoritarian party, the *Mouvement*
Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND), from which all district mayors and province governors were selected (Kroslak, 2008; Prunier, 1995). Every Rwandan citizen was obliged to be a member of MRND. The following comment from Prunier (1995) is illustrative of the authoritarianism of the regime:

> All citizens had their place of residence written on their identity cards. Travelling was tolerated, but not changing address without due cause; one had to apply for permission to move...Administrative control was probably the tightest in the world among non-communist countries. (p. 77)

This authoritarianism was accompanied by Tutsi political marginalisation. Indeed, during the 20 years of Second Republic administration, no single Tutsi was ever appointed as a district mayor or province governor, except the governor of Butare who was appointed almost at the end of this period. Furthermore, “there was only one Tutsi officer in the whole army, there were two Tutsi members of parliament out of seventy and there was only one Tutsi minister out of a cabinet of between twenty-five and thirty members (Prunier, 1995, p. 75).

The institutionalisation and racialisation of the ethnic question led eventually to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. A brief history of the events surrounding the 1994 genocide has already been presented in Chapter Two of this thesis. Attention is now turned to an overview of the Rwandan education system, with an emphasis on the development of the primary education, from colonial times up until 1994.
History of Rwandan Education System

Colonial days (1894-1962)

Early development of formal education and resistance to schooling

Before the arrival of the Europeans, education in Rwanda was totally informal. Rwandan children received their education from parents, relatives and community opinion leaders. The purpose of this informal education was to give children the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to enable them to become wise. Adults transmitted cultural values and language through stories, songs, dance, and poems. They also taught military and war skills (Rwandapedia, 2014). The rise of formal education and the demise of informal education occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century. The first school was established in 1900 by Catholic missionaries (many were from France). The Catholics were followed by the Protestants who also played a big role in the development of formal education in Rwanda. The evolution of formal education, with an emphasis on primary schooling, in the colonial period as interpreted by Erny (2001) and King (2008, p. 75-81) is presented in the following commentary.

Schooling was initially resisted by the Rwandan royal court. Indeed, the royal court did not welcome the introduction of schooling. This resistance is reflected in the king’s response to the ‘White Fathers’ request of a land to settle in and construct the first school (Erny, 2001; King, 2008). The king did not allow missionaries to establish a school near the royal court as they had wished. Rather, he authorised them to settle in a remote region reputed for its rebelliousness and insubordination. In addition, an effort was made to spread rumours according to which a White man is anthropophagic and had constructed a big tunnel to be used in the kidnapping of children from Rwanda to Europe. Those who dared attend mission schools were persecuted and rejected by society. This resistance was considered to be justified since the king and Tutsi chiefs
feared that the school/religion could interfere with regular customs on which the feodalism was based, which could challenge Tutsi authority. Later, however, the king and Tutsi chiefs showed interest in schooling by authorising missionaries to open a school near the royal court for the education of noble Tutsis on condition that this education would be non-religious and that religion would not be taught in the school.

Despite this resistance, there were 10 schools created by 1905, 33 schools with 1250 children by 1910, and 40 schools with 2650 school children by 1913 (Erny, 2001). Owing to the elite Tutsis’ aversion to schooling, mission schools were initially attended mostly by low class Hutus who were seeking protection from the White Fathers. In the noble class, only orphan, ‘familyless’ and/or very poor Tutsis attended these schools (Erny, 2001). With time, however, Tutsis’ reluctance to attend schools declined slightly and the German colonial administration founded a secular school reserved exclusively for sons of Tutsi chiefs. In this connection, Lemarchand’s (1970) has pointed out that “the education of Tutsi caste became a special concern of German Residents, on the grounds that they were the natural auxiliaries of the protectorate” (p. 74). But in general, having spent less than 20 years in Rwanda and being one of the most under-staffed colonial powers worldwide (Lemarchand, 1970), the German colonial administration neither had the time nor the means to establish more than one school in the country (Erny, 2001; King, 2008).

The equity issue in educational access

When Belgian colonisers were mandated to administer the country in 1923, they increased the number of schools by first establishing four schools which had been intended by their predecessors. By 1925 these schools contained 265 students who increased exponentially to 677 in 1929, the year such schools closed (Erny, 2001). King (2008) pointed out that before they closed, “these schools were strictly reserved for sons of chiefs and for notables of the Tutsi race” (p. 76). It must be highlighted that prior to
the early 1920s schools had longer been attended by only powerless Tutsis and Hutus. Since the mid-1920s, however, higher class Tutsis began to convert to Catholicism and to send their children to school (Erny, 2001). From this time, preference in schools started to be given to children from the Tutsi ethnic group. Therefore, from the mid-1920s up until the end of the 1950s, ‘the consensus of opinion among Belgian administrators was that the Tutsi should remain the sole recipients of secular and missionary education (Lemarchand, 1970, p. 74). The educated Tutsi served as interpreters, clerks, and tax collectors and could be appointed chiefs, thus constituting “the embryo of a new category of functionaries which the administration used as a counterweight to the apathy or resistance of the older generations” (Lemarchand, 1970, p. 74). The Catholic church, however, did not comply fully with the above perspective as it did admit a small number of Hutus into its Seminaries. Those Hutus who had been seminarians later coordinated the events that led to the earlier mentioned 1959 social revolution (King, 2008; Erny, 2001).

The curriculum focus

The curriculum was tailored to meet missionary objectives. Prior to the 1920s, education in mission schools focused mainly on reading the Holy history and other religious texts, on memorising catechism, on singing liturgical songs in Latin, and on reciting prayers (Erny, 2001). By 1907, a textbook of prayers and a catechism had been translated into the local language, Kinyarwanda. Education lasted for four years during which students were prepared for baptism. As such, reciting word-by-word the catechism and reading some letters in Kinyarwanda became a condition for being baptised (Erny, 2001).

From the end 1930s until the day of independence, however, the curriculum focus shifted from the exclusive teaching of Religion to the incorporation of either manual training or French. Manual training was emphasised in the ordinary path at lower
primary level, while learning French was emphasised in the selective path at upper primary level. The ordinary upper primary lasted three years and begun after the lower primary that lasted two years. It was conceived for the mass, and by emphasising manual training, it prepared primary school graduates to contribute to the development of rural areas (Erny, 2001; King, 2008). The selective upper primary lasted four years and started after completion of lower primary of two years duration. By emphasising the learning of French, upper primary aimed to prepare a Rwandan elite who could serve the colonial administration (Erny, 2001; King, 2008). Furthermore, only completion of selective upper primary could lead on to secondary education (Erny, 2001). There was acculturation among Rwandans that emanated mainly from the prioritisation of the use of French language in schools.

Overall, primary education was limited by minimal colonial government support and few physical and human resources. It was also characterised by ethnic imbalances with regard to access to education. As a result of these imbalances, primary education remained unavailable to many Rwandans: “by 1957, less than three per cent of children were finishing six years of primary school (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002, p. 1151).

The First Republic (1962-1973)

Democratisation and universalisation of primary schooling
In order to implement its egalitarian ideology, the First Republic strove to universalise and democratise primary education. This was part of the correction of the educational inequities with regard to access to education, which had characterised the colonial era. On this, article 4 of the 1966 *Loi sur l’Education Nationale* (Education Act) declared primary education to be free and compulsory to all Rwandans (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). To accommodate the large number of children in classes, a two-shift system (double vacation) has been introduced since 1963 in the first four years of primary
education (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). After 1966, however, this system was only allowed in the first three years that now constituted the lower primary (*République Rwandaise, 1967*). The upper primary lasted three years. In case a double-shift system was required in subsequent years (i.e. in the upper primary), teachers were requested to teach more than one class, but this had to be authorised by the Minister of Education (*République Rwandaise, 1967*). It must be highlighted that the expanded access of children to primary education did not maintain the same pace because of the low national budget and a burgeoning number of school aged children brought about by overpopulation (Hilker, 2011).

A series of challenges seemed to work against the democratisation and universalisation of primary schooling. Such challenges included, for example, the shortage of qualified teachers and the low completion rate (King, 2008). The increased quantitative educational expansion created a need for qualified teachers. As the colonial administration had not prepared enough qualified teaching personnel, unqualified teachers were maintained and allowed to teach during the First Republic (*République Rwandaise, 1967*). There was also a very low completion rate among students, reinforced by academic elitism. Academic elitism here refers to all practices that work against mass education and universal access (Parhizgar, 2010). Such practices may include, for example, the promotion and allocation of funding to the best achievers/students in the education system and the neglect of poor performers. Indeed, under the First Republic, primary school students who had not obtained the required scores were expelled from school for good. This was stipulated in Article 49 of the 1966 Education Act (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). According to this Act, students were not allowed to repeat more than twice within a full cycle of primary schooling (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). Priority was therefore given to new students promoted to the next grade, and any student who had not obtained the required scores had to leave the system.
to make places available for newly promoted students (République Rwandaise, 1966). This had a negative impact on the student completion rate and was thus detrimental to the ‘universalisation’ and ‘democratisation’ of education.

**The higher attrition rate of students**

Given the lack of places in secondary schools, rigorous selection was undertaken at primary school level to enable only very few primary school graduates to continue on to secondary schools. Upon completion of the first four year cycle of primary education, from 1963 until 1967 students sat for a national exam which selected the best students to enter grade five and six (République Rwandaise, 1967). This discriminatory exam was suppressed towards the end of the 1960s. Another official exam which was required for the end of primary school certificate was conducted on completion of grade six (République Rwandaise, 1966). The possession of this certificate and the ethnic quota principle were considered prior to admitting students into secondary schools (King, 2008). The many primary school leavers who were not promoted to secondary education had to join the labour marked at a very young age without adequate skills. Although complementary classes that taught agricultural skills and crafts were available for non-completers, these classes were suppressed by 1966 due to financial constraints (Hanf et al., 1974).

**The curriculum and classroom teaching**

In the primary school curriculum, compulsory subjects included Religion or Moral Education, Kinyarwanda, French, Civic Education, Calculation, Geography, History, Drawing, Music, Gymnastics, and Manual work. Girls and boys were not given the same content in the subject of Manual training. While girls were taught home/housecraft, boys acquired knowledge and skills in agriculture, horticulture, and handcraft (République Rwandaise, 1966). The language of instruction was Kinyarwanda
in the lower primary lasting three years, and French and/or Kinyarwanda in the upper primary that lasted three years.

Furthermore, classroom teaching was overly formal and restricted to the use of authorised/prescribed textbooks. Teachers were required by inspectors to adhere strictly to official instructional manuals while delivering content. According to article 114 of the Presidential Order N° 175/03, “teachers are prohibited to distribute in class instructional manuals that are not listed in the curriculum or on other official programmes” (République Rwandaise, 1967).

Although the First Republic surpassed the colonial administration with regard to increasing primary student enrolments (enrolment quadrupled from 1961 to 1972), it did not reject many aspects of colonial education. For example, as in the colonial period, primary education continued to comprise two cycles and remained six years, in duration. The language of instruction in the upper primary remained French, and upon completion of grade six, a primary leaving examination continued to be administered to select the best achievers for secondary education (République Rwandaise, 1966; République Rwandaise, 1967). Thus, entering secondary education remained highly competitive. In addition, as in the colonial period, classroom teaching remained formal, abstract, passive, and emphasised memorisation and recitation of the content on the part of the students (Erny, 2003). Moreover, the shortage of qualified teachers and the insufficient educational infrastructure continued to hamper education provision. Hence, notwithstanding the increased enrolment rates, the goal of universalisation of primary education was far from being achieved particularly as by 1972 almost 50 per cent of primary aged children were not in school (Hanf et al., 1974).
The Second Republic (1973-1994)

Important changes were implemented by the Second Republic to deal with the challenges that affected primary education under the First Republic. In particular, the 1979 school reform and its contribution to solving educational problems which were endemic during the First Republic administration merit special consideration. This reform and its implications for the evolution of primary education in Rwanda are now discussed.

The 1979 school reform

The 1979 school reform came as a tentative solution to the problems created by the high attrition rate of students occurring between the primary and secondary school levels. As such, it ruralised primary schooling to enable the many primary school graduates who were not entering secondary education to engage with rural activities (République Rwandaise, 1985b). In addition to the two cycles that existed at the primary school level, the reform introduced a two year cycle to teach primary school students practical training (République Rwandaise, 1985b). This two year practical training focused mainly on rural activities which included, for example, farming, masonry, carpentry, and basketwork (République Rwandaise, 1985b). The duration of primary education, therefore, was extended to eight years. As before the reform, the first cycle continued to focus on literacy, and the second cycle on general training (République Rwandaise, 1985b). The national exam that used to be conducted at the end of grade six was shifted to the end of grade eight.

Furthermore, the 1979 reform introduced Kinyarwanda as a medium of instruction in all levels of primary education. While both Kinyarwanda and French had been used in primary schools under the First Republic, the 1979 reform introduced Kinyarwanda as the sole medium of instruction throughout primary education (République Rwandaise, 1985b). Making Kinyarwanda the language of instruction was aimed at, it is
held, promoting social/cultural development. In secondary and tertiary education, however, the language of instruction did not change as French continued to be used in the teaching and learning processes. Similarly, the 1979 reform maintained the double timetable system (two-shift system) that had been introduced during the First Republic. This two-shift system was maintained for the first three years of primary schooling to deal with the increased number of students. There was, however, an official inclination to abandon the double timetable system progressively (République Rwandaise, 1985b; République Rwandaise, 1985c).

The ethnic quota and the 1979 school reform challenges

The democratisation of educational access was also an objective of the reform, but it seems that the ethnic and regional quota system worked against this democratisation. It will be recalled that the ethnic quota system, though started by First Republic regime, gained prominence under the Second Republic (Kiwuwa, 2012). According to Article 60 of the Law N° 14/1985 in relation to the organisation of primary education, primary school graduates were admitted to secondary schools based not only on scores obtained in national examinations, but also on regional and ethnic quotas. Accordingly, Hutus, Tutsis, and Twas did not have the same access to secondary education since places were fixed in keeping with their proportional numbers in the country’s overall population (République Rwandaise, 1982b). It can be argued that the ethnic quota principle was not a good practice in the field of education since students could enter secondary education not on the grounds of academic merit, but on the grounds of ethnic and/or regional affiliations.

Moreover, the extended duration of primary education created a need for new teachers and new facilities. By 1984, however, there were indications that there was a lack of means to achieve the objectives of the 1979 reform. In 1984, the World Bank educational report on Rwanda highlighted that the shortage of qualified teachers and
teaching materials were the major factors undermining the impact of the reform (World Bank, 1984):

...with a rapid enrolment increase, the proportion of unqualified teachers has risen to 66 per cent for grades 1-6 with deleterious effect upon quality. Teaching of workshop subjects in grade 7-8 is generally weak as the required retraining of teachers was substandard. Expenditure on textbooks and educational materials is minuscule and quality suffers from severe shortages in this regard. (p. 6-7)

In light of the above, the aims of the 1979 reform were hampered by a lack of means made worse by financial constraints. It will be recalled that in the 1980s Rwanda agreed to World Bank Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which forced governments to decrease state funding of important services including education (Kroslak, 2008). The shortage of educational materials, the shortage of qualified teachers, and the insufficiency of textbooks can be attributed to the decrease in government spending on education in the wake of the implementation of SAPs. It is against this background that, in 1991, the 1979 school reform was revised and the duration of primary education was again reduced to six years.

The implementation of this reform was challenged by the civil war that had started in 1990. During this war, the government decreased its attention on educational matters by mobilising resources towards the war effort. In addition, primary schools were closed in regions annexed by the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) rebels, and primary school children were displaced internally. The impact of this war on education is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six of this thesis.

To recap this last part of the chapter: from 1894 until 1994, there were four milestones in the development of primary education in Rwanda. These include the arrival of Europeans and the development of an elitist education system in Rwanda from
1900 until 1962, the democratisation and universalisation of educational access in the 1960s, the 1979 school reform, and the revision of the 1979 reform in 1991. The fifth milestone connected with post-war educational developments will be presented in Chapter Six according to the second substantive research question of this study. This research question will uncover the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership since 1994. Attention is now turned to the history of school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times up until 1994.

**History of Primary School Leadership**

**Colonial days (1894-1962)**

**Prior to 1925**

Prior to 1925, the administration of primary schools was mainly in the hands of the Catholic church and Protestants. In the absence of official school legislation, the organisation of education was almost entirely left to the appreciation and initiative of the Missions, especially the Catholic church (Erny, 2001; King, 2008). In line with this, all educational affairs/issues such as education policies and the content to be taught were set by the White Fathers under the direction of the Alsacian Bishop Hirth (Erny, 2001; King, 2008). As education was viewed as a means for evangelisation, White Fathers in their administration of schools were guided by their superiors’ beliefs about the purpose of the school (Erny, 2001):

> The aim of the school…is 1. To prepare good recruits for seminaries, 2. To prepare catechists to send in the countryside/villages, 3. To prepare actively practicing Christians from the elite caste who can convince by example others to convert to Catholicism, …the aim of the school is not to teach writing to
everyone, but to a small elite number only, which is sufficient to prepare assistants/auxiliaries for the government. (p. 28)

The above aim of the school was not shared by all school administrators. Indeed, while White Fathers had to comply with Bishop Hirth’s perception of the purpose of the school, not all Catholic church missionaries endorsed the promotion of a purely religion-centered education (Erny, 2001). Rather, some advocated for following the example of the Protestants who were combining religion with technical training (Erny, 2001).

School administrators were either Catechists or Fathers from outside Rwanda. The school that was reserved exclusively for the education of noble Tutsis was, for example, administered by two Catechists from Uganda who had accompanied the White Fathers to Rwanda (Erny, 2001). Locally made Catechists, however, were not involved in administration. Rather, they worked as helpers of missionaries in almost all domains. Although they could be regarded as teachers, their duties went far beyond those of teachers in contemporary educational situations. They worked for missionaries as “intermediates between missionaries and local authorities, recruiters of catechumens, reciters of catechism, against master builders, builders, domestic personnel, security keepers, etc” (Erny, 2001, p. 31). These ‘Catechist-teachers’ lived on agricultural harvest like other Rwandans, but had some benefits such as forced labour exemption, respect from society, and gifts from Fathers (Erny, 2001).

The German colonial administration was not involved in the management of schools. Indeed, the Germans appeared to be less interested in education. They were reticent to get involved because they tended to be short of resources and personnel (King, 2008). They praised the work of Missions and encouraged them to establish more schools. Notwithstanding these praises and encouragements, the work of
missionaries was slightly constrained by the resistance of the king whose authority was respected by the Germans because of the benefits of indirect rule (Erny, 2001).

The 1925/26 De jonghe Convention

The years 1925/26 marked the beginning of an official involvement by the Belgian colonial administration in educational affairs. This involvement took place as a result of the “De jonghe convention” signed between the colonial government and different Missions (Simpenzwe, 1988). Named after Mr De jonghe, who was the Director General at the Ministry of colonies, the De jonghe convention officialised education provision (Simpenzwe, 1988). While the terms of this convention were discussed in 1925/26, the convention was not actually signed until January 1930 (Erny, 2001; Simpenzwe, 1988).

Colonial involvement entailed the control and subsidisation of missionary education. According to the convention, the government agreed to provide missionaries with subsidies while missions, in exchange, accepted inspection and agreed to follow the curriculum and other guidelines established by colonisers (Erny, 2001; King, 2008). The subsidies provided were directly proportional to the number of schools administered by the missionaries, the level of education (i.e. primary or secondary), and the number of students and teachers involved. In line with the terms of the convention, missions committed to make available to schools, equipment and infrastructure, and to recruit personnel. It must be highlighted that according to the convention the administration and management of subsidised private schools continued to be in ecclesiastical hands. The subsidisation policy, however, did not apply to all schools. It was only those schools owned by Catholics and Belgian Protestants that were subsidised. Anglican schools and other schools owned by non-Belgians, on the other hand, were not subsidised. By funding schools, the colonial government abandoned an official education that was held in its schools and engaged in the provision of a public
and subsidised education (Erny, 2001; King, 2008; Simpenzwe, 1988). It is the De jonghe convention, therefore, that introduced the libre subsidie (government-aided) school system in Rwanda, other types of schools being state and private schools.

It is important to mention at this juncture that the above convention reflected an example of international policy borrowing in school administration. In fact, by introducing this convention in Rwanda and Burundi, Belgians aligned with a convention that had originally been signed in 1906 between independent Congo and the Holy See (Simpenzwe, 1988). It will be recalled that Congo is Rwanda’s neighbouring country which had been under Belgian rule since 1908. Apart from the international influence manifested through the 1925 convention, from the 1920s until independence, schooling in Rwanda continued to be influenced by forces beyond national boundaries. Education policy and practice were, for example, decided in Burundi (where the Ruanda-Urundi governor was located), Algeria (the location of the headquarters for White Fathers), and in Belgium (Erny, 2001; King, 2008).

The 1948 Convention

The 1948 convention was a revision of the 1925 convention. It was signed between the Ruanda-Urundi colonial government represented by Mr Simon, the then governor of Ruanda-Urundi territory and Missions represented by Bishop Laurent Deprimoz, the apostolic vicar for Ruanda (current Rwanda) at the time (Simpenzwe, 1988). The convention was made in the context of responding to the United Nations’ (UN) call for expanding access to education and for providing sufficient education at the secondary school level in Rwanda. Through this convention, missions were expected to collaborate with the government in the education of the general populace without abandoning elite education. Accordingly, two different educational tracks were established at the upper primary school level: a selective track for the preparation of a future intellectual elite
derived from Tutsis and an ordinary track for the mass population comprising mostly Hutus (Erny, 2001, Simenzwe, 1998).

Although many aspects of the 1948 convention remained similar to its 1925 predecessor, some new aspects are worth noting. To implement the UN recommendations, the colonial government through the 1948 convention, committed to increase subsidies and amended subsidisation criteria. Erny (2001) listed new criteria that school administrators (the missions) had to fulfill in order to obtain subsidies. These criteria included, but were not limited to:

The possession of educational infrastructure, the will to dispense free education at elementary level, staff qualifications, the threshold number of students the school can accommodate, the language of instruction, the number of days a school functions per year, the incorporation of the manual work time in the everyday programme, the use of approved curriculum, school performance, and the acceptance of official, educational, administrative and medical inspections. (p. 142)

Another new aspect of the 1948 convention was that the provision of subsidies was extended to schools administered by non-Belgian missionaries. In addition, according to the convention, a missionary school inspector of Belgian origin was assigned to each parish/region. This inspector was expected to carry out pedagogical inspections in schools located in that region. Official inspectors were also appointed to carry out administrative inspections in the region assigned to them (Erny, 2001; Simenzwe, 1988).

In accordance with a series of conventions, missions continued to be solely responsible for the organisation and administration of schools until the late 1950s. Belgians funded schools which accepted to follow the curriculum and other guidelines.
established by them. Most school leaders came from outside Rwanda. However, with political independence obtained in 1962 and the ideology (social revolution and Hutu emancipation) that led to it, change in the ways schools were administered was unavoidable under the First Republic regime. Attention is now turned to school leadership after independence.

The First Republic (1962-1973)

In August 1962, just one month after independence, a convention pertaining to school administration and management was signed between independent Rwanda, the Catholic church and the Protestant Alliance. This convention regulated temporarily the relationship between missions and the state from independence until the publication of the *Loi sur l’Éducation Nationale* (*Education Act*) in 1966. This *Loi sur l’Éducation Nationale* nationalised education, which created conflict between the church and the state.

Church and state conflict

The *Loi sur l’Éducation Nationale* (*Education Act*) of 1966 placed educational affairs under national control and embittered the relationship between church and state. Indeed, it was aimed at nationalising formally all schools by placing them under the direct control of the state and removing school control from the hands of ecclesiastical authorities (*République Rwandaise*, 1966). One of the consequences of the nationalisation of schools was that school administrators of foreign origin were replaced by Rwandans (King, 2008). It will be recalled that all schools, except for a very few, were owned and controlled by the church (especially the Catholic church), although subsidised by the state. The following key provisions of the *Loi sur l’Éducation Nationale* seemed to have been at the heart of the resentment between church and state:
All schools constructed before the promulgation of the *Loi sur l’Education Nationale* with the financial means of the state are automatically the property of the state (art. 19); (b) The curriculum and the selection of instructional manuals are fixed and highly controlled by the state (art. 22); (c) The admission, promotion and expulsion of students in all schools are done in accordance with the guidelines established by the Ministry of National Education (art. 47, 49, 50, 51); (d) All the teaching personnel including religious personnel of state and subsidised schools are hired and removed from work with the supervision and control of the state (art. 53, 54, 55).

It can be perceived from the above statement that the nationalisation of schools in this way could result in the secularisation of the whole school system. Hence, the reason for the oppositional reaction/attitude of the Catholic church: the church officially declared the *Loi sur l’Education Nationale* to be contrary to the Constitution and against previous conventions that had been signed between the state and the church (Lemarchand, 1970).

Despite the concern about the secularisation of the school system, there was another factor that fuelled church-state controversy. In this connection, Lemarchand (1970) has drawn attention to the high ethnic polarisation between the First Republic Hutu-government and the Tutsi-dominated clergy immediately after independence. Although Hutu leaders had benefited generally from Catholic church support in the abolition of the Tutsi monarchical regime, most of the Tutsi priests including those occupying senior positions in the Catholic church, had rallied themselves to the cause of the monarchy (Lemarchand, 1970). This rallying brought about an unhealthy relationship between the state and the church. Such a relationship was significant since “the vast majority of the indigenous clergy, including some of those in control of the commanding heights of the church hierarchy, are of Tutsi origins (Lemarchand, 1970, p. 259).
Centralisation of school administration

The 1966 *Loi sur l’Education Nationale* made the administration of schools highly centralised, with personnel in state schools recruited by the Minister of National Education and appointed by the Minister of Public Service and Labour (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). In subsidised schools, however, school personnel were recruited by church representatives, approved by the Minister of Education and appointed by the Minister of Public Service and Labour. Both state schools (very few in number) and the many subsidised schools dispensed a public education and the salaries of their personnel were provided by the state (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). In addition to the centralised process of school personnel recruitment, the centralisation of education administration could also be seen through the existence of a national inspection service created by the Ministry of Education (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). As part of its mission, the national inspection service was expected to ensure that teachers adhere strictly to instructional manuals in the classroom (*République Rwandaise, 1966*).

The Minister of National Education controlled Rwandan schooling through different school authorities. These school authorities included the Minister himself, the General Council for education, the national representatives of subsidised education (representing different religious institutions), official inspectors, and church/diocesan visitors (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). The General Council for education advised the Minister on all educational matters including the curriculum, the selection of appropriate textbooks and school legislation (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). Official inspectors comprised the *inspecteurs d’arrondissement* (Province Education Inspectors) and the *inspecteurs de Secteur* (Sector Education Inspectors). They were responsible for pedagogical and administrative inspections in schools located in the Province and Sector assigned to them (*République Rwandaise, 1966*). The Minister of National Education fixed the size/limit of a Sector. There were many Sectors in a Province.
Sector Education Inspectors reported periodically to Province Education Inspectors and the Ministry of Education. Church/diocesan inspectors who carried out pedagogical inspections in schools in the colonial area were now only responsible for the organisation and inspection of the teaching of Religion in schools (*République Rwandaise, 1967*).

**The challenges to school inspection**

It appears that school inspection was more theoretical than practical. Indeed, Sector Education Inspectors (SEI) were overloaded because many of their duties could be easily performed by a school-based principal, but the position of school principal was suppressed. SEIs were expected to visit schools and watch teachers’ lessons in class and provide pedagogical advice after classroom inspection (*République Rwandaise, 1967*). In addition, they were expected to inspect the quality of school buildings and materials, to monitor compliance with the official curriculum and with laws and regulations governing national education (*République Rwandaise, 1967*). In place of a school principal, there was a *maître principal* (principal teacher) who was essentially a teacher, with authority to perform some administrative duties (*République Rwandaise, 1967*). This *maître principal* had the same teaching load as other teachers. With the same teaching load as his colleagues, a *maître principal* could not find time to perform the assigned administrative duties. Moreover, his/her authority was limited as he/she had to follow and implement the SEIs’ decisions. As a result, it could be concluded that the nationally emphasised school inspection was hampered by the absence of a formal school-based principal and the work overload of Sector inspectors.
Leadership preparation and selection

The maître principal was not a trained manager/leader. Instead, he/she was selected from among experienced teachers, with a complete pedagogical training usually obtained from a teacher training secondary school (République Rwandaise, 1966; République Rwandaise, 1967). After selection, the candidate was required to be approved by the Province Education Inspector (PEI) after being proposed by the Sector Education Inspector (SEI) in state schools. In subsidised schools, however, the approval was undertaken by the PEI after the candidate was proposed by the representative of subsidised education (usually a representative of a religious institution) at the national level (République Rwandaise, 1967). Like the maître principal, the inspecteurs de Secteur (Sector Education Inspectors) were selected among people with a theoretical training and practical experience in teaching/education (République Rwandaise, 1967). The prospective SEI was to be appointed by the Minister of Education (République Rwandaise, 1967). It can be inferred from the above that school staff selection and appointment reflected bureaucratic compliance, with rigid and tight procedures being followed until the candidate is approved and/or appointed at the national or provincial administrative level.

It is important to understand whether the above picture of school leadership under First Republic remained unchanged under the second. Such understanding is useful to appreciate changes, if any, that occurred under the Second Republic. Attention is now turned to the presentation of the depiction of school leadership under the Second Republic. Where possible, continuities in school leadership between Republics will be established.
The Second Republic (1973-1994)

The mid-1980s saw the modification of the previously mentioned 1966 Education Act and the introduction of new laws aimed at regulating national education generally and school administration specifically. These new laws included the Loi Organique sur l’Education Nationale (the 1985 Education Act) (République Rwandaise, 1985a) and the Loi portant organisation de l’enseignement primaire, rural et artisanal Intégré et Secondaire (Law regulating the organisation of primary, integrated rural and craft, and secondary education) (République Rwandaise, 1985b). A Presidential order was put in place to make explicit the provisions of these laws (République Rwandaise, 1985c). Moreover, to remedy the church-state controversy that was endemic under the First Republic, another Presidential order was dedicated to the clarification of the status of subsidised private primary and secondary schools (République Rwandaise, 1986). In a similar vein, a new convention of 15 April 1987, that is still guiding the church-state relationship, was signed between the state and the Catholic church (République Rwandaise, 1987). The remainder of this section is devoted to portraying school leadership as it is reflected in the above laws, Presidential orders, and conventions.

The rebirth of the position of school principal

The 1985 law regulating the organisation of primary education, integrated rural and craft education, and secondary education, added the school principal to the list of school authorities. According to this law, “every school is led by a Directeur (school principal) performing pedagogical and administrative duties for the better functioning of the school” (Art. 25) (République Rwandaise, 1985b). In addition, a primary school principal was required to lead more than one school when circumstances dictated that this be the case. He/she was selected from among primary school teachers having completed successfully pedagogical training in secondary school and having acquired substantial teaching experience (République Rwandaise, 1985b). It is important to
mention that the election necessitated church or district intervention depending on whether a school was state or subsidised. To make this point clear, a list of candidates to the post of school principal was made by the representative of the church (in the Catholic church this was the priest responsible for Catholic education in the parish) when a prospective school principal was to lead a subsidised primary school. The list was made by the Commune (District) Education Council if the would be school principal was to lead a state school. School teachers then elected the school principal from the list established for them (Rényublique Rwandaise, 1985b). Furthermore, in addition to the creation of the post of school principal, the above 1985 law established the School Education Council, the Commune (District) Education Council, and the Province Education Council (Rényublique Rwandaise, 1985b).

The prescribed duties that were to be accomplished by the school principal were managerial in nature. Such duties, according to République Rwandaise (1985c), comprised:

- To collect or submit statistics requested by school authorities, to monitor periodically teachers’ possession of pedagogical documents, to ensure absent teachers are replaced temporarily and if possible replace them personally until they come back, to report to the Sector Education Inspector the recommendations and suggestions that can improve service delivery, and to manage discipline in the school (Art. 22).

The school principal was expected to work closely with the council of teachers whilst performing the above duties. The council of teachers was under the direct authority of the principal and its mission consisted of submitting (to the District Education Council) for approval those cases of students who would repeat the year or be expelled from the school, managing discipline at the school, and managing funds emanating from school
income generating activities (République Rwandaise, 1985c). It may be argued that the decision making authority and autonomy of the school principal were very limited. This limitation can be evidenced by the fact that school principals had to present for consideration or criticism all students repeating the year or student expulsion cases to the Commune (District) Education Council.

In addition to their limited decision making authority, it should be mentioned that school principals and inspectors were also constrained by the shortage of educational infrastructure and resources. This situation has been partially attributed to Rwanda’s adherence to SAPs in the 1980s, which resulted in the reduction of expenditure on education and other important services.

The church’s influence in school management and administration

Given that the Catholic church owned and ran the majority of primary schools, most of the commentary in this section relates to the Catholic church. Other churches, however, had similar experience with the state.

The relationship between the state and the Catholic church was embellished through the incorporation of the church’s wishes in the 1986 Presidential order (République Rwandaise, 1986) and in the 1987 new convention between the two parties (République Rwandaise, 1987). In order to appease church-state conflict, the post of the representative of subsidised private schools at the level of the province was created. This representative was no longer only responsible for the organisation of the teaching of Religion (as was the case according to the First Republic regime) but was also involved in ensuring the efficient functioning of subsidised schools in the province (République Rwandaise, 1986). Most importantly, this provincial church representative was to give recommendations and advice to the Province Education Inspector aimed at
improving teaching-and-learning in subsidised schools (République Rwandaise, 1985c; République Rwandaise, 1986).

At the level of the school, the influence of the church in education generally and school leadership specifically was reflected through the provisions of the 1986 Presidential Order (P.O). Such provisions now worked against the principles of nationalisation of schools that were promoted by the First Republic regime. Key provisions regarding the new relationship between the state and the Catholic church comprised the following arrangements (République Rwandaise, 1986):

The state recognises that the land and school buildings at subsidised schools are the property of the church or any other person who constructed them with full or partial support from the state (art. 2, P.O); (b) the owner of subsidised schools can establish the list of candidates on the post of school principal, recruit teachers in collaboration with school principals, select Religion textbooks, and with the approval of the Minister, select other instructional manuals that have a scientific interest (art. 4, P.O); (c) The state approves and appoint the teaching and administrative personnel recruited by the owner of subsidised schools within 30 days before the commencement of the school year (art. 32, P.O); The performance appraisal of primary school teachers is conducted firstly by the school principal, secondly by the owner of the school, and thirdly by the Province Education Inspector after consulting the Sector Education Inspector. Primary school principals are evaluated firstly by the owner, secondly by the Sector Education Inspector, and thirdly by the Province Education Inspector (art. 34, P.O).

In light of the above, in the 1980s the church regained much of its influence in primary education and in primary school leadership. Thus, the state’s recognition of the church
as the owner of the many primary schools, the church’s intervention in school personnel recruitment and in performance appraisal indicated the redefinition of the church’s role in education and school leadership. It may be argued that the church regained its influence and control over education because of budget shortages plaguing the government in the 1980s.

Moreover, the church’s role in primary school administration was reinforced by the 1987 convention between the state and the Catholic church. In addition to the above church privileges, this convention entrusted the church with the right, for example, to supervise and control the work of school personnel in its schools, to send people in state and non-Catholic schools to teach Catholic Religion to Catholic students, and to use funds from school fees and state subsidies on the maintenance, functioning and equipment of the schools (*République Rwandaise, 1987*). In addition, the Catholic Secretariat, SNEC (*Secretariat National de l’ Enseignement Catholique*) was tasked to coordinate and manage Catholic schools at the national level. To prevent further conflict between the signatories, respect, communication, consultation between state and church officials were envisaged (*République Rwandaise, 1987*).

Notwithstanding the above positive relationship between state and church in the 1980s, the early 1990s were characterised by misunderstandings between these partners. Obura (2003) has pointed out that in 1992 the church accused the state of violating relevant terms of 1987 convention. In relation to school leadership, for instance, she (Obura, 2003) summarised issues that the church perceived as being promoted by the state:

Confusion over the roles of various school administrators and actors, supporters, inspectors and visitors; appropriation by the state of multiple management roles which, according to the 1985 agreement, were to be shared; problems with the
approval, recruitment and transfers of teachers and heads, and interference in school management. (p. 109)

Both the state and the church, Obura (2003) concludes, highlighted that the lack of precision in the wording of the 1980s protocols resulted in confusion and misunderstanding over specific management and administrative roles each party was to undertake at the Commune (District), Sector and school level.

Centralised educational administration and school leadership selection

Similar to the situation during the First Republic, the administration of schools remained centralised under the Second Republic. Although school education councils, Commune education councils, Province education councils and local auxiliary organs for education were created under the Second Republic, the establishment of central bodies responsible for school inspection and curriculum development reflected the existence of centralism in education (République Rwandaise, 1985c; République Rwandaise, 1986). In addition, the administration of schools continued to be dominated by an administrative hierarchy and a lack of autonomy at the school level, with much reporting following the ‘bottom-up’ channel of communication (République Rwandaise, 1985b; République Rwandaise, 1985c). In this connection, school principals were required to report to the Sector Education Inspectors and the church representative who, in turn, had to report to the Province Education Inspector and the representative of the church at the level of the Province. The latter two officials reported to the Ministry and/or the representative of the church at the national level (République Rwandaise, 1985c). Furthermore, similar to during the First Republic, school principals and inspectors were not required to be trained managers. Their selection was based on teaching experience and knowledge of pedagogy as evidenced by the possession of a certificate issued by a teacher training secondary school (République Rwandaise,
Province Education Inspectors, on the other hand, had to possess a Bachelor’s Degree in Education or in Education-related subjects (République Rwandaise, 1985c).

**Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that through a series of protocols signed between the state and the church, these signatories shaped, provided and influenced primary school leadership from 1900 up until 1994. In the colonial era, the church especially the Catholic church largely held monopoly over school administration, with Belgian authorities subsidising schools which accepted to follow the curriculum and other guidelines established by them. The First Republic, however, challenged the church’s role by taking over church schools and controlling the entire education system. On this, state control was manifested, for example, in curriculum development, school inspection, the recruitment, approval, and the appointment of teachers and school leaders with minimal intervention by the church. Nevertheless, due to state financial hardship, the church regained much of its influence in primary education and primary school administration from the 1980s under the Second Republic.

Although each political regime had its distinct way of shaping primary education and primary school leadership, there are important continuities occurring from the colonial period through to the Second Republic. Such continuities, in relation to primary school leadership include, for example, the fact that leadership potential continued not to be part of screening criteria for the selection of school leaders. Rather, the selection of school principals and inspectors continued to be based on the candidates’ possession of teaching experience and qualification. Another continuity is that school leaders continued to face such school-based challenges as a shortage of qualified teachers due to a rapid increase in student enrolments, a low completion rate, insufficient financial resources, teacher-centred pedagogy, and a lack of teaching materials. Furthermore,
school principals’ leadership continued to be managerial and remained mostly characterised by bureaucratic compliance, the implementation of formal procedures and rules designed by central offices, and the very limited autonomy with regard to decision-making.

To conclude, this chapter has responded to the first research question of the study being reported here; namely, what is the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994? The exposition provided is helpful in understanding how the past may have an impact on the present. In particular, it helps in understanding how analysing history and learning from it can enable people to offer suggestions for improving future policy and practice. The next chapter is now concerned with the second research question posed in relation to primary school leadership in the post-conflict era; namely, ‘What are the recent developments that have taken place in relation to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda since 1994?’
CHAPTER SIX
DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO PRIMARY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN RWANDA SINCE THE GENOCIDE OF 1994

Introduction

Chapter Five described the historical background to primary education generally and primary school leadership specifically from colonial times until 1994. It revealed that, throughout this period, the churches played a significant role in administering and managing primary schools. For example, churches and the state signed different conventions which clarified the contribution of the signatories to school management affairs. Despite these conventions, there were continuous state and church conflicts over school ownership, control and administration, with the magnitude of the conflict and the way of handling it depending on the political regime which was ruling the country at the time.

Moreover, the administration of primary schools was highly centralised from the day of independence in 1962 until 1994. Under this centralisation, school principals’ leadership was limited to implementing bureaucratic policies and rules instigated by central bodies. The centralised services of education included curriculum development, school inspection as well as school principal and teacher recruitment, approval and appointment. Furthermore, just before 1994, school leadership was constrained by such challenges as the lack of qualified teachers and teaching materials as a result of increasing enrolments and financial hardship.

This chapter addresses the second aim of the study, namely, to develop an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership in Rwanda since 1994. It will be recalled that the year 1994 marked the termination of the four year civil war, which resulted in the genocide occurring throughout the country. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part of the
chapter examines briefly the impact of the genocide on primary education. This is deemed essential to understand the context within which school leadership took place in the aftermath of the war and the genocide. The second part describes the developments that have occurred in relation to primary education more generally in Rwanda from 1994 until 2014. The third part of the chapter highlights the developments related to primary school leadership during this period.

Within the second and third parts of the chapter, two periods, namely, the emergency reconstruction (i.e; from 1994 until 1999) and the reconstruction development (i.e; from 2000 until 2014) periods are used when chronicling the developments related to primary education and primary school leadership. As the literature on education and conflict is not clear about when these periods start and end (Obura, 2003), the periods have been delimited based on an account emanating from the Rwandan education sector policy (Ministry of Education, 2003). This policy document indicates that the emergency phase ended in 1999 and the developmental phase commenced in 2000 with the launching of the Rwandan home-developed vision 2020 (Ministry of Education, 2003).

**Impact of the Genocide on Primary Education**

The 1994 genocide and war in Rwanda had a devastating effect on primary school education. Many teachers were either killed during these events, or imprisoned for suspected involvement in the genocide (Cole & Barsalou 2006; Hodgkin, 2006). The educational infrastructure was also destroyed as, approximately, 32 per cent of pre-genocide primary schools were demolished (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002). In addition, there was a problem relating to teacher qualification because in 1997, just three years after the genocide, seventy per cent of primary school teachers were still underqualified (Cantwell, 1997). Adding to the lack of sufficient primary schools and the small number of qualified teachers was the low student completion rate. By 2004, a decade after the
genocide, only 51 per cent of primary school students had completed a full cycle of primary schooling, a percentage that was low compared to the average completion rate in Sub-Saharan Africa at the time (Bridgeland, Wulsin & McNaught, 2009).

In addition, educating children who were psychologically and emotionally traumatised in the aftermath of the conflict was challenging. Thousands of children had lost their parents or were separated from their nuclear families. Also, children had encountered disturbing experiences that profoundly affected their psychological wellbeing as highlighted by Obura and Bird (2009):

Eighty per cent of Rwandan children experienced death in their immediate family; 90 per cent saw dead bodies of victims or body parts; 70 per cent witnessed atrocities; 200 children under 14 years old were still being held in one of the country’s major prisons in 1998, suspected of involvement in the genocide; and the number of women and girls raped remains uncounted. (p. 8)

There is no doubt that these traumatic experiences had a detrimental impact on the Rwandan primary school system. Given the debilitating effect of the genocide on primary education, it was incumbent on the government and its agencies to reconstruct the entire sector. Attention is now turned to the developments in relation to education more generally, with a specific emphasis being placed on primary education.
Developments in Relation to Primary Education (1994-2014)

The emergency reconstruction phase (1994-1999)

Educational developments during the emergency reconstruction phase were characterised by initiatives/efforts that were aimed at relaunching and reconstructing the education system. These initiatives ranged from the re-opening, staffing and furnishing of primary schools to the creation of a conflict sensitive education system. These initiatives are described in the following commentary.

Early national and international community response

The post-genocide government was prompt in its re-establishment of the primary school system. In contrast to Machel’s (1996) observation that education is seldom considered a priority by governments and international agencies during emergency situations, the post-genocide government as well as local and international organisations in Rwanda realised very quickly the importance of including education in post-conflict relief programmes. Indeed, there seemed to be a shared belief among the state, as well as among external and internal partners, that only education could bring about a sense of normalcy and routine which were strongly needed by children. This shared understanding of the importance of education is evidenced by the fact that primary schools were re-opened as early as September 1994, just two months after the end of the genocide in July of that year (Cantwell, 1997; Obura, 2003). The opening of primary schools was followed shortly afterwards by that of secondary schools in October 1994 (Cantwell, 1997).

As the new government was short of financial resources, international agencies played a significant role in providing and organising educational emergency. For example, UNESCO and UNICEF ran a joint Programme for Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction (PEER). As part of this programme, Teachers’ Emergency Packages
(TEPs) emphasising basic literacy and numeracy skills, and each containing 80 boxes of school materials for children, were distributed throughout the country (Cantwell, 1997; Obura, 2003). These UN-agencies also provided a basic two-day training for teachers, focusing on the use of TEPs and on dealing with psychological trauma (Cantwell, 1997; Obura, 2003). Although, in general, primary school teachers did not like the games and activities contained in the TEPs, the rapid supply of TEPs and other school materials by UNESCO and UNICEF contributed considerably to the re-opening of schools in a relatively short period (Cantwell, 1997; Obura, 2003). In addition to UNESCO and UNICEF, there were approximately 200 NGOs which contributed to meeting the needs of children in the wake of the genocide. These NGOs intervened with the provision of food, water, health care and shelter (Cantwell, 1997; Obura, 2003). The primary education sector benefited from this support since the NGOs’ assistance targeted non-accompanied, unhealthy, orphaned, and traumatised children (Obura, 2003). Notwithstanding the NGOs’ relatively successful intervention, the NGOs’ activities lacked coordination and some NGOs were ill-equipped for, and unfamiliar with, responding to emergency situations (Cantwell, 1997).

Furthermore, during the emergency phase local and international organisations supported the implementation of educational programmes that did not exist before 1994. Such programmes included, for example, landmine-awareness education and trauma relief training for teachers. Obura (2003) notes that while the former seems to have been effective, the effectiveness of the latter was doubtful. The following comment is indicative of perceptions about the effectiveness of the trauma relief training (Obura, 2003):

…from the start, the notion of putting mainly untrained teachers in trauma-alleviation sessions was debatable…Given the almost total lack of referral services and professional personnel in Rwanda, it was unlikely that teachers could
ever do much in a professional sense for traumatised children. The traumatised teachers themselves were battling with the [trauma] every day as it came, in very difficult circumstances. (p. 63)

Nevertheless, Obura (2003) concludes, that trauma-alleviation training and other training for primary school teachers, albeit insufficient and somewhat ineffective, boosted the morale of teachers and exposed newly recruited teachers to classroom management strategies.

Another response to the educational emergency is represented by the attraction, recruitment and remuneration of primary school teachers. Owing to the shortage of teachers, teacher recruitment was flexible. There was a call for every educated person to work as a primary school teacher, and people were allowed to teach in primary schools without necessarily holding the usual End of Secondary School teaching qualification (Cantwell, 1997; Ministry of Education, 2007). Obura (2003) goes on to praise UNICEF’s effort to attract teachers by paying a “one-off contribution to teachers’ salaries, which amounted to US$ 800,000” (p. 64), a practice that could not have taken place if the country had not been in an emergency situation. In a similar vein, when salaries were delayed international and local organisations distributed food rations to teachers to support emergency schooling (Cantwell, 1997; Obura, 2003).

The support provided by the government and various agencies produced relatively good educational outcomes during the emergency reconstruction period, although by 1999 some of the milestones achieved had not yet reached the pre-genocide level. Primary school enrolments, for example, increased gradually during the first five years after the genocide, but by 1999 they had not yet reached the 1993 level (Obura, 2003). Likewise, in 1999, the number of qualified teachers was increasing, but the percentage of qualified teachers had not yet reached the pre-genocide teacher qualification level (Obura, 2003). Another achievement worth noting relates to the construction of new
primary schools and the rehabilitation of damaged classrooms as part of the physical reconstruction process. In this connection, by 1999 the number of schools had increased from 1287 in 1994 to 2021 in 1999 (Obura, 2003). The distribution of teaching materials to both teachers and students was also beneficial for resuscitating the Rwandan education system (World Bank, 2000; World Bank, 2004).

Despite these positive trends, issues associated with the higher teacher-student ratio, higher repetition and drop-out rates, the shortage of qualified teachers, the shortage of learning materials, and the poor salaries of teachers were still prevalent in the country’s primary schools up to 1999 (Obura, 2003; World Bank, 2000; World Bank, 2004).

**Early signs of educational transformation**

As discussed in Chapter Five of this thesis, change in political regime was accompanied by shifts in rules and policies governing educational provision in pre-genocide Rwanda. There were also, however, continuities in educational policy and practice between regimes that succeeded each other before the genocide of 1994. The post-genocide government has been no exception to this trend as it also initiated many education changes. It could be argued that these changes have led to educational transformation. Educational transformation here refers to the process of “making a thorough and dramatic change from one situation to another, or a change, modification, transfiguration to what already exists” (Watson, 2000, p. 44). The extent to which an educational transformation in post-conflict Rwanda has occurred is now examined.
Change of mission and objectives of the education system

The post-genocide government has stated repeatedly that pre-genocide education systems failed the nation. Indeed, as highlighted in Chapter Five, colonial governments and post-independence governments promoted a discriminatory and elitist education system. This discrimination was one of the contributing factors to the upheaval of 1994 (Ministry of Education, 2003). In 1994, in order to correct the errors of the past, the post-conflict regime set the educational mission and objectives to be pursued by the new education system. These objectives were intended to create a new Rwandan society and comprised (Ministry of Education, 1998):

Educating citizens who are free of all forms of discrimination (whether based on ethnic origin, region, religion or sex) and who fully recognise human rights and the duties of the individual towards others in society; Contributing to the promotion and cultivation of peace, justice, tolerance, solidarity, unity and democracy. (p. 13)

It can be argued that changing the mission and objectives of the education system in order to correct past errors represented a move towards educational transformation. In particular, the new education system was aimed at inculcating in students such elements as values and attitudes that could promote togetherness, unity and reconciliation. These elements were integrated into curriculum programmes and illustrated the government’s early commitment to developing a conflict sensitive education system. A further indication of the educational transformation and ultimately the creation of a conflict sensitive education system in the emergency reconstruction phase was curriculum change.
Curriculum change

A good number of planned and unplanned changes affected the primary school curriculum in the emergency reconstruction period. Obura (2003, p. 85) uses the term “curriculum metamorphosis” to characterise those changes. As such, she puts them in three categories including official curriculum policy changes, planned and authorised curriculum implementation changes, and unofficial/unplanned curriculum events and/or happenings. The former two comprise such curriculum changes as the abolition of ethnic and regional quotas as entry criteria into different levels of education, the introduction of English in the primary school system for the first time, postponing the teaching of Rwandan history, and supporting science and technology and French syllabus development (Ministry of Education, 2003; Obura, 2003). The unplanned curriculum events, on the other hand, entailed the suppression of textbooks that did not comply with the new politico-educational context and the re-use of pre-genocide Mathematics and Kinyarwanda (mother tongue) textbooks at the primary school level, the acceptance of donated English textbooks for primary education, the over emphasis on learning of languages compared to science and mathematics teaching at primary school level, and the increased number of subjects to be taught to primary school students (Obura, 2003). These planned and unplanned curriculum changes occurred prior to 1999 and were reflected in the new curriculum that was implemented in 1998. They are compiled in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Curriculum policy changes and authorised implementation changes</th>
<th>B. Curriculum events or happenings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School ethos imbued with the philosophy of national unity: concretising this by elimination of discriminatory entry or promotion requirements</td>
<td>Re-using/reprinting pre-war Kinyarwanda (MT)*language and Mathematics textbooks (in MT): prolonging the pre-war curriculum (interim solution regarding educational materials), which re-emphasised MT learning up to sixth grade [Authorised reprint; unplanned language teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language learning increased (English introduced on the curriculum)</td>
<td>Use/acceptance of donation of specific off-the-shelf textbook series, which determined the English curriculum [Authorised use; unplanned curriculum event]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postponing the teaching of Rwandan history</td>
<td>De-emphasis on mathematics/science learning in policy documents, resulting in highlighting languages at the expense of Mathematics/science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting science and technology, and French syllabus development</td>
<td>Too many subjects to be taught to primary school students (retention of pre-war subjects, addition of new ones).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MT* = Mother Tongue


These eight substantial changes affected the curriculum within only five years following the genocide of 1994. It may be argued that they reflected an educational transformation in so far as the identification of teachers and students as Hutu or Tutsi was banned as part of the elimination of ethnic discrimination in schools. The pre-genocide prescribed curriculum also changed. In addition to pre-war curriculum subjects, the primary school curriculum of 1998 comprised such new subjects as Science and Elementary Technology, English, Sex Education and HIV/AIDS awareness (Ministry of Education, 2003; Obura, 2003).

Another indicator of educational transformation was the modification of the language of instruction policy. The incorporation of English in the primary school system, and in other levels of education, for the first time in post-conflict Rwanda signalled the end of bilingualism and the adoption of trilingualism in the country’s education system. As mentioned in Chapter Five of this thesis, French and Kinyarwanda were the official languages and medium of instruction in pre-genocide Rwanda. To meet the language of instruction needs of the many returnees who spoke mainly English, English was made an official language and a medium of instruction alongside
French by the post-conflict regime (Ministry of Education, 2003). As a result, primary school teachers and students were required to learn all the three languages concurrently, with Kinyarwanda remaining the language of instruction from grade 1 to grade 3. From grade 4 to 6, the language of instruction was either French or English.

Unfortunately, teachers tended to be inept in one of the two international languages, with English being the least spoken language among the many ‘educated’ people at the time (Ministry of Education, 2003). This situation rendered the trilingual policy in education problematic, a fact that was confirmed by the following Ministry of Education comment nearly a decade after the adoption of trilingualism in education (Ministry of Education, 2003):

The teaching of three languages from primary level onwards has created problems for teachers who have been in the system for many years and only speak one of the two international languages, and are still expected to teach in both languages at primary level. The country also lacks experts in linguistic disciplines. (p. 14)

As with teachers, students also had poor language skills and textbooks written in English were scarce.

In light of the indicators of an educational transformation presented above, it is doubtful that this transformation solved the endemic problems that existed in the pre-war primary education. Notwithstanding the importance of the educational changes introduced in the primary school system from 1994 until 1999, primary education continued to be hampered by student drop out, inadequate learning materials, and the dearth of qualified teachers as in pre-1994 periods. It is therefore arguable that the educational transformation undertaken in the first five years after genocide was only partial since it failed to address a number of deeply entrenched problems.
The reconstruction development phase (2000-2014)

As in the emergency reconstruction phase, education during the reconstruction development phase underwent tremendous changes. It will be argued, however, that the educational changes introduced between 2000 and 2014 have led to a significant, but not complete educational transformation. This transformation is evidenced, for example, by change in the orientation for, and reformulation of, the aim of education. Unlike in the emergency phase, the post-2000 education has focused on the achievement of the international development targets including Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Education for All (EFA) (Ministry of Education, 2003). The new aim for education, reformulated to reflect the developmental and poverty reduction needs, is as follows:

The global goal of the government of Rwanda is to reduce poverty and in turn to improve the well-being of its population. Within this context, the aim of education is to combat ignorance and illiteracy and to provide human resources useful for the socio-economic development of Rwanda through education. (p. 8)

Furthermore, the educational transformation undertaken since the beginning of the 21st century in the country is evidenced through the implementation of a plethora of ambitious goals/initiatives in the education system, which did not exist prior to 2000. Ambitions are described in such planning tools as Rwanda’s home-grown Vision 2020, the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP), and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) (Ministry of Education, 2003). The remainder of this section will focus on the developments that have taken place in relation to primary education. Many of those developments have occurred as part of the realisation of educational targets set out in the above national planning tools. They comprise the ambitious integration of Science and Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the primary school system, the language of instruction reform, and the progress towards
the achievement of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Education For All (EFA) targets.

Science and Information Communication Technology in primary school

The introduction of science and Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the developmental phase can be perceived as a development, although this initiative has not been without criticism. In order to transform from an agrarian to a knowledge-based and technology-led economy as outlined in vision 2020 (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2000), the government of Rwanda has recognised the need for incorporating science, technology and ICT throughout the entire education system (Ministry of Education, 2003). The following statements emanating from the 2003 education policy illustrate how the nation is committed to Science, Technology and ICT integration in the education system (Ministry of Education, 2003):

The use of ICT in education shall be considered as the heart of the entire education system; In the next 20 years, Rwanda should have established herself as a regional service and information centre; It is recognised that science and technology are increasingly important fields in the Rwandan education system (pp. 6, 8, 15).

In the primary school system, the science and elementary technology course incorporated into the primary school curriculum of 1998 was recognised by the 2003 education policy as a requirement for future economic development (Ministry of Education, 2003). In a similar vein, the recent introduction of ICT in primary education is designed to help in the realisation of socio-economic and developmental objectives set out in the earlier mentioned Rwanda’s planning tools. The integration of ICT in Rwandan primary schools has occurred mainly through the implementation of the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) programme.
This OLPC programme aims to improve education in low-income/developing countries by distributing low-cost, low-power, and children-designed laptops. Founded in 2005, the programme entered the country’s primary school system for the first time in October 2008 as part of the piloting of the OLPC project. During that year, 10,000 laptops were distributed in primary schools, and by 2011 Rwanda ranked in the top five buyers, having bought and deployed 110,000 laptops (Tremblay, 2011). By the end of 2012, Rwanda had distributed 210,000 laptops to 217 primary schools (UNESCO, 2014). More importantly, as of 2014, the country was considered to be the third largest deployment site worldwide after Peru and Uruguay. Capacity building of 981 teachers from 150 schools had been undertaken in the piloting phase (UNESCO, 2014). At the time of this study, Rwanda was committed to providing each of the 2.5 million primary school children with a laptop (UNESCO, 2014).

The sudden change of the language of instruction

In 2009, the Rwandan government abandoned the trilingual policy that had been in place since 1994 and decided to elevate the status of the English language. In the education arena, English was made the sole language of instruction at all levels of education, and French was discarded as both an official language in public spheres and a language of instruction in schools and universities (Samuelson & Freedman, 2010). It will be recalled that the Belgian colonisers left behind an education system that was dominated by the French language. Consequently, because historically only a very small number of primary school leavers could enter secondary schools and universities where French was exclusively the medium of instruction, French was the language of power and prestige among elites from independence up until the 1994 genocide. Furthermore, although English was, at least theoretically, afforded the same status in schools as French and Kinyarwanda under the trilingual policy by the post-genocide regime,
almost all schools in the country continued to use French as a medium of instruction and only very few schools were teaching in English by 2009 (Paxton, 2012).

One of the motives behind dropping French and adopting English as the only language of instruction was that English had become a language of business and trade. The government of Rwanda has tended to associate the switch to English as a teaching language with economic gains. The following comment from the Rwandan Education Board (2014) illustrates this point:

Rwanda decided to change from French to English as the medium of instruction…The change has been necessitated by Rwanda’s vision for education, business and trade, and regional and international relations as ICT development propels Rwanda’s economy to a middle income status by 2020. (p. 4)

It can be construed, therefore, that the belief that English is a world language for education, commerce and economic development motivated the switch to English as a medium of instruction.

These arguments in favour of English were further justified by Rwanda’s desire to join both the East African community comprising mainly English speaking countries and the Commonwealth of Nations. By becoming a member of these English speaking communities, the country which was traditionally a francophone country due to its Belgian colonial legacy and past ties with France moved towards the Anglo-Saxon world in the late 2000s. Some commentators have also pointed to the deterioration of Rwanda’s diplomatic relations with France as a potential political argument favouring the ascendency of English over French in the country (Samuelson & Freedman, 2010).
Developments in relation to achieving Universal Primary Education and Education For All

At the time of the study reported here, Rwanda was still committed to achieving the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These goals emphasise that all children be given the opportunity to complete primary education and that gender imbalances in primary and secondary schools be addressed by 2015. The progress towards achieving these goals is now examined.

The country has made impressive progress in achieving universal primary education (UPE). The abolition of school fees in 2003/4 and the introduction of compulsory primary education resulted in higher enrolment rates. The net primary school enrolment rate, for example, rose from 94.2 per cent in 2008 to 96.5 per cent in 2012 (Ministry of Education, 2013). Similarly, the gross enrolment rate, although decreased from 127.9 per cent in 2008 to 123.2 per cent in 2012, remained high (Ministry of Education, 2013). The student-to-qualified teacher ratio in primary schools also decreased slightly from 67 in 2008 to 62 in 2012 (Ministry of Education, 2013). In addition, completion rates in primary schools increased significantly from 22 per cent in 2000 to 52.5 per cent in 2008 and had reached 72.7 per cent by 2012 (Ministry of Education, 2013). Furthermore, the same source indicates that the number of qualified teachers increased gradually from 91 per cent in 2008 to 95.6 per cent in 2012.

The progress towards attaining gender parity in primary education has also been encouraging. Traditionally, the belief that girls do not need formal education in order to become good wives and mothers has undermined girls’ access to education in Rwanda. It is only recently that the enrolment of girls in primary schools has increased and has surpassed slightly that of boys. The net enrolment rates for girls grew from 95.1 per cent in 2008 to 98 per cent in 2012 and from 93.1 per cent to 95 per cent for boys in the same period (Ministry of Education, 2013). Likewise, completion rates for girls were higher
than those of boys, with a 77.7 per cent completion rate of girls and a 67.5 per cent for boys by 2012 (Ministry of Education, 2013). Although the number of males is still higher than that of females at the tertiary education level, the achievement of gender parity in primary and secondary schools has emanated from government efforts to empower women. Women’s empowerment is further evidenced by the fact that 64 per cent of parliamentarians are female, a percentage that is higher than that of any other country in the world (The Guardian, 2014).

Another educational development, related to Education for All (EFA), is the successful implementation of the Nine Year Basic Education (NYBE) programme. This NYBE programme was introduced in the Rwandan school system in 2009. According to the NYBE policy, NYBE is defined as “All children [being] able to get education in nine years, this is made up of six years of primary education and three years of a general cycle of secondary education without paying school fees (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 3). Three strategies including teacher subject specialisation, reduction of core courses, and double shifting have been adopted to implement a cost-effective NYBE programme (Ministry of Education, 2008). Teacher specialisation involves primary school teachers specialising in specific subjects and teaching those subjects in more than one class, thus reducing the number of teachers in primary one to six and allowing savings on teachers (Ministry of Education, 2008). It has replaced the pre-2008 class-based teaching according to which a teacher was assigned only one class for the whole school year.

The second strategy that was put in place to minimise the cost of the implementation of the NYBE programme is the reduction of core courses from primary one to six. On this, the NYBE policy states that “the extent to which a school can save on teachers is in part determined by the number of core courses” (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 3). In grade one to three, nine subjects comprising Kinyarwanda,
French, English, Maths, Moral Education, Science and Technology, Religious Studies, Civic Education and Art were replaced by five subjects incorporating Kinyarwanda, English, French, Mathematics, the General Paper and such compulsory extra-curricular activities as sport, culture, clubs, spiritual activities, music, drama and dance (Ministry of Education, 2008). In the upper primary level, on the other hand, 11 subjects namely, Kinyarwanda, English, French, Maths, Political Education, Science and Technology, Religious Studies, Civic Education, Art, History and Geography were reduced to six subjects: Kinyarwanda, English, French, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies and compulsory extra-curricular activities of culture, sport, clubs, dance, music and drama (Ministry of Education, 2008). It will be recalled that French was removed from this list of subjects in 2009.

Another strategy to facilitate the implementation of the NYBE policy is double-shifting. According to this strategy, primary school teachers are expected to teach two separate classes every day. This has increased the teaching load, with approximately 20 per cent of primary school teachers required to teach beyond 35 hours per week and the average teaching load being 32 hours per week (World Bank, 2011). Despite the rise in the number of working hours, there are benefits that the Ministry of Education expects to be derived from double shifting. Such benefits include, for example, the improvement of student-to-teacher ratios, savings in the number of teachers required for NYBE, and the reduction of associated classroom construction costs (Ministry of Education, 2008).

To sum up, primary education during the reconstruction and development phase has been characterised by ambitious goals, tough policies, and the improvement of educational access. In relation to ambitious goals, for example, ICT in education was promoted in a country where the majority of primary schools do not have access to electricity, computers and telephone lines and where many primary school teachers are not computer literate (Mukama & Andersson, 2008). The tough policies, on the other
hand, may relate to the prompt change in the medium of instruction. With regard to access to education, Rwanda has made some impressive progress in providing UPE and EFA. Such progress indicates a remarkable transformation of education in the reconstruction development phase. Indeed, the country has attained the highest primary school enrolment rates in Africa (UNICEF, n. d) for the first time in its educational history. The quantitative expansion of primary schooling coupled with the successful implementation of the free and compulsory NYBE programme are increasingly replacing the traditional academic elitism which used to restrict access to secondary education. More importantly, the country has recently introduced twelve years of basic education (Rwanda Education Board, 2014). It can be concluded from the above, therefore, that Rwanda will have achieved, or will have come very close to attaining the education-related MDGs by 2015.

It can be argued, however, that the educational transformation that has characterised the reconstruction development period is far from being complete. Almost all changes in education policy and practice were aimed at achieving quantitative rather than qualitative educational targets. This observation is also acknowledged by the Rwanda Education Board (2014) in the following way:

Over the last decade, the work of the education sector was to get children into schools, to improve access to education…Today, our purpose has changed. We ask ourselves: Now that children are in school, are they learning? Are they attaining a quality education?. (p. 2)

Likewise, the United Kingdom’s (UK) Department for International Development (DFID) which has strongly influenced the Rwandan education system through aid, policy formulation and development, has recognised recently the prioritisation of educational access that has occurred over learning achievement. In the assessment
report of DFID’s aid impact on education in three East African countries including Rwanda, the desire to increase enrolment rates and the lack of commitment to promoting quality education have been highlighted (Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2012):

DFID has focused on expanding access to basic education and has succeeded in boosting enrolment substantially. There has, however, been a lack of attention to learning outcomes and to the trade-off between increasing access and ensuring quality. As a result, the quality of education being provided to most children is so low that a large majority is failing to achieve basic literacy and numeracy. (p. 1)

It can be inferred from the above that priority has been given more to increasing enrolment rates than to ensuring the quality of education being received by children. It is fortunate, however, that by 2014 the need to improve quality education was starting to be acknowledged by the Rwandan Education Board (Rwanda Education Board, 2014). In particular, a competency-based curriculum for primary schools was being developed in 2014 to be implemented by January 2016 (Rwanda Education Board, 2014). Attention is now turned to the developments in relation to school leadership from 1994 to 2014.
Specific Developments in Relation to Primary School Leadership (1994-2014)

It will be recalled that the second aim of the study being reported in this thesis was to develop an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda since 1994. As in Chapter Five, this current chapter has discussed the changes and initiatives that have characterised primary education in general before looking into the developments connected with primary school leadership more specifically. The two periods that have been referred to so far, the emergency reconstruction and the reconstruction development, are relied upon to identify specific developments, if any, in relation to primary school leadership.

The emergency reconstruction phase (1994-1999)

Throughout this period, school leadership and management was neglected as an area of national concern. Educational emergency did not focus in the development of primary school leadership. Indeed, government and agencies’ intervention almost exclusively targeted education more generally, while school leadership, specifically, tended to be overlooked.

In light of the above, the administration of primary schools resembled in many respects the pre-genocide practices of school management. Despite the fact that the emergency educational demands obviously constrained school leadership in the wake of the genocide, there were no new policies and/or activities that aimed specifically to promote and improve primary school leadership. On this, the key school administration and management provisions (Art. 31-35) of the 2003 law organising national education, effective since 1994, in spite of changing the mission and objectives of education, did not differ from those highlighted in the 1985 law organising national education (Republic of Rwanda, 2003). Therefore, during the emergency reconstruction period, there was a continuation of pre-genocide school leadership and management realities as
they have been highlighted in Chapter Five of this thesis. A brief recall and update of these realities now follows.

The Catholic and Protestant churches continued to be key partners of the state in the management and control of the many subsidised primary schools. Of the 2092 primary schools that existed in Rwanda in 1999, 1494 (i.e. 71.4 per cent) were government-subsidised, 567 (i.e. 27.1 per cent) were state schools and 31 (i.e. 1.5 per cent) were private schools. All these government-subsidised schools were largely managed by the churches, with the Catholic church managing 60 per cent of them, the Protestants 34 per cent, and other bodies 6 per cent (World Bank, 2002). As with pre-1994, the churches participated in the recruitment and appointment of school administration personnel in subsidised schools, while this was solely done by the state in state schools and by owners in private schools. The recruitment and appointment of primary school teachers was only done by the state in both government-subsidised and state schools.

Notwithstanding the above state-church partnership, misunderstandings relating to school management roles remained between these two parties. Obura (2003) notes that the late 1990s saw the resurgence of state-church conflict, which made the churches call again for the revision of the 1980s agreement between them and the state. In 1995 an attempt to update this convention was made, but the resulting agreement was neither approved nor implemented (Obura, 2003). By 1999 the state-church controversy was considered an ‘unfinished business’ because “responsibility, oversight, and management roles between state and church remained unclear” (Obura, 2003, p. 112).

Other continuities between pre-genocide school leadership and school leadership during the emergency reconstruction phase include the centralisation of authority and of administration and management of schools. On this, school principals continued to have very limited autonomy in decision-making. They were expected to implement centrally
developed guidelines, curriculum, policy and other formal rules and procedures. In a similar vein, school principals also continued to be recruited locally but approved and appointed by central education offices. In addition, despite the appointment of school principals who did not have a background in education due to emergency requirements, school principals continued to be appointed based on the possession of teaching experience and on their knowledge of pedagogy rather than on their leadership potential.

The reconstruction development phase (2000-2014)

During this period, important developments in relation to primary school leadership have occurred. These developments include the shift from a centralised school administration to a decentralised one, the introduction of school-based management, the introduction of Imihigo (performance contracts) in educational leadership and management, and the bilateral project between the Ministry of Education and Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB). Each of these developments is now examined in turn.

Education decentralisation

Since 2000 Rwanda has adopted and implemented a decentralisation policy. The overall objective of this policy is “to ensure political, economic, social, management/administrative and technical empowerment of local populations to fight poverty by participating in planning and management of their development process” (Ministry of Local Government, 2000, p. 9). The policy has been implemented in three phases (Ministry of Local Government, 2012):

- The 2001 to 2005 phase in which local government leaders especially women and youth were elected, and laws and rules governing the functioning of districts and sub-district administrative entities were put in place.
• The 2006 to 2010 phase during which local government structures were set up, some government functions transferred to these structures, and Imihigo (performance contracts) introduced at all government entities. The number of administrative entities was reduced significantly from 11 to 4 provinces, 106 to 30 districts, 1545 to 416 sectors, and 9165 to 2148 cells.

• The 2011 to 2015 on-going phase for which achievements have yet to be published, aims among other things, to empower the many citizens who remain poor and whose participation in economic development is still low.

It was during the second phase that the education sector was decentralised. Indeed, since 2006, some functions that used to be performed at the level of the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) have been reassigned to such local government entities as the district (Akarere) and the sector (Umurenge).

The educational functions and responsibilities that have been decentralised to 30 districts comprise responsibilities over monitoring the implementation of centrally designed education policies. They include specifically the following responsibilities, which are expected to be performed by District Education Officers (DEOs) (Ministry of Education, 2010):

• Preparation of the Five-Year District Education Development Plan and the Three-Year District Education Strategic Plan.

• Implementation of education policy and strategic plans

• Preparation of the budget and Medium Term Expenditure Framework

• Monitoring and evaluation of activities in education

• Recruitment, deployment and payment of permanent teaching staff, within ceilings set by the Teacher Service Commission/Rwanda Education Board

• Provision of information on employed teachers to MINEDUC through the Teacher Service Commission/REB
• Provision of all education statistics
• Transfers of teachers and students [from one school to another] within the same district
• Follow-up of NGO education-related activities and reporting back to Provinces and MINEDUC
• Monitoring of school financial reports, use of capitation grants, teachers’ salaries and school feeding. (p. 11)

It can be seen from the above that, in the education sector, budgetary and managerial authority have been decentralised to the district. As part of the decentralisation process districts and local communities have also been given the opportunity to plan and manage school resources. In addition, the recruitment and appointment of teachers and school principals are no longer centralised since they are now undertaken at the level of the district. Moreover, although the central government still pays salaries to teachers and school administrative staff, the district prepares payrolls and ensures salaries are commensurate with school staff qualifications and experience (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Moreover, education officers, at the time of the study reported here, revealed that teacher career promotion and the procurement of teaching and learning materials including textbooks have been decentralised to the level of the district. Also, they pointed out that the construction of schools has been decentralised as evidenced by the presence of an officer in charge of school construction in every district, who is paid by the Rwanda Education Board (REB).

Although educational decentralisation has served to make some improvement to service delivery in the education sector, there is sometimes conflict over the implementation of district priorities and centrally designed education policies. As district education officers (DEOs) are under the line management of, and are hired, paid,
and dismissed by, the district, the district often requires them to perform activities that are not directly related to education. This situation hampers collaboration between district education offices and the Ministry of Education and/or REB. One of the participants interviewed in the present study related that she is used to being involved in district activities that are not directly related to education and that this distracts him from other important educational matters. She commented on this matter as follows:

The district sometimes does not allow me to attend MINEDUC or REB education related meetings...This is mainly caused by conflict of interest as the district tells me that performing a given activity/task is more urgent than going to such meetings. (II1.D.K.R)

When asked about the types of activities that could sometimes prevent her from performing education related duties, she answered:

The district asks me to help in mobilising the population to fight HIV. I am often requested to sensitize the population about good governance, to participate in community work preparation programmes, to be involved in community health care scheme programmes…and to attend many meetings that are not necessarily related to education. (II1.D.K.R)

It is clear, therefore, that the district sometimes gives less priority to the implementation of central education policies and strategies, and when this happens service delivery in education becomes compromised.

Besides decentralising education to the level of the district, educational administration has also been decentralised to 416 Sectors. In fact, since 2011 the post of Sector Education Officer (SEO) has been created. The SE Os comprise mainly young graduates who are responsible for, among others, preparing and following up teachers’ recruitment and appointment in schools located in the Sector, preparing education-related statistics in the Sector, striving to improve the quality of education and
educational access, ensuring textbooks are delivered to schools, following up on school principals’ and teachers’ performance, performing classroom inspections and inspecting the environment and administration of schools located in his/her Sector, and analysing and reporting educational problems in the area of curriculum, examinations, textbooks and learning materials (VVOB, 2013).

An analysis reveals that SEOs’ duties overlap considerably with those of DEOs. Although DEOs immediately supervise SEOs and the sector is an integral component of the district, there appear to be significant similarities between their roles. For example, the recruitment and deployment of teachers is common to both SEOs and DEOs. Similarly, it is not clear whether the monitoring and evaluation of school activities undertaken by DEOs differ from that of SEOs, or whether DEOs accomplish all of their tasks through SEOs. Furthermore, SEOs report occasionally to the Ministry of Education or the Rwanda Education Board as is the case for DEOs. Furthermore, some of the regional/provincial education inspectors’ roles are similar to those of SEOs. For example, in addition to coordinating education at the level of the province, regional inspectors are expected to conduct school and classroom inspections as SEOs do.

**Education deconcentration**

Despite the fact that education has been decentralised to district and sector administration levels, there are still important educational services that remain centralised in one agency (i.e. REB) at the national level. The best term to describe this situation would be ‘deconcentration’.

Deconcentration in educational management is evidenced by the fact that some relevant educational functions remain centralised at a higher level within the administrative hierarchy, although they have been transferred from the Ministry of Education to semi-autonomous agencies. Such agencies comprise the Rwanda Education Board (REB), the National Council for Higher Education, the National
Council for Science, Technology and Innovation, the Workforce Development Authority, the Institute of Scientific and Technological Research, the Rwandan National Commission for UNESCO, and the Umwalimu Savings and Credit Cooperative (Ministry of Education, 2010). As this thesis focuses on primary school leadership, only the responsibilities that have been transferred from the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) to REB will be highlighted.

Established in 2009, REB is responsible for technical and professionalised functions while MINEDUC performs macro strategic management functions. MINEDUC’s functions include developing education policy, norms and standards, and planning, monitoring and evaluation for the education sector at the national level (Ministry of Education, 2010). The REB, on the other hand, undertakes technical, specialised and professionalised functions. In particular, it is mandated to fast-track implementation of education-related activities, and MINEDUC’s recommendations in the following areas: “Curriculum and pedagogical materials development, production and distribution; teacher development and management; education inspection; examinations and accreditation; higher education student financing” (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 9). Each of these areas is specifically assigned to a department, which suggests that there are five departments within REB.

A closer look at the above functions which have been transferred from MINEDUC to REB indicates an imbalance between what has been decentralised to districts and sectors and what has remained centralised. Most of the core education activities and functions such as curriculum development, pedagogical management, national examination, education inspection, teacher professional development remain centralised in REB. Even though there remains little consensus as to the meaning of decentralisation, most would agree that transferring power, resources, and other
substantial educational functions to a central entity like REB is contrary to educational decentralisation. For this reason, the practice/process could be termed deconcentration.

School-based management

Although educational decentralisation in Rwanda started in 2006, the introduction of school-based management in the country can be traced back to 2003/4. These 2003/4 years marked the abolition of school fees and the replacement of such fees by a capitation grant, which is calculated on a per-student basis and deposited directly by the government into school bank accounts (Ministry of Education, 2010). In line with the aim of the decentralisation, there is greater autonomy for schools in how to spend this grant, with the central government providing general indicative guidelines. According to the guidelines, 50 per cent of the grant is to be spent on teaching activities, 35 per cent on school maintenance, and 15 per cent on school personnel training (Paxton, 2012).

Another hallmark of school-based management has been the creation of school committees and councils which intervene in the management of the school. In addition to being controlled locally by district and sector education officers, primary and secondary schools are managed by the school management board (SMB) and School Based Management (SBM) Committees (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). The SMB is composed of the school principal and other administrative staff whose number depends on the size and level of the school. The SMB, and in particular, the school principal are responsible, among others, for the daily running and management of the school (Ministry of Education, 2003). School committees, on the other hand, include the School General Assembly Committee (SGAC) and the School Audit Committee (SAC) (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). The SGAC is made up of ten members including four elected parent representatives of whom two act as chairperson and deputy chairperson of the committee, the school owner, the school principal, two teacher representatives, and two students representing their peers (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). The SAC, on the
other hand, comprises two elected parents acting as the chairperson and deputy chairperson of the committee, and who are not members of the SGAC. Membership of the committee also includes one elected teacher, the Sector Education Officer, the Cell Executive Secretary, and in the case of government-subsidised and private schools, the school owner (Republic of Rwanda, 2012).

Furthermore, there are education councils at the school (students’ and teachers’ councils), sector (Sector Education Council) and district (District Education Council) levels. While students’ and teachers’ councils consist of all students and all teachers respectively, the Sector Education Council consists of school principals of schools operating in the Sector, the Executive Secretary of the Sector, the Sector Education Officer, all the chairpersons of the SGACs in the Sector, teachers’ representatives, owners of schools operating in the Sector in the case of private and government-subsidised schools, and Executive Secretaries of Cells making up the Sector (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). The District Education Council, on the other hand, is composed of the district Mayor, the social affairs Vice Mayor, the District Education Officer, school principals of nursery, primary, and secondary schools operating in the district, the chairperson of SGAC representing each school level in each Sector, teachers representing each school level from each Sector, and all Executive Secretaries of Sectors composing the district (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). It can be perceived that higher district authorities are responsible for education in addition to their socio-political commitments.

An analysis of school committees’ responsibilities indicates that greater local community participation in education and school principal accountability to local communities are being sought by the government. The expected involvement of school committees in different aspects of school management indicates the reinforcement of school accountability. The School General Assembly, which is represented by the
SGAC, is legally more powerful than the SMB since it is the supreme body of the school in its administrative, pedagogic and social development (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). The SGAC, for example, is entrusted with the task of following up the conduct and discipline of school administrative personnel, teachers and students, intervening in school assets management, analysing the school’s action plan, assisting in handling major problems faced by the school, and monitoring that the SMB should comply with laws and regulations governing the school specifically and the provision of education more generally (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). In similar vein, the School Audit Committee (SAC) ensures transparent financial management by examining the obtention, spending and clearance of financial and material resources (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). In this regard, the school principal and his/her management team are made accountable for the proper use and spending of the capitation grant, almost the only source of income for the many primary schools in Rwanda.

Nevertheless, it may be argued that parents’ participation in school management affairs is only partial. Although the SGAC is responsible for following up the conduct and discipline of teachers and school authorities, it does not have power to recruit and/or dismiss either teachers or the school principal. Moreover, from observations made in the current study, members of school committees tend to be dominated by the school principal who is often more skilled/educated and informed than them. This domination means it is quite rare for the school principal’s decision to be challenged by parents chairing the SGAC and SAC.

Another development in relation to school leadership in Rwanda is the introduction of performance contracts (imihigo) in school leadership and management. These contracts are aimed at ensuring strong accountability, which is a requirement for the effective implementation of the decentralisation policy.
Performance contracts in school leadership

Performance contracts were introduced for the first time in the Rwandan education system in 2006. With the implementation of the decentralisation policy in the education arena, the contracts were implemented in the context of promoting accountability in educational management and administration. This performance contract has been signed between people employed at the lower level of management and their supervisors working at the higher level within the administrative hierarchy (Ministry of Local Government, 2012). At the level of the school, teachers sign performance contracts with their school principals and school committees. Primary school principals, on the other hand, sign performance contracts with the Sector Education Officer (SEO), while secondary school principals sign such contracts with the District Education Officer (DEO) (World Bank, 2011). The DEO signs contracts with the mayor, whereas the mayor signs contracts with the president of the republic (Ministry of Local Government, 2012; World Bank, 2011).

The contracts between teachers and school principals cover the daily activities teachers are expected to perform. They cover such elements of their work as "punctuality, completion of the curriculum, pedagogical matters, hygiene, AIDS, gender awareness, and student success” (World Bank, 2011, p. 43). The school principals’ contract with the district may include, for example, the development of the school, the promotion of hygiene in the school, the submission on time of the action plan, the school budget, and the annual reports, the effective management of financial resources, and the rehabilitation of old classrooms (World Bank, 2011). The contract between the DEO and the district mayor may cover the mobilisation of the local community to contribute to the achievement of national educational targets including the reduction of student dropout rates, the construction of new classrooms, adult literacy, and the
compilation of what schools and Sectors strive to achieve as stipulated in their performance contracts.

There seem to be contradicting views as to the appropriateness of incorporating student academic performance in the performance contracts. The educational leader interviewed in the current study criticised vehemently the current tendency to include in performance contracts the proportion of students who will pass and what grades they will obtain. He stated that it is unrealistic to predict students’ learning achievement since it results from different factors, some of which are unpredictable. He put it this way:

It is not realistic to be precise about the number of students who will perform well in a year. You can mention in your contract that you will strive to encourage student attendance, but going further to point out how many will pass or fail is not practical. (I11.D.K.R)

Another issue is that the bottom-up planning that governs the performance management is not always respected. Rather than proceeding/flowing from school to district, the performance contracts sometimes flow the other way. One school principal interviewed for the study reported here revealed that schools were required to include in their performance contracts the annual educational targets of the district. He stated that he was going to include in the performance contract of his school the district’s target regarding the presence of a fire extinguisher in all schools located in the district, although there was very little chance of the school’s infrastructure catching fire. Indeed, this school did not have electricity or any other source of power that could cause fire. In a similar vein, another school principal mentioned that performance contracts ought to proceed from school to district, not the other way round. This principal commented as follows:
The district ought to formulate education targets based on schools’ needs because schools know better what kids really need. But this is not the case. We first have to know the priorities of the district in education and then incorporate those priorities into our performance contracts and indicate our contribution to achieving them. (I5.P.N.R)

Notwithstanding the above imperfections, it has been reported that performance contracts (imihigo) are helping to inspire employees “to set and realise targets, generate internal motivation to perform, re-align resources towards key priorities, and act as an effective mechanism to coordinate institutional efforts” (Ministry of Local Government, 2012, p. 17).

The MINEDUC-VVOB school management project

In the area of school leadership development and support, the most laudable effort has been the school management programme/project funded and managed by both the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB). This project started in 2003 and has focused on running professional development programmes for school administrative personnel. As school leaders in Rwanda are not trained initially as managers and/or leaders, the project may be considered as an important development in school leadership in the country. Although VVOB existed in Rwanda before the genocidal events of 1994, it did not intervene in school leadership and management affairs until 2002. Rather, its activities before 1994 focused on sending teachers to Rwanda (VVOB, 2014a).

Since 2003 capacity building initiatives have been undertaken for primary school principals and the administrative staff of secondary schools. In 2006, primary school principals were intensively trained by VVOB and MINEDUC. The training focused on such themes as school administration, management and leadership; financial and school assets management; school principals’ management roles, duties, and responsibilities;
developing a school development and strategic plan; pedagogical management; and crosscutting issues of unity and reconciliation, gender, guidance and counselling, environment, and reproductive health awareness (VVOB, 2014b). School management training modules addressing these themes have also been developed and distributed to primary school principals for self-training and self-evaluation (VVOB, 2014b). Similarly, since 2003 training sessions have been run for all the secondary school administrative staff (i.e. the principal, the deputy principal, discipline master, bursar and secretary) throughout the country (VVOB, 2014c). As for primary school principals, these staff members were given training modules that aligned with their duties and formal leadership positions.

Over the last three years, VVOB has concentrated on the institutionalisation of the school management (SM) programme within the Ministry of Education administrative structures. A school management and leadership unit has been created and is now operating under the Rwanda Education Board (VVOB, 2014c). Similarly, as part of the institutionalisation of the SM programme, 30 resource and reference centres (one in each district) have been established. These centres are indeed schools of reference which are mandated to support other schools through peer-to-peer learning (VVOB, 2014c).

Nevertheless, it seems primary school students did not reap much from primary school principals’ training in the SM programme. This is evidenced partly by the poor learning attainment of primary school students. Indeed, there is a “very low learning achievement among primary school students” as 37 per cent of primary school children are unable to meet curriculum expectations in literacy and 46 per cent of students in Grade Four do not meet the expectations in numeracy which are set out in the Grade Three curriculum (VVOB, 2014c, p. 3). This disappointing result has persuaded VVOB to start a new school leadership training programme aimed at improving quality
education in primary schools. The programme is expected to last three years from January 2014 until December 2016. Its specific objective is to produce school leaders in primary education who “focus on appropriate teaching, monitoring and follow-up strategies to improve learning outcomes of all learners in literacy, numeracy and life skills” (VVOB, 2014c, p. 1).

**Conclusion**

This chapter has chronicled the developments that have taken place in relation to primary education and primary school leadership from 1994 until 2014. It comprised three parts. First, the impact of the genocide on primary education was presented. This was followed by an examination of the developments that have generally characterised primary education in both the emergency reconstruction and reconstruction development phases. Lastly, specific initiatives and changes in relation to primary school leadership were analysed according to these two phases. The rationale for investigating developments in primary education and primary school leadership arose out of the need to know what the Rwandan government did to resuscitate and develop primary education and, in particular, to shape primary school leadership after the genocide of 1994.

The accounts provided in this chapter are normative and prescriptive in that they represent what ought to be done by school leaders and other education stakeholders in accordance with the national education policy and other national guidelines. They portray mainly macro-level and systemic issues which may differ from the challenges faced by individual school leaders as they perform their work and the strategies adopted by them to deal with those challenges at the micro-level of the school. These challenges and strategies are discussed in the following chapter, which addresses the third research question of the study being reported in this thesis, namely, ‘What are the issues that are
of current concern to primary school leaders in Rwanda and what strategies do they adopt in order to deal with those issues?"
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CURRENT CONCERNS OF SCHOOL LEADERS AND THE
STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY THEM TO DEAL WITH THOSE CONCERNS

Introduction

Chapter Six addressed the second aim of the study being reported in this thesis by describing the developments that have taken place in relation to primary education generally and primary school leadership specifically from 1994 until 2014. It indicated that this two decade-period has been characterised by initiatives, changes, and ambitious goals which have shaped primary education and school leadership at the primary school level. On the one hand, in relation to primary education, the immediate aftermath of the genocide (i.e. during the emergency reconstruction phase) was marked by the implementation of various changes which aimed to correct the errors of the past. The post-2000 education (i.e. during the reconstruction development phase) has, however, focused mainly on the achievement of the Universal Primary Education and Education for All targets, the implementation of the language of instruction reform, and the integration of ICT into the primary school system. On the other hand, regarding primary school leadership, no specific developments occurred in the first five years after the end of the war and the genocide in 1994. Nevertheless, the post-2000 period has seen such school leadership-related developments as the implementation of education decentralisation and deconcentration, the introduction of school-based management, the introduction of performance contracts in school leadership, and the implementation of the school management project funded and managed by the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB).

This chapter relates to the third aim of the study being reported in this thesis, which was to develop an understanding of the current concerns faced by primary school
leaders and the strategies adopted by them to deal with those concerns. It is divided into two parts. The first part of the chapter presents the concerns identified according to five broad themes, namely, ‘conflict prevention’, ‘professionalism’, ‘financial/resourcing constraints’, ‘student attrition’, and ‘parental disengagement’. The second part of the chapter highlights the strategies adopted by school leaders in dealing with these problems. The numbers and letters that appear in parenthesis after quotes refer to the coding system for identifying the transcripts of interviews. Although each of the concerns and strategies is distinct, they are not mutually exclusive and there are areas of overlap between them. These concerns and strategies are now discussed in turn.

The Concerns of School Leaders

Before depicting the concerns faced by primary school leaders in post-new war Rwanda, it is pertinent to pose the following questions: Twenty years after the war and genocide in Rwanda, are the current concerns faced by school leaders in the country shaped and/or influenced by the legacy of war and genocide as was obviously the case in the immediate aftermath of the conflict?; is the current nature of primary school leadership shaped solely by endemic manifestations of political and economic underdevelopment characterising many post-colonial and developing countries?; or is current primary school leadership shaped by both the conflict legacy and post-colonial and developing country status of the country? These questions are attended to later in this section.
Participants’ concerns associated with conflict prevention

Two categories were generated from the data regarding the challenges participants experienced in relation to conflict prevention. The first category relates to the difficulty in preventing genocide ideology in schools as part of the ideological reconstruction. The second category is connected with the challenge associated with teaching about genocide in the classroom. A discussion of each of these categories will now follow.

Ideological reconstruction

Post-new war societies have always undertaken the task of reconstruction after the end of violent conflict. The concept of new war and the way in which Rwanda qualifies as a post-new war society have been extensively explained in Chapter Two of this thesis. In this current chapter post-new war reconstruction is defined as a set of strategies that seek to “address the needs of countries emerging from conflict; prevent escalation of disputes; avoid relapse into violence, address the root causes of conflict; and consolidate sustainable peace” (African Union, 2006, p. 4). In keeping with this definition, the term ideological reconstruction in a post-genocide society refers to the progressive elimination of an ideology that led to genocide by promoting new ways of thinking and inculcating new values in the people of that society (Weinstein, Freedman & Hughson, 2007). This suggests that the prevention of genocide ideology is an integral part of the ideological reconstruction (Weinstein et al., 2007). The role of schooling in contributing to the ideological reconstruction after mass violence is supported by the literature which highlights the contribution of education towards sustainable peace, reconciliation, and development (Bush & Salterelli, 2000; Novelli, 2010; Paulson, 2011a; Smith & Vaux, 2003).

Over the last few years, there has been a number of episodes related to genocide ideology in different sectors of life in Rwanda. In the education arena, genocide ideology has entered Rwandan schools, a fact that was confirmed by the
parliamentarians’ special report on this issue (BBC, 2008; King, 2014). This report indicates that students who survived the genocide have been harassed and/or intimidated through verbal, or written messages (e.g. graffiti) at school (King, 2014). On a related matter, some teachers and school administrative personnel were allegedly accused of stirring up hatred among students by dividing them along ethnic lines (BBC, 2008). As the conflict that culminated in the genocide in Rwanda was an identity/ethnic-based conflict, the ridiculing and harassing of genocide survivors on ethnic grounds may be seen as being synonymous with promoting division and engaging with a genocide ideology. Teachers and school leaders accused of instilling hatred and divisions among students have been either imprisoned, or dismissed from their jobs (King, 2014).

Although participants in the study being reported here did not refer to incidents of genocide ideology in their schools, some did highlight encountering problems related to identity, which required an effective ideological reconstruction. Furthermore, as elaborated later in this chapter, the introduction of anti-genocide ideology clubs in all the schools investigated indicates that genocide ideology is a concern that needs to be dealt with by school leaders. The following commentary presents an illustrative example of the problem relating to ethnicity which occurred in one of the six schools investigated.

School leaders from one of the six schools in the study reported that there had been a problem/case related to identity between two primary school children in 2012. Children A and B were friends and were from the same ethnic group, but B was also a friend of another child C. After seeing B and C walking together, A kept asking B whether C shared the same ethnic group with them. Such a question may be considered sensitive since it used to be asked during the genocide by militias on road blocks when they were trying to single out who to kill. The school leader interviewed stated that child A reported the incident to him.
When asked who he thought had divulged to children such identity/ethnicity-related information, the school leader stated that although primary school children were born after the genocide, they were still exposed to influences from neighbours and friends of their families. He put it this way:

Based on the conversation I had with the parent of this child [child A], I can say that kids learn ethnicity outside their nuclear families. There are adult persons who tell kids about it. (I9.DPS.N.R)

Another school leader in the same school mentioned that children were getting ethnicity-related information from both their nuclear families and from the wider community (I7.RP.N.R).

In light of the above, children’s beliefs about ethnicity and the Rwandan genocide are primarily influenced by their families and wider society rather than school education. The view that young children come to own their parents’ thoughts about events is well researched (Grusec & Danyliuk, 2014). As children formally learn very little about the history surrounding the Rwandan genocide in primary schools, their main source of information about Rwanda’s horrific past is parents and neighbours (I7.RP.N.R, I20.S.K.R). These parents and neighbours may transmit to children segregationist views that are shaped by negative effects the genocide has had on their lives (I5.P.N.R). For example, one school leader stated that a woman whose husband is in jail for alleged participation in the genocide may tell her children to dislike those children whose parents sent his father to jail (I5.P.N.R). Another contributing factor to conflict among students especially at the secondary and tertiary school levels has been the fact that genocide survivors are entitled to a range of benefits including government financial assistance, while non-survivors are not (King, 2014). Attention is now turned
to the challenges associated with teaching about the genocide and related controversial topics in the classroom.

Teaching about genocide

Some school leaders interviewed were concerned about their teaching staff’s lack of confidence and guidance for teaching about the Rwandan genocide and its controversial history. At the primary school level, the genocide is planned to be taught in Grade Six alongside many other topics making up the social studies syllabus (I9.DPS.N.R, I7.RP.N.R). By the end of the lessons on the genocide, students are expected to have achieved such objectives as to distinguish genocide from large scale massacres, to explain the causes and effects of the Rwandan genocide, to explain how the Rwandan genocide ended, to describe the current developments in relation to reconciliation in Rwanda, and to compare the Rwandan genocide with other genocides (Republic of Rwanda, 2008). It is no easy task for a primary school teacher to accomplish these objectives inasmuch as the history of Rwanda is “problematic” and subject to “variegated interpretation” (Kiwuwa, 2012, p. 62). This makes the lack of available guidance on teaching such a sensitive topic as genocide, which is also an integral part of a contested history, a concern.

This lack of guidance is generally manifested in the absence of formal documentation/textbooks which could help teachers to discuss confidently the sensitive issues surrounding the genocide. Given the documented positive correlation between the availability of textbooks and learning achievement, the lack of such textbooks compromises the students’ learning (Michaelowa, 2001). In a country where curriculum development is centralised, teachers expect to receive formal textbooks that are aligned with the curriculum to be provided from curriculum developers (Ministry of Education, 2010). However, in spite of the recently introduced decentralisation of textbook delivery, school leaders in the study being reported here highlighted the scarcity of
textbooks about the Rwandan genocide. On this, one teacher and parent representative stated: “There is no approved Rwandan history textbook from grade one to six in primary schools. There is no such known textbook here, and this is a concern for teachers” (I7.RP.N.R). Similarly, another school leader added that the available informal textbooks serve to sow confusion among teachers and students when it comes to teaching about the Rwandan genocide. He put it this way:

The challenge in the teaching about genocide relates to confusing textbooks. Some authors indicate in their books that there exist different ethnic groups in Rwanda. Others reject the existence of such groups in the country. This creates confusion among both teachers and students. (I5.P.N.R)

The lack of formal textbooks to support the teaching about the genocide is compounded by the challenge related to discussion about ethnicity in the classroom during the teaching of the genocide and its causes.

The government’s position on ethnicity makes the teaching of the genocide particularly challenging for teachers. Indeed, discussions about ethnicity are not common, at least in public places, since the identification of Rwandans as Hutus, Tutsis, or Twas was outlawed officially by the government as part of the promotion of unity and reconciliation (Fussel, 2001; Power, 2013). Given the relationship between the Rwandan genocide and ethnicity, it is difficult for teachers to teach about the genocide without making reference to the ethnic groups composing the population. It follows that teachers do not allow for open debate and discussion about ethnic groups (Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa) in the classroom (I2.DPS.K.R, I14.DPS.B.R). In this connection the following comment from one participant is evocative:

Teachers may explain what genocide is, but they teach with reservation about the Rwandan genocide. Children may ask who is Hutu, Tutsi or Twa, but teachers do
not like such discussions on Hutu, Tutsi, Twa because they may say a word which could put them in trouble. Teachers choose to read what is written. They even fear to teach the lesson. (I2.DPS.K.R)

Similarly, reflecting on the danger posed by discussing ethnicity as a cause of conflict in the classroom has on teachers, another school leader stated:

Teachers may say in class that genocide against Tutsis was committed by Hutu extremists, and children may start wanting to know who is Hutu or Tutsi among themselves. Children may even become traumatised psychologically. The challenge is that the teacher is not protected whenever classroom discussions result in bad things like psychological trauma. (I5.P.N.R)

These quotes illustrate the reason why teachers tend to teach about the genocide with reservation. This tentativeness is further justified by the fact that, in recent years, some dozens of school principals and teachers in Rwanda have been suspended, sacked and/or sent to prison for alleged transmission of genocide ideology to students (International Planned Parenthood Federation, 2007).

On a related matter, the above quotes are not critical of the government’s decision to ban ethnicity in the country given the link between ethnicity and the genocide of 1994. Rather, the comments indicate that conflict prevention and peace building are long term processes that require people to explore and deconstruct identities and attitudes that led to the conflict in question, and that teachers and school leaders require formal guidance in order to contribute meaningfully to these processes. Furthermore, the quotes suggest that teachers are guarded in what they say and in their behaviour in the classroom in order to protect themselves from any potential prosecution for inculcating genocide ideology in their students.
Participants’ concerns relating to teachers’ and school leaders’ professionalism

Some of the school-based realities depicted by those school leaders interviewed in this study suggest a lack of teacher professionalism in the participating schools. This lack of professionalism is manifested in, for example, teachers not using participatory teaching methods, not preparing lessons, not coming to school, or being late for work. These matters, however, can only be understood if cognisance is taken of the contextual complexity characterising primary school education and the teaching profession in Rwanda. Indeed, as discussed below, there exist contextual barriers to teacher professionalism, some of which are unfortunately beyond school leaders’ and teachers’ control.

For the sake of clarification, it is appropriate to define teacher professionalism. Here it refers to the improvement of quality and standards of practice. It entails constantly improving teaching practice through teachers’ commitment, expertise and knowledge (Hargreaves, 2000; Helsby, 1999). Two factors inhibiting teacher professionalism comprise the lack of professional development opportunities available for teachers and teacher demotivation. These factors are now delineated and will be followed by discussion of the professional development needs of school leaders.

The lack of professional development opportunities for teachers

Owing to the very limited opportunities available for in-service teacher professional development, primary school teachers’ use of participatory teaching methods is rare. The absence of such opportunities serves therefore as a barrier to teacher professionalism. This observation resonates with Al-Hinai’s (2007) theoretical linkage between professionalism and professional learning, according to which “professionalism requires professional knowledge, competence and expertise, which in turn require further development through continuous professional education” (p. 43).

The scarcity of in-service professional learning opportunities has meant that most teachers at the primary school level continue to teach using colonially-inherited teacher-centred pedagogy, with little interactive participation occurring in classrooms (Weinstein, et al., 2007). This phenomenon occurs despite more than 95 per cent of primary school teachers being qualified (Ministry of Education, 2013) and in spite of the government’s desire to develop the critical thinking of students (Ministry of Education, 2010). Not surprisingly, those school leaders interviewed were perplexed that their teachers were still teaching in the way they had been taught. The following statement illustrates the concern of one deputy principal of a school located in a rural area:

I encourage my teachers to use active teaching methods to enable students to discover new things themselves. However, teachers rarely use active learning strategies. They often use expository teaching methodology because they say it helps them cover all the content and finish the programme on time. (I2.DPS.K.R)

In a similar vein, one educational leader at the level of the district expressed her concern that in-service professional learning for teachers is centralised at the Rwanda Education Board level and that only very few teachers are able to benefit from professional development opportunities. Her comment on this is indicative:
We need teacher professional development programmes for our teachers. Teachers teach like they used to teach 20 years ago, and the world has changed. Many teachers do not receive training. In-service teacher training is centralised in the Rwanda Education Board (REB), and sometimes REB requests the district to send one or two teachers to REB-organised training. Two teachers in the whole district is a very small number. (I11.D.K.R)

In light of the above circumstances, school leaders tend to face challenges connected with supporting teachers to implement student-centred and critical thinking approaches to teaching and learning.

Equally, teachers are very reluctant to use participatory teaching methods when approaching specific topics in the classroom. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this reluctance is especially applicable in regard to teaching about the Rwandan genocide and its controversial history (I2.DPS.K.R, I14.DPS.B.R). It follows that besides experiencing difficulties in applying learner-centred pedagogy, teachers also tend to avoid implementing it in their teaching of controversial topics.

Teachers’ reluctance to use active teaching methods while teaching sensitive topics has also been identified in post-new war societies other than Rwanda. It has been observed in such post-new war settings as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Kosovo that “teachers fear that open discussion [about contentious topics] in integrated classroom will lead to violence (Weinstein, et al., 2007, p. 64). This situation indicates that the prioritisation of the teacher-centred pedagogy in post-new war societies may be linked to the legacy of war. Notwithstanding this linkage, it must be noted that the post-colonial legacy also contributes to a lack of open debate in the classroom in post-new war settings. Likewise, Weinstein et al. (2007) have pointed out that the colonial era in Rwanda and the communist era in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Kosovo “left a
legacy of passive acquiescence to government doctrine; teachers awaited the requirements spelled out by the central administration and the lecture format was the norm” (p. 64). Therefore, both post-new war and post-colonial legacies have influenced (and are influencing) teachers’ teaching strategies in post-new war countries including Rwanda.

On a related matter, it is emphasised that providing professional mentoring and support to teachers in the area of learner-centred pedagogy is not an easy task for school leaders. Indeed, just like teachers, many school leaders in sub-Saharan Africa, including Rwanda, were exposed to the academic rationalist model which prioritises the transmission of knowledge of content and the ‘best’ ways for delivering it, rather than the reflective practitioner model which involves the adoption of active learning strategies and the promotion of critical thinking about the knowledge (Vavrus, Thomas & Bartlett, 2011). Given that teacher-centred pedagogy was the modus operandi of teachers and school leaders in the course of their initial training, systematic in-service professional development for teachers and school leaders may be required for adapting and adopting student-centred pedagogy.

Another professional development need for primary school teachers is in the area of English language competency. Teachers’ lack of proficiency in English, the new language of instruction, hampers attempts at enhancing teacher professionalism. As mentioned in Chapter Six of this thesis, since 2009 there has been a switch from French to English as the medium of instruction in all levels of education in Rwanda (Rwanda Education Board, 2014; Paxton, 2012). The rise of English and demise of French in Rwandan schools are inextricably linked to the Anglophone influence on the post-new war education in Rwanda (Schweisfurth, 2006). In this connection, the elevation of the English language in a country whose education system was dominated by the Belgian and French tradition is achieved through borrowing by the Rwandan policy makers of
educational policy and practice from English speaking countries, mainly from Uganda and Tanzania. Schweisfurth (2006) depicts this international borrowing as follows:

[Post-genocide education in Rwanda has been characterised by a] transfer of models of educational policy and practice from neighbouring countries, such as Uganda and Tanzania, through the return of Tutsi refugees who fled the country before or during the genocide. This might be termed ‘second generation colonialism’, as a number of these policies have their origins in British colonial models. (p. 698)

As many policy makers in Rwanda speak English (Weinstein, et al., 2007) and grew up in diaspora in Uganda and Tanzania from the 1960s up to 1994 (Marlow-Ferguson, 2002), they tend to borrow education policies and practices from these countries.

The promotion of the English language may also be explained by the influence, through aid, of the United Kingdom (UK) on post-new war education in Rwanda. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) which was not part of the country’s donors in the pre-genocide era has become the main donor to post-conflict Rwanda, and the chief donor for the education sector (Hayman, 2007; Schweisfurth, 2006). It has been involved in education policymaking and provides “considerable support to the Ministry of Education through long and short-term technical assistance, helping to produce policies and strategies, notably driving the implementation of a sector-wide approach (SWAp)” (Hayman, 2007, p. 375). Similarly, Schweisfurth (2006) describes the UK DFID’s influence on post-new war education in Rwanda as follows:

There has been a noticeable shift in the donor community away from France and Belgium as the main bi-lateral players to new partnerships, including the DFID. Each new partner brings with it a particular set of priorities and ways of working, and a particular historical relationship with Rwanda
In light of the above, the structure and philosophy of education in Rwanda are becoming essentially English. It will also be recalled from Chapter Six of this thesis that Rwanda has recently joined both the East African Community comprising mainly English speaking countries and the Commonwealth of Nations (Rwanda Education Board, 2014), which justifies the current priority of English over French in schools.

Despite the recent introduction of school-based mentoring to address teachers’ deficiencies in the English language (Rwanda Education Board, 2014), school leaders in the study reported here highlighted that primary school teachers are facing very serious problems associated with the difficulties in mastering the language since most teachers spent their formative years in the French-language dominated school system. In this connection, one school leader stated:

Many teachers grew up in the francophone system. The new English system was imposed on them unexpectedly…you understand it is very difficult to teach in a language you are unfamiliar with. Remember we adopted English after many years of teaching in French. (I7.RP.N.R)

Similarly, another school leader reported that in the upper primary school level (i.e. primary 4 to 6) where the use of English as a medium of instruction is mandatory, teachers often explain the content in the local indigenous language, Kinyarwanda, instead of the recommended language. She was also concerned that this method of delivering the content has a deleterious effect on students’ academic performance in the national examinations because these exams are conducted in the English language. She put it this way:

Teachers rarely speak English in class. They mainly use Kinyarwanda to explain the content. They write notes in English on the blackboard, and explain it in
This teaching method may be one of the factors behind our low academic performance in national exams. (I2.DPS.K.R)

In emphasising the negative impact that the change in the language of instruction is having on teaching and learning, the same school leader added:

Teachers in primary 5 and 6 often say teaching in English is hard for them and they leave some content untaught because they struggle with the English language. This has led to the failure of students in national exams because some content is not covered. (I2.DPS.K.R)

This situation has been compounded by inadequate in-service professional learning designed to improve the fluency of teachers in English. On this, one school leader commented: “training for raising teachers’ level of English has been held in the past two years, but has been discredited by the teachers. For me too, this training did not help at all” (I7.RP.N.R). Similarly, based on classroom inspections another school leader commented that English competency is the area in which his teachers require considerable professional development (I8.DPS.M.U).

Besides needing professional learning for developing teachers’ competencies in the use of active teaching methods and the new language of instruction, some school leaders stated that their teachers need formal professional development for assisting children who are physically and/or intellectually disabled. In Rwanda, children with disabilities are not usually accommodated in mainstream classrooms. Rather, these students spend a certain period of time in special centres where they are taught craft and other vocational skills for assisting them in the future (Thomas, 2005). Nevertheless, in some of the schools selected in the study, school leaders reported that disabled children are increasingly joining their schools and that professional development for teachers is

In addition to the scarcity of ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers, teacher professionalism is also undermined by such factors as teacher demotivation. Evidence from the literature suggests that there is a linkage between motivation and professionalism (Al-Hinai, 2007). Attention is now turned to describing the second contextual barrier to leadership for teacher professionalism, namely, teachers’ lack of commitment and motivation.

**Teacher demotivation**

Teacher demotivation was a substantial concern for the school leaders. This demotivation may, however, not be attributed directly to the legacy of war and genocide that occurred in Rwanda. Although many teachers lost their lives or were imprisoned for alleged participation in the Rwandan genocide (Cole & Barsalou, 2006), they were not killed simply because they were teachers or educated people as was the case in Cambodia in the 1970s (Clayton, 1998; Duggan, 1996; Sovachana, 2012). In addition, 20 years after the end of the war and genocide in Rwanda participants in this study did not mention any lack of security and safety in school compounds, which usually contributes to teachers’ loss of morale during, and in the immediate aftermath of the, violent conflict (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). The contributing factors to teachers’ lack of motivation and commitment as revealed by those school leaders interviewed will now be considered.

There was, in fact, some variation in school leaders’ perspectives about the factors behind teachers’ dissatisfaction with their jobs and the location of the school seems to have influenced their views on this matter. In rural areas, for example, the school leaders interviewed revealed that poor and unattractive working and living conditions, as well as the poor remuneration for teachers are the chief factors explaining teachers’
falling commitment and motivation (I3.P.B.R, I2.DPS.K.R, I5.P.N.R, I7.RP.N.R, I9.DPS.N.R). In the urban schools, however, school leaders claimed that their teachers were relatively committed and motivated (I4.P.A.U, I12.P.KM.U, I13.DPS.A.U, I15.DPS.KM.U). This was partly due to the fact that remuneration for teachers and their living conditions in the capital city are slightly better compared to circumstances in the countryside.

More specifically, the contextual factors influencing teacher demotivation as identified by school leaders of rural schools relate to the very low salary paid to primary school teachers, the social devaluation of teachers, the long distance from teachers’ homes to school, continuous educational reforms, overcrowded classrooms, and the increased teacher workload (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R, I7.RP.N.R). These factors, with the exception of the first three, also tend to have a negative effect on motivation of teachers in urban schools. Each of these factors is now elaborated in the following section:

Commenting on low pay as a source of demotivation and social devaluation of teachers in rural areas, one school leader said:

Teachers get a very low salary compared to other government employees with the same level of education. There are also arrogant people in the community who say provocative and discouraging words against teachers. Imagine hearing grassroot people saying they can employ and pay five teachers every month, or that they are able to pay all teachers in a given school without the state’s intervention after selling coffee or crops. (I5.P.N.R)

The above comment suggests that although some of the claims made by members of the community about teachers may be unrealistic, teachers in rural locations are held in low regard by the community in which they live because of the low salary they receive.
Furthermore, the comment indicates that teachers and school leaders are discouraged by such statements.

Nevertheless, teachers in the urban schools featured in the study reported here tend to be more motivated extrinsically than their counterparts in rural schools. This is because of disparities between salaries, since primary school teachers working in the capital city earn up to three times as much as their colleagues in rural schools. This inequity is a consequence of relatively affluent parents in the capital city being able to supplement local school budgets and teacher salaries (I4.P.A.U, I13.DPS.A.U, I15.DPS.KM.U).

Teacher demotivation and dissatisfaction in rural areas are manifested, for example, in the number of teachers who tend to extend days of absence without valid reasons when they have been granted permission to be off duty (I2.DPS.K.R). In addition, as teachers are committed to the classroom during almost all the working days of the week, they are expected to prepare lessons during the evenings, or at weekends. However, due to teachers’ dissatisfaction with their job, school leaders stated that, rather than preparing lessons, teachers prefer to do household work, or be involved in other small businesses to supplement their paltry monthly salary (I2.DPS.K.R).

In regard to the impact of educational change being a contributing factor to teacher demotivation, some school leaders from both rural and urban schools pointed out that teachers are sometimes demoralised by their encounters with endemic educational reform (I3.P.B.R). As mentioned in Chapter Six of this thesis, the post-conflict Rwandan education system has been dominated by constant changes which have been initiated centrally by the Ministry of Education, and assisted by different international aid agencies and donors. Some of these changes are not welcomed by teachers as they disrupt their work, or may contribute to poor student learning achievement. On this, the main view was encapsulated by one school leader who stated:
The contributing factor to teacher demotivation is the endemic educational change which disturbs teachers’ teaching. When teachers do not attain expected educational results and they know that the failure was caused by the introduction of many changes in education, they feel discouraged. (I3.P.B.R)

The same school leader went on to provide an example of a change that disturbed teachers’ work and undermined teaching and learning:

There was a time when we were told to start the school year teaching all the lessons in *Kinyarwanda* [mother tongue] except the English lesson in the lower primary [grade 1 to 3]. This guideline changed before the end of the school year as we were requested, at the beginning of the third trimester, to teach all the lessons in English except the *Kinyarwanda* lesson. (I3.P.B.R)

The above commentary is also true for curriculum change as schools have occasionally been required to implement a curriculum/programme when the academic year commences and to follow a different one later in the year (I3.P.B.R, I13.DPS.A.U). This situation is often compounded because the curriculum change is not always accompanied by a supply of new textbooks to facilitate its implementation (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R).

Other causes of teacher demotivation include overcrowded classrooms, the intensification of teachers’ work, and the long distance from the teachers’ home to school. These factors hamper the promotion of teacher professionalism. In most of the schools participating in the study, classrooms accommodated more than 50 students (I5.P.N.R, I8.DPS.M.U, I12.P.KM.U). In addition, there was a double shift system according to which a primary school teacher teaches two separate and large classes every day, with a one hour lunch break. This arrangement places heavy demands on teachers. Furthermore, some primary school teachers walk long distances from their
homes to school and do not arrive at school on time (I2.DPS.K.R). Moreover, due to
financial hardship these teachers cannot use public transport in those rural areas where
roads connect their homes to schools. It can, therefore, be concluded that while being
late for work is an indication of poor professionalism, it should also be recognised that
teachers often find it difficult to commute from home to school.

Having discussed the perceived concerns of participants relating to teachers’
professionalism, attention is now turned to a discussion of the professional development
needs of the participating principals and deputy principals in the study.

Professional development needs for school leaders

As indicated in Chapter Six of this thesis school leaders in Rwanda have over recent
years encountered some professional development opportunities organised by the
Ministry of Education-VVOB school management project (VVOB, 2014b). The
beneficiaries of these opportunities have been mainly secondary school leaders, with
primary school leaders being much less targeted (I21.VV). Leaders of primary schools
involved in the present study, however, had benefited from the secondary school
leaders’ professional development activities since they had been leading the Nine Year
Basic Education (NYBE) schools, which comprise both the primary (i.e. year 1 to year
6) and lower secondary (i.e. year 7 to year 9) school levels (VVOB, 2014b; VVOB,
2014c). Despite having benefited from such professional learning opportunities, most
school leaders interviewed stated that they require a broader range of professional
development opportunities. In this regard, the principals and deputy principals
highlighted the desirability of professional development in such areas as accountancy,
school leadership and management, and English language (I2.DPS.K.R, I3.P.B.R,
professional development needs will now be discussed in turn.
Principals considered that they required training in accountancy because their schools did not have an accountant. In fact, they were concerned about performing financial management given their inadequate knowledge of, and skills in, accountancy principles. Some principals went further to suggest that in addition to receiving training for themselves a professional accountant was still necessary to be employed in the school (I5.P.N.R, I12.P.KM.U). The need for an accountant and/or training in accountancy was reinforced by the fact that schools are audited, and school leaders are not confident enough to explain accountancy-related details required by the auditors (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R). School leaders’ lack of financial management skills partly emanate from the nature of the Bachelor of Education programmes offered in Rwandan universities, which are perceived to be out of touch with school leadership realities (MINEDUC-VVOB, 2011).

The necessity for ongoing in-service training in school leadership and management was further highlighted given that school leaders in Rwanda receive no initial preparation for performing the role. The only requirement for becoming either a principal or deputy principal is to have graduated from a teacher training institution (MINEDUC-VVOB, 2011). There is, therefore, an assumption that possessing teaching skills is synonymous with possessing leadership capacity. Although this assumption was also held by some of the school leaders participating in the study (I4.P.A.U, I15.DPS.KM.U), most of them emphasised the desirability of formal and specific preparation for school leadership, management and administration in order to lead their schools effectively (I1.P.K.R, I2.DPS.K.R, I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R, I14.DPS.B.R).

The need to improve teachers’ English language competency mentioned earlier, also applies to school leaders. Even though school leaders are mistakenly considered more competent in English than their teachers because of their relatively high level of education, the reality is that these leaders tend to have a low level of English
proficiency. Indeed, holding a degree in Education does not necessarily make school leaders proficient in English inasmuch as most of them attended university between 1994 and 2009, the period during which French, English, and *Kinyarwanda* were used in schools according to the trilingual policy. It will be recalled from Chapter Six that under this policy almost all courses were taught in French at secondary and university levels, although English was theoretically afforded the same status in schools as French (Paxton, 2012). Many participants in the study reported here acknowledged their deficiency in the English language and highlighted the need for holistic training to elevate their level of English proficiency (I2.DPS.K.R, I3.P.B.R, I8.DPS.M.U, I12.P.KM.U).

**Participants’ concerns relating to financial constraints**

Most of the school leaders participating in the study expressed concerns regarding financial constraints which undermine effective school leadership and teaching and learning. In considering this issue, it is useful to recall from Chapter Six that the main source of income for most Rwandan primary schools is the capitation grant (Ministry of Education, 2010). This grant was introduced by the government after the abolition of school fees in 2003/4 to allow all children to attend school regardless of their financial circumstances (Ministry of Education, 2010; Paxton, 2012). It is a per-student fund allocated to public and government-aided schools by the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), and schools have some autonomy over how to spend it, with only little guidance from MINEDUC (Paxton, 2012).

Although all the schools selected for the study here received the government funding in the form of the capitation grant, most participants stated that this fund is not sufficient to meet the rapidly increasing challenges of the Nine Year Basic Education (NYBE) schools. These challenges include the lack of teaching and learning resources

The lack of teaching and learning resources

The lack of teaching and learning materials is hardly new in developing countries. Indeed, due to financial problems students’ learning achievement tends to be compromised by the dearth of teaching resources in developing nations (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Michaelowa, 2001). This situation is particularly challenging for Sub-Saharan African countries which have recently attained high primary school enrolment rates as a result of the implementation of the international objectives of Education for All (EFA) and the Universal Primary Education (UPE) (Otunga et al., 2008; Rogers & Vegas, 2010). Therefore, in these countries, it is increasingly common for teachers to hold classes in underfurnished classrooms (Otunga et al., 2008; Rogers & Vegas, 2010).

Some participants in the study being reported in this thesis highlighted that although the capitation grant had increased from 3500 Rwandan Francs (RWF) to 5000 RWF per student per annum, it is hardly sufficient to purchase some of the essential resources. The reason for this insufficiency is that it is necessary for the grant to be spent on the purchase of a whole range of items (I5.P.N.R). According to the official guidelines, 15 per cent of the fund is withheld by Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and is expected to be spent on school personnel training, 35 per cent is sent to a school to be used for school maintenance, while 50 per cent is expected to be spent on teaching activities (Paxton, 2012). It is only this 50 per cent of the grant that school leaders can use, for example, for purchasing teaching materials, paying contractual teachers,
photocopying and printing exam papers, paying night security guards, transport fees when they leave schools for meetings, and buying calling cards for communication (I5.P.N.R). Participants reported that these demands exceed the available financial means, a situation that obstructs the acquisition of important resources (I2.DPS.K.R, I5.P.N.R).

Specifically, the teaching resources reported by participants as lacking in most of the rural and urban schools participating in the study include science laboratories, chemicals, and equipment to teach science subjects at the lower secondary school level of the Nine Year Basic Education scheme. Furthermore, there were no computers and computer labs for students to practise Information Communication Technology (ICT) especially in the rural schools. This dearth of resources was a serious concern for leaders because science and ICT were mainly being taught theoretically and practical work was seldom undertaken (I2.DPS.K.R, I5.P.N.R, I8.DPS.M.U). Furthermore, commenting on the challenge of teaching ICT, participants in the rural areas were concerned that, during ICT classes, their students had to walk long distances to neighbouring schools where electricity had been installed to be able to use a computer (I2.DPS.K.R, I5.P.N.R). Another problem disclosed by most participants, including those in the capital city, is that the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) programme that had been implemented in Rwanda since the end of 2008 had not yet reached their schools at the time of the present study (I2.DPS.K.R, I5.P.N.R, I8.DPS.M.U).

These findings suggest that schools’ access to ICT in terms of resources is still very limited in Rwanda. While according to the plan the deployment of most computers in Rwandan schools was to be funded by donors, the reality is that the distribution of computers in schools turned out differently from what was anticipated (Mukama & Andersson, 2007). One criticism emerging from this is that Rwanda should have based its ICT policies on its economic context rather than on assumptions and foreign aid
(Hayman, 2005). It follows that the integration of ICT in the primary school system is far from being a success especially in the rural areas where most schools are located. As referred to earlier, most schools in rural areas do not have electricity (only 25 per cent of all schools have access to electricity), or any source of power to allow the use of computers (Ministry of Education, 2010, 2013). Therefore, the economic situation of the country and the lack of basic infrastructure (e.g. electricity) seem to be the chief factors undermining schools’ engagement with ICT.

Another important observation in relation to the lack of resources is that the extent to which problems with resources were experienced by the primary schools selected depended on the school’s size. This observation aligns with the literature which emphasises the need to consider such aspects of the school context as the school’s size in order to understand school leadership challenges (Clarke & Wildy, 2004; Leithwood, Louis, Wahlstrom & Anderson (2004). With the exception of one small urban school, which had an additional stable source of income alongside the capitation grant, small and medium schools encountered more financial challenges than larger ones. School leaders pointed out that because the grant was distributed on a per student basis, larger schools received a greater proportion of money than the small and medium schools (I5.P.N.R, I16.P.M.U). Consequently, these school leaders stated that larger schools face minor problems related to the acquisition of basic teaching and learning materials (I5.P.N.R, I16.P.M.U).

Large schools also encountered relatively few constraints regarding the acquisition of basic teaching resources because the expenses of small and medium schools were much the same as those for larger schools. On this, by way of example, one school principal of a rural medium-sized school (attended by 716 students) indicated that the number of pieces of chalk used whilst teaching 45 students in one class does not differ significantly from that used for teaching 60 students studying under
one roof. He went on to say that principals of larger schools spend roughly the same money as him on many items including transport and communication (I5.P.N.R). The view that larger schools did not experience as many financial constraints as smaller schools finds further justification according to one principal of a larger school’s comment that her school was accustomed to ending the academic year with some money deposited into the school account (I3.P.B.R). The same could hardly be claimed for a smaller public school.

In addition to school size, the scarcity of resources is linked to the location of the school. In the urban schools parents’ contributions are used to boost the capitation grant, which allows these schools to supplement teacher salaries and cover other expenses. In the rural schools selected, however, the district has prohibited schools to collect such contributions from parents (I7.RP.N.R, I10.RP.B.R). One educational leader stated that the need to reduce student drop out motivated their decision of not allowing schools to request money from parents (I11.D.K.R). On this, she commented that given the extreme poverty and ignorance of people in the countryside and the fact that primary education is free according to the Constitution, asking parents to contribute would result in many families/parents removing their children from school. Schools from rural settings, therefore, did not face the same financial problems as those located in the capital city where contributions and livelihoods differed considerably. This inference is supported by the literature which highlights the contextual influence the geographical location of the school has on school leadership (Clarke & Wildy, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Another factor contributing to resourcing problems is the allocation by the government of the same amount of the capitation grant to primary and lower secondary school students within the Nine Year Basic Education schools. Participants in this study stated that the per-student fund is the same for both primary school students and year 7,
and 9 students (i.e. lower secondary school students) (I5.P.N.R). It will be recalled that the present study was undertaken in Nine Year Basic Education (NYBE) schools in which the six year primary school level is combined with the three year lower secondary school level (Ministry of Education, 2013). Some school leaders in this study indicated that allocating 5000 RWF per student per annum to both categories of students is not a sensible practice (I5.P.N.R, I16.P.M.U). They stated that they spent more on lower secondary school students than on primary school students and that the capitation grant is not sufficient to purchase all the required teaching materials for the lower secondary school level.

The lack of classrooms

While remarkable progress had been made in terms of constructing new classrooms to accommodate the ever-growing number of students, there remained a lack of classrooms in those schools selected for the study. It will be recalled from Chapter Five and Six of this thesis that before the implementation of the NYBE programme, in 2009, there was a six year primary education which was followed by six years of secondary schooling. The introduction of the NYBE programme according to which years 7, 8 and 9 were added to the six year primary school level has required the construction of new classrooms to accommodate NYBE students (Ministry of Education, 2010; Paxton, 2012). As such, school leaders reported that their schools are facing challenges related to a shortage of classrooms as evidenced by the fact that, notwithstanding the schools’ adoption of the double shifting system, rooms are still overcrowded (I2.DPS.K.R, I5.P.N.R, I11.D.K.R, I14.DPS.B.R, I15.DPS.KM.U). This system consists of the double utilisation (i.e. in the morning and afternoon) of available classrooms for different groups of students to deal with the challenge posed by the shortage of rooms (Ministry of Education, 2008).
Regardless of the above comments, given the recent introduction of the Twelve Year Basic Education (TYBE) programme, some participants were more concerned about the availability of classrooms to accommodate TYBE students than the NYBE students. That is, school leaders whose schools had been requested by the district/government to receive TYBE students expressed multiple concerns relating to the shortage of classrooms (I2.DPS.K.R, I3.P.B.R). In particular, they expressed concerns regarding the lack of funds to speed up the process of building new classrooms. Although under normal circumstances the capitation grant was not allowed to be spent on building new classrooms (Ministry of Education, 2010), schools were required by the administrative sector to deposit a portion of this grant into the sector’s bank account. The sector combined this money emanating from schools with the local community’s compulsory contributions designed for constructing classrooms. It then used these funds together with the government’s special contribution (i.e. cement and roofing materials) towards classroom construction to initiate and control the building of classrooms in schools located in the sector. However, the local community’s contributions to supplement the government’s contribution were very limited because of the poverty of households in the rural areas where most of the population live on subsistence agriculture (I5.P.N.R, I11.D.K.R). This sector, therefore, was deprived of funds to complete the classrooms it had started constructing.

Understaffed schools

Some school leaders highlighted that their schools are understaffed. This understaffing is mainly applicable to the number of administrative/support staff within the school. Unlike in the ordinary secondary schools, containing both the lower and the upper secondary school levels, the positions of accountant and of deputy principal in charge of students’ discipline do not exist in the NYBE schools that participated in this study (I5.P.N.R, I12.P.KM.U). As a result, in addition to conducting teacher inspections,
attending regular meetings held at the administrative Sector and/or District, and carrying out other headship-related duties, the principals are often overwhelmed by managing students’ discipline and performing accountancy-related tasks. It will also be recalled from earlier sections in this chapter that undertaking accountancy-related duties is challenging for principals since they do not always have sufficient expertise in this area. In a similar vein, although deputy principals in charge of studies are expected to assist principals in the realm of discipline management, principals and deputies are overloaded as they have to manage the discipline of a good number of primary and lower secondary school students and at the same time fulfil multiple other responsibilities (I12.P.KM.U, I14.DPS.B.R, I15.DPS.KM.U).

Understaffing is also evidenced by the short supply of primary school teachers. As such, schools tend to be supplied with fewer primary school teachers than are required. On this, participants stated that having overcrowded classrooms is caused by the government not allowing them to recruit new teachers to reduce the growing teacher-student ratios. This view was made clear by one school principal who commented: “creating additional classes to reduce the number of students per teacher is impossible as we cannot be given new teachers to teach those new classes” (I3.P.B.R). Thus, the trend of increasing students’ numbers was not accompanied by increasing the number of teaching staff.

Nevertheless, it must be highlighted that the short supply of primary school teachers is not caused by the shortage of qualified teachers in the districts within which the study reported here was conducted. Although the teaching profession is hardly envied because of the poor living conditions of teachers (Ministry of Education, 2010), there are many teaching graduates who are looking for jobs, a situation that is reinforced by the increasing unemployment rate among the educated populace (I3.P.B.R). The reason for not recruiting those graduates to reduce the high teacher to student ratio
seems to be linked to the government’s strategies to deliver a cost effective NYBE. These strategies aim to “save on teachers” and include double shifting, the specialisation of teachers per subject, and the reduction of core courses (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 4). They are, therefore, expected to make the teaching of large numbers of students possible without necessarily increasing the number of teachers (Ministry of Education, 2008). Attention is now turned to the vexed issue of student attrition.

Participants’ concerns relating to student attrition
Despite Rwanda’s impressive progress in attaining the highest primary school enrolment rates in Africa (UNICEF, n. d.), student attrition remains a problem for school leaders in many of the primary schools that participated in the present study. While a large number of children enter the first grade of primary school, many leave school before completing the full cycle of primary schooling. The causes of student attrition as identified by participants in the study are now investigated.

Causes of attrition
Poverty was mentioned by many school leaders in the study as being the chief cause of student drop out and absenteeism. On this, school leaders in both the rural and urban areas pointed out that children from poorer households tend to leave schools to work temporarily in order to obtain money to purchase basic school materials (I8.DPS.M.U, I10.RP.B.R, I12.P.KM.U, I19.RP.M.U). In this connection, one deputy principal commented:

Because parents are very poor in this region some students abandon school for work to be able to purchase basic school materials. When you ask them the reasons for their absence once they come back to school, they tell you that they were looking for money to purchase notebooks and uniform as their parents do
not have money to do it. Others tell you that they were absent because they were working for money to spend on a haircut. (I2.DPS.K.R)

This deputy principal added that students from poor families tend to wear torn and/or dirty clothes, do not wear shoes, and possess fewer than required notebooks.

While the above commentary indicates that some students do return to school after a certain period of absence, school leaders highlighted that many of them do not come back. A parent chairing the school board at one urban school stated that after the end of the 2013 school year there were more than 20 cases of students who had left the school for good. Similarly, there were 28 and 19 students from the urban and rural schools respectively who had dropped out in 2013. School leaders of these schools stated that those students had abandoned school to be involved in such casual activities as transporting sugar cane to the market, or being employed as domestic workers. In addition, two other schools located near mining excavations tended to encounter many of the children dropping out in order for them to be involved in activities associated with mineral extraction.

Student attrition is also influenced by grade repetitions. While not more than 10 per cent of students in the lower primary and five per cent in the upper primary level were officially allowed to repeat a grade (I3.P.B.R), some school leaders stated that they could go beyond these percentages to improve the quality of education (I16.P.M.U). Other school leaders reported that the limitations on how many students can repeat a year/grade are unofficial and that it is possible to have either a small or high number of grade repeaters depending on the academic performance of the students (I6.P.K.R, I8.DPS.M.U). Whether official or not, there was a common view among school leaders that promoting a student, who does not know how to read and/or write, to the next grade would be a disservice to the community (I6.P.K.R, I16.P.M.U, I8.DPS.M.U).
Nevertheless, as a result of repeating grades, students often became demotivated and abandoned the school before completing primary education (I14.DPS.B.R). In a similar vein, student demotivation arising from grade repetition tended to be reinforced because grade repetition increases children’s time in schools, a situation that makes those children over aged for the primary school level. Primary school students who are over age, school leaders believed, are under increased pressure to earn money for their nuclear families and this further contributes to low completion rates (I2.DPS.K.R, I7.RP.N.R, I10.RP.B.R, I19.RP.M.U).

Another factor behind student attrition seems to be the poor teaching conditions and the decreasing quality of education. Although not specifically disclosed by participants, it can be inferred that the conditions within which teaching and learning take place can be a cause for drop out among students. Apart from the two schools in the study which held small classes, students in the other schools selected had overpopulated classes, making individualised learning difficult in the classroom (I3.P.B.R, I12.P.KM.U, I16.P.M.U). It is arguable that the lack of attention devoted to the needs of individual students coupled with teachers’ lack of commitment to teaching and their lack of proficiency in the language of instruction contributed to student attrition. Similarly, school leaders’ general concern about the quality of education being provided can be linked to the low completion rate (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R, I7.RP.N.R, I8.DPS.M.U). It must, however, be mentioned that the low quality of education was more apparent in the rural schools selected than in schools located in the capital city. An extreme example of the poor quality of education was given by one school leader of a rural school who recalled having met a grade six student who was unable to write his name properly. She put it this way:

I entered a primary six classroom two years ago and asked one student to write for me his name in the mother tongue. The student struggled a lot and wrote as if he
was just starting to learn how to write. This situation showed me that there are
students who finish primary six without the basic skills. Almost all students are
failing *Kinyarwanda* [mother tongue] language and they have grown up speaking
this language. Completing primary schooling without knowing how to write your
name is a real concern. (II.RP.K.R)

The above recollection is indicative of the poor quality of education that is experienced
by some students, which may demotivate them as well as their families, and contribute
to school attrition.

Another contributing factor to student attrition which is not very apparent at the
primary school level is pregnancy. While only one primary school student out of the six
schools selected had dropped out due to pregnancy, one education leader who
participated in this study reported that teenage pregnancy is a common cause of attrition
for girls at the post-primary school level (i.e. year 7, 8 and 9 of the Nine Year Basic
Education scheme) (II.I.D.K.R). These childhood pregnancies may be considered as a
violation of children’s rights since students in years 7, 8, and 9 are usually aged between
13 and 15 (Kanyesigye, 2013). At the national level, the Gender-Based Violence in
Schools report has indicated that 522 students aged between 10 and 18 years became
pregnant and stopped attending school in 2012 (Kanyesigye, 2013). This age group of
10 to 18 years would also have included primary school students since their age
normally ranges between 7 and 12.

It is important to emphasise that those students who dropped out in the schools
studied were not genocide orphans. While it has been reported that 15 per cent of
children affected by the genocide were unlikely to finish grade three or four six years
after it occurred (Akresh & De Walque, 2008), the school leaders interviewed suggested
this is not now the case twenty years after the end of the civil war and the genocide
Rather, school leaders suggested that those students dropping out are mainly non-genocide orphans, children from poor families, and children witnessing conflict in their nuclear families (I1.RP.K.R, I11.D.K.R, I19.RP.M.U). However, it can be argued that the legacies of war and genocide have had (and are continuing to have) an impact on the work of school leaders, especially at the secondary school and university levels (I6.P.K.R). There remain cases of young genocide survivors who are still traumatised as a result of painful legacies of the past. In addition, there exist young people born as a result of rape during the genocide (Hilsum, 2014); rape was widespread during the genocide and children born from rape have faced (and are still facing) extraordinary challenges related to rejection and acceptance by their mothers (Hilsum, 2014). Many of these young people also live in poverty as they do not qualify for government assistance to the same extent as do genocide orphans (Hilsum, 2014).

Pursuing the discussion on the factors contributing to student attrition in the schools selected, it is pertinent to mention that school leaders of one urban school stated that they do not experience student attrition and many of the challenges highlighted above. This school, which has so far been an exception to some of the concerns indicated in the preceding discussion, is government-subsidised as are the other selected schools in the study, but what makes it idiosyncratic is its private school status. It was established by parents in the early 1980s, and unlike the other schools selected it levies very high school fees. Hence family poverty as a cause of student attrition tends not to be the case in this school as parents can afford to pay such a large amount of money (I4.P.A.U). Teaching also takes place in relatively good conditions compared to the situation in the other schools studied. On this, whereas school leaders in the remaining schools were struggling to construct new classrooms and were unable to increase the number of teachers in order to deal with the growing student-teacher ratios, leaders of
this school reported that they were not experiencing such problems. Rather, they had split large classes into small ones and had recruited an additional nine teachers to occupy those classrooms (I4.P.A.U, I13.DPS.A.U). The school managed to pay salaries to these teachers as the government only payed salaries for nine among the 18 teachers who were employed in the school (I4.P.A.U). Furthermore, poor quality education as a contributing factor to student attrition tends not to be applicable to this urban school because its students’ academic performance was outstanding, which allowed them to secure places in prestigious secondary schools (I4.P.A.U, I13.DPS.A.U).

A closer look at the above mentioned factors contributing to student attrition indicates that there is no one single cause of student attrition in the schools selected for this study. Rather, student attrition is more of a process than the outcome of one single event, and as a result it is the product of a synergy between many factors (Hunt, 2008). It follows that student attrition was also linked by some participants to the lack of parental involvement in the education of their children. However, because parental disengagement may be explained by many other factors in addition to student attrition, it is discussed separately.

**Participants’ concerns relating to parental involvement in education**

As mentioned in Chapter Five and Six of this thesis, the provision of primary education in Rwanda has historically been in the hands of the state and religious institutions, especially the Catholic church. This is still true as almost all primary schools in the country fall under the public sector umbrella (Ministry of Education, 2013). The public sector comprises two types of schools, namely, state schools which are funded and managed directly by the state and government-subsidised schools which are funded by the state but run by Catholics, or Protestants (Ministry of Education, 2013; Paxton, 2012). The existence of a large number of such public sector schools in the country
suggests that parents’ intervention in primary education provision is limited, as evidenced by the very small number of private primary schools that are owned by parents, or private institutions.

In keeping with the above context of education provision, the role of parents in education has been restricted to sending children to school while the role of the state and school has always been to educate those children. Indeed, despite the official call for being involved in the education of their children (Ministry of Education, 2003, 2010), many parents especially those with low socio-economic status view education as the business of only the state and school. School leaders participating in the study reported in this thesis were perplexed by this view which has dominated the Rwandan education system since the introduction of modern schooling in the country. Notwithstanding this historical legacy of under-involvement of parents in education, participants provided differing views on the reasons and factors lying behind parental disengagement. Also, the location of the school seems to have shaped participants’ perspectives on this issue. The factors identified as causing the lack of parental involvement in the education of their children in the rural and urban areas will now be discussed in turn.

Parental disengagement in the rural schools
The lack of parental involvement in education in rural areas is not related to parents’ intervention in school governance. As mentioned in Chapter Six of this thesis, parents are expected to control basic education schools through School General Assembly Committees and School Audit Committees (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). Although from observations made in the current study their participation in the school leadership and management process is limited, these committees represent all parents in school governance and have some authority over certain school management affairs. As a result, parents’ lack of involvement in their children’s education is far from being
connected with involvement in school leadership and management. Rather, it is generally related to parents’ lack of concern about what children learn in schools, and about what contribution is required to improve students’ learning achievement.

In rural areas poverty was mentioned by some participants as being the main cause of the lack of parental involvement in education. Those who held this view stated that the reality of some students coming to school without basic school materials is indicative of parental disengagement in the education of their children. This belief was captured in the following participant’s comment: “parents living in poverty sometimes send children to school with torn and dirty clothes, or without pen, notebook and uniform. These parents do not really fulfil their responsibilities” (I2.DPS.K.R). Similarly, another school leader of a rural school said that every parent wants his/her children to receive a good education, but any signs of parental apathy emanate from poverty: “Every parent in this region wishes to have educated children. Parents say so in meetings we hold with them... the problem is that poverty prevents them [parents] from following up the education of their children” (I1.RP.K.R). Nevertheless, in rural settings, poverty as the main cause of the lack of parental involvement in education received little endorsement among the school leaders who participated in the study. Rather, as discussed below, the cause of the lack of parental involvement was attributed by most participants to parents’ ignorance about the purpose and importance of education.

Illiteracy and ignorance were reported by many participants in the rural areas as being responsible for the lack of involvement of parents in the education of their children. Participants who expressed this view provided convincing examples of how ignorance takes precedence over poverty when it comes to determining the lack of parents’ participation in education. In this regard, one participant chairing a school board (school general assembly committee) stated:
Some people say that poverty prevents parents from being involved in the education of their children. But in accordance with the report produced by the school on this issue, I have realised that the mindset of parents counts most. This report indicates that parents do not come to school when the school invites them to discuss learning and discipline issues experienced by their children. I think parents are ignorant or have a wrong understanding of the benefits of education. (I10.RP.B.R)

Another school leader commented, in a similar vein:

Parents do not know that they are responsible for their children’s education. They just send kids to school and do not follow up their education…they think educating is only the task of the teacher…this contributes to the low quality of education. (I7.RP.N.R)

The above comments suggest that many parents in the rural areas are unconcerned about what their children learn at school.

Furthermore, in rural settings, parents’ reluctance to contribute money to the teacher allowance is also considered as an indicator of parents’ lack of interest in the education of their children. On this, participants stated that parents in the rural areas believe that using their financial means to supplement teacher salaries is contrary to the law, which stipulates that primary education is free and compulsory (I5.P.N.R, I7.RP.N.R, I10.RP.B.R, I11.D.K.R). One statement encapsulating participants’ beliefs about parents’ reluctance to contribute financially to their children’s education is *uburezi ni ubuntu ariko si ubusa*, which translates as ‘free education does not mean zero financial contribution’ (I10.RP.B.R).
Parental disengagement in the urban schools

In urban areas, poverty and ignorance as contributing factors to the reticence of parents to be involved in education were not highlighted quite as much by school leaders. Rather, they seemed to hold that parents are aware of the importance of education and are relatively affluent to afford paying the required financial contributions (I4.P.A.U, I12.P.KM.U, I13.DPS.A.U, I15.DPS.KM.U). Notwithstanding this awareness, participants reported that parents believe that, so long as the financial means are available, education is the business of the teachers and the school. The following observation from one principal captures this concern:

The most difficult problem I have relates to parents. Parents in this city contribute financially to the education of their children, but in spite of this contribution they throw kids to us. They rarely come to school, and many do not follow what happens here. They are not available, they are not available (I4.P.A.U).

The unavailability of parents to talk to teachers poses serious challenges for school leaders and teachers, who are required to provide academic support to children who often stay at home on their own. On this, the same school principal in an urban school declared:

We have students who appear to live alone. We have a child who has reached primary 6 after repeating previous grades many times. This child told me he stays alone in the house. He lives only with one parent who works during the night. It means the child reaches home from school when his parent leaves home for work. This problem is very challenging to us. We have many cases similar to this. You understand we deal with such problems and parents do not help us. Even our good performance comes from the effort of our teachers, not parents. (I4.P.A.U)

This sentiment is illustrative of a belief amongst school leaders in urban areas that the reluctance of parents to be involved in the education of their children can be attributed
to daily commitments that render many of them too busy to participate in school activities.

At the end of this section on the current concerns faced by primary school leaders in post-new war Rwanda, an attempt is now made to explicitly answer the questions posed at the beginning of the chapter. The questions asked, it will be recalled, whether the current challenges faced by school leaders in Rwanda are solely attributable to the legacy of the war and genocide which ended 20 years ago; whether those challenges are only shaped and/or influenced by endemic manifestations of low socio-economic development characterising many post-colonial and developing nations; or whether they are shaped by both the conflict legacy and post-colonial and developing country status of the nation.

Although the civil war and genocide ended twenty years ago, some of the current challenges faced by school leaders can be attributed directly to the legacies of the conflict. In particular, the issue relating to conflict prevention is specifically attributable to the conflict and its causes in Rwanda. On this, the prevention of genocide ideology in schools whereby school leaders have to deal with segregationist ideas children derive from their families illustrates how current school leadership is influenced by the legacy of genocide. Furthermore, the inability of school leaders to support teachers in their teaching of genocide-related and other controversial issues and teachers’ reluctance to use ‘participative’ teaching methods whilst teaching genocide-related topics indicate how school leadership is constrained by the legacy of conflict. Nevertheless, the whole issue of teacher centred pedagogy should not be attributed to the legacies of the conflict. As has been mentioned in Chapter Five and earlier in this current chapter, the existence of teacher-dominated classrooms in which students take notes and passively participate in the learning process can be traced back to the colonial and post-colonial periods, and may thus be viewed as colonially inherited (Weinstein et al., 2007). It follows that both
The conflict and post-colonial legacies have influenced (and are still influencing) teaching and learning, and ultimately school leaders’ work.

Another school leaders’ concern that can be linked to the war and genocide legacies is the adoption of English as a medium of instruction. While it is true that historically most of the motives behind the language of instruction reform in schools in Rwanda are common to those in other African countries and many other developing nations (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009), it is arguable that the genocide and war have had an influence on the language of instruction policy in the country. This concurs with Samuelson and Freedman’s (2010) comment that “the policy makers [in Rwanda] frame [the language of instruction] change as a major factor in the success of social and education reforms aimed at promoting reconciliation and peace and increasing Rwanda’s participation in global economic development” (p. 191). Similarly, Mathisen (2012) after analysing the impact the genocide has had on education reforms in Rwanda concludes that “language reform in schools has been more dramatically impacted on by the genocide (p. 2). He clearly demonstrates that “the elimination of genocide ideology via the denial of ethnic differences” is one of the factors that nurtured the decision of making English the sole language of instruction (p. 89). Therefore, one could argue that if the war and genocide had not occurred, the elevation of English would not have been justified by the need to both eradicate the genocide ideology and promote peace and reconciliation.

Moreover, the linkage between language and political power is evident in the case of Rwanda. The adoption of English as the sole language of instruction emanates from the fact that the language of the victor was English and those holding political power are mostly English speaking Rwandans who returned to the country in the wake of the genocide, after the victory of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (Mathisen, 2010; Samuelson &
Freedman, 2010). It is most likely that English would not have totally replaced French in Rwanda if the French speaking regime (genocidal government) had won the war.

The challenges faced by school leaders can also be linked to the influence of globalisation on the post-new war education in Rwanda. Schweisfurth (2006, p. 697) has pointed out that “Rwanda makes a unique case study of how [post-conflict] education policy is influenced by forces beyond national boundaries”. As the education system was destroyed as a result of war and genocide, many international aid agencies and donors intervened to reconstruct it and have heavily influenced the post-genocide education system through their critical role in sector wide approaches to education planning and development (Schweisfurth, 2006). These aid agencies and donors can be linked with globalisation as they have a plethora of education priorities, foci, and mandates which align with those of Western funders, and which they use to shape the post-genocide education policy and practice.

On a related matter, the government and the donors, especially the UK DFID, have supported the attainment of the Education for All targets, the promotion of science and technology, and the English language in schools as a way of achieving economic integration into regional and global markets (Rwanda Education Board, 2014). To achieve these ambitions, many education changes have been initiated centrally by the Ministry of Education, assisted by international aid agencies and donors. Leading centrally-imposed reform has been problematic for local school leaders as changes are required to be implemented regardless of the school’s capacity and teachers’ readiness to embrace them.

However, not all of the concerns emphasised by primary school leaders can be seen as related to post-conflict recovery. On this, twenty years after the end of atrocities the issues of student attrition, low teacher salaries, financial constraints, the lack of professional development opportunities for teachers and school leaders, and the lack of
parental involvement in education can be better understood against the context of poverty and a poor domestic revenue/economy characterising low income and developing countries, including Rwanda. Although most of the world’s out-of-school children live in low income and developing nations affected by violent conflict (UNESCO, 2011), participants’ perspectives in this study did not link student attrition to the legacy of war and genocide that occurred in the country twenty years ago. Similarly, issues pertaining to financial hardship, teacher demotivation arising from poor pay and poor teaching conditions, and the lack of professional learning opportunities for teachers are connected with the problems affecting basic education delivery in many developing countries as highlighted by Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) and Chimombo (2005).

The above challenges affecting school leaders interviewed should not be overstated. Indeed, overemphasising the concerns of school leaders may obscure tangible strategies they are adopting to deal with the challenges they encounter. It may also result in an overly negative picture of primary school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda being painted. While it is true that school leaders who participated in the study being reported here encounter the complex problems already highlighted, they also have school-based strategies for dealing with these problems. Attention is now turned to describing these school level strategies.
Strategies for Dealing with the Concerns

The investigation of the above-mentioned concerns was undertaken as part of addressing the gap according to which the challenges affecting leadership at the individual school level in post-new war societies are “not always systematically researched” (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005, p. 6). It will also be recalled from the literature reviewed in Chapter Three of this thesis that there was a perceived need to investigate Rwandan primary school leaders’ concerns because developing countries and/or post-new war societies do not all have the same culture, political systems, economies and visions (Oplatka, 2004). More importantly, the literature indicated that there is a research lacuna about the strategies and the leadership style school leaders adopt to deal with the contextual complexity characterising school leadership in post-new war societies (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). To contribute to filling this lacuna, the strategies adopted by school leaders who participated in the study reported here are now examined.

Conflict prevention strategies

In order to prevent the reoccurrence of violent conflict, there seems to be a concerted effort at the primary school level to create a socially cohesive and conflict-free society. When participants in the study were asked to identify the strategies their schools were using to prevent large-scale violence, most of them mentioned engaging in dialogue about Rwandan history, unity and reconciliation (I3.P.B.R, I4.P.A.U, I5.P.N.R, I6.P.K.R, I7.RP.N.R, I12.P.KM.U, I20.S.K.R). This dialogue takes place while engaging in compulsory extra-curricular activities in students’ clubs.

Different types of students’ clubs exist in primary schools (i.e. environment clubs and English clubs). Conflict prevention dialogue takes place in specific anti-genocide clubs, unity and reconciliation clubs, and patriotism clubs. In most cases, these anti-violence clubs are led by a committee of students and are advised by one or two
teachers (I6.P.K.R, I12.P.KM.U). Additionally, in most schools only Primary Four to Six students are allowed to be members of these anti-genocide clubs since they are relatively senior and are deemed to be able to understand the complex and tragic situations experienced by Rwandan society in the past (I4.P.A.U, I8.DPS.M.U). Furthermore, school leaders highlighted that clubs do not segregate students along any lines since members of these clubs emanate from the three ethnic groups making up the Rwandan population (I7.RP.N.R, I20.S.K.R).

In addition to promoting dialogue in clubs, some of the schools selected contribute to conflict prevention by commemorating genocide at the school level and by visiting genocide memorial sites. During genocide commemoration, the clubs are involved in preparing and organising genocide commemoration events, and students, regardless of their ethnic background, compose songs and poems to present during the event (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R, I7.RP.N.R). Also, as part of this commemoration, schools invite local leaders to give talks to children about such topics as patriotism, unity and reconciliation, and the origins and causes of the Rwandan genocide (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R). Moreover, two of the six participating schools take student leaders in the clubs and other students’ representatives to genocide memorial sites (I4.P.A.U, I5.P.N.R). At the memorial sites, school leaders reported, students are briefed about issues surrounding the Rwandan genocide and come back to school to share their new knowledge with fellow students.

It was also reported that students become psychologically traumatised during genocide commemoration events at the school level, or when they visit genocide memorial sites. Some school leaders stated that cases of psychological trauma had occurred as a result of commemorating genocide in their schools (I5.P.N.R, I12.P.KM.U, I20.S.K.R). Traumatised students, school leaders commented, obtain assistance in the form of counselling from either teachers who have been trained to deal
with such cases, or professional counsellors in the local community (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R). It must be highlighted that psychological trauma was not mentioned as a substantial concern for school leaders. The reason for this seems to be that, 20 years after the end of the war and genocide, psychological trauma no longer affects school leaders’ day-to-day work. Rather, it tends to be episodic as it is almost only experienced during genocide commemoration activities, or when genocide memorial sites are visited by the schools.

**Peer-to-peer learning strategies**

School principals from three urban schools participating in the study were part of a club comprising other school principals. This club of school principals meets regularly and visits schools led by club members to share ideas, experiences and good practice. School visits are often undertaken when a club member is experiencing an especially tough problem in his or her school, with the aim of helping individuals to deal with the problem encountered. The following comment from a school principal captures what is sometimes done during school visits and the perceived value of the club for its members:

> We advise each other on different issues. In this club, we visit schools we lead. A principal can tell us that the personnel at his/her school are rebelling or that there is something wrong at his/her school. We visit this school and observe how things are done. We observe students gathering in the morning; we enter classes; we look at the level of hygiene, and so on. We then meet teachers and discuss important issues together. I have seen this is a good practice, and it would be good if other principals formed such clubs. (I4.P.A.U)
The same school principal recommended that other school principals form peer-to-peer learning clubs because of the critical role of the principal in promoting school success. She put it this way:

I strongly recommend that school principals form such clubs because I have realised that the principal plays a big role in the improvement and development of the school. I used to not agree with this, but I am convinced now that the role of the principal is critical. (I4.P.A.U)

Apart from intervening when there is a pressing challenge in a club member’s school, the club members also coach new principals on how school issues may be dealt with.

The coaching offered by peers is especially important since most principals in Rwanda have not been initially prepared to manage schools. For example, one principal stated that she learnt managerial and leadership strategies from her peers prior to receiving formal professional development, which came one year after appointment:

I studied Education, but not school leadership and management. So I faced leadership related challenges when I was appointed principal. Managing teachers, students, and parents was not easy for me. I approached experienced school principals and we implemented what we call ‘peer learning’. These principals gave me advice while I was waiting for the Ministry of Education training. (I12.P.KM.U)

Another example of the peer-to-peer learning strategy existed in other schools where school leaders involved teachers in a peer-to-peer learning session. In this session, the principal, deputy principal, or a teacher teaches a model lesson to the remaining teaching staff, and this activity is followed by a plenary discussion in which the lesson is evaluated and areas of improvements suggested (I8.DPS.M.U, I9.DPS.N.R).
The peer-to-peer learning strategy was also used by school leaders to deal with deficiencies in English language competence. For example, school leaders supported the creation of students’ English clubs in schools and were encouraging teachers to support each other to overcome challenges posed by teachers’ lack of proficiency in the English language (I2.DPS.K.R, I3.P.B.R).

**Dealing with teacher demotivation**

The ways in which school leaders dealt with teacher demotivation varied from one situation to another. While some school leaders empathised with teachers and showed them compassion and care, others did not. One male deputy principal commented: “I tell my teachers that the doors are open and that they can go and look for a better job if they are not happy with their salary” (I14.DPS.B.R). Similarly, another male principal tried to integrate spirituality in the workplace by referring to accountability to God and to society whilst seeking to counteract teachers’ anti-professional behaviours arising from demotivation:

I tell teachers that they are answerable to the nation and to society, and that they are failing the nation and society whenever they do not perform their duties well. I also tell them that God will ask them what they will have done during their teaching career. On this, I advise them to leave the system if they do not want to face God’s judgment. I therefore tell them that it is better to leave the teaching career instead of rendering bad service deliberately. (I5.P.N.R)

Unlike the above school leaders, there was one school principal who, in keeping with her caring character, stated that she tried to create an atmosphere of caring and respect to raise the commitment of her teachers:
I try to be humble and respect my teachers. I also acknowledge and praise their teaching efforts and try to support them. I know it is human to make mistakes, and I discuss their problems with them without being intimidating. (I3.P.B.R)

In doing so, she sought to deal with teacher demotivation by placing respect, care, and support at the heart of her relationship with teachers.

In the previously described urban school with private school status, the school principal highlighted adopting three specific strategies that contribute to the success of the school in general and the motivation of teachers in particular. These include teamwork, monitoring students’ learning, and paying teachers well (I4.P.A.U). Regarding teamwork, she reported involving teachers in decision-making and seeking advice from them:

My leadership strategy is to collaborate with my colleagues. For example, during teacher placement [at the beginning of the school year], I invite all the teachers and tell them that we all know each other’s strengths and weaknesses because we have been working together for many years; I remind them, for instance, that primary five students did not do well in Mathematics last year, and I ask them to advise me on what we can do. Teachers then start thinking about who can be placed in primary five and continue with placing themselves in classes based on their capacity/ability and experiences. This is the strategy I use. We work together as a team. (I4.P.A.U)

With regard to monitoring students’ learning, this school principal stated that she enters classrooms to diagnose the areas in which students have difficulties and discusses with teachers how students’ learning in those areas can be improved. This strategy is not, however, the monopoly of the principal of the urban private school since it was also adopted by other school leaders who participated in this study. It is known as classroom
inspection, and principals and their deputies are required by the Ministry of Education to conduct it regularly.

The good pay also motivates teachers associated with the urban private school. The principal confirmed that, due to the generous remuneration, her teachers could work under little, or zero supervision. She put it this way:

Our teachers are very well paid. We give them an allowance to supplement salaries from the state and they are motivated. They are committed to the extent that if, for example, I fall sick, or if I travel away for mission, I am sure children can continue to learn and perform well. (I4.P.A.U)

It should also be pointed out that some school leaders stated that addressing teacher demotivation is beyond their competency inasmuch as it is caused mainly by poor teacher pay and poor living conditions. On this, they said that addressing teachers’ lack of motivation is the responsibility of the state, which should increase teachers’ salaries to improve teachers’ standard of living (I2.DPS.K.R). Some progress has been made in this respect, with the government establishing the teachers’ Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO), which is an incentive for teacher motivation and retention (Umwalimu SACCO, 2012). Although criticised by some of the school leaders interviewed (I5.P.N.R), this cooperative is expected to improve teachers’ economic conditions through granting them low interest loans. Attention is now turned to the strategies used to deal with financial constraints.
Dealing with financial constraints

Occasional parental contributions and taking on debt

Seeking financial contributions from parents is a strategy adopted by many school leaders to deal with financial hardship. It will be recalled that in the selected schools financial constraints were faced mostly by rural, small and medium sized schools. Leaders in these schools stated that whenever there is a need for funds to accomplish an important activity, they invite parents to a meeting to agree on a fixed amount of money each parent should contribute, or they simply ask children to inform parents about the required money to bring to school (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R). These parental contributions are occasional and are therefore acceptable to rural district authorities. They differ from the regular contributions which are authorised only in the urban schools that were selected.

As mentioned earlier, regular financial contributions are not sought from parents in the rural district on the grounds that parents may remove children from schools, because of both poverty and the parents’ interpretation of the free education principle (I5.P.N.R, I7.RP.N.R, II1.D.K.R).

Another strategy that is adopted by many school leaders in the rural schools selected is taking on debt. As certain school materials have to be purchased through tender, school principals often request the tender winner to deliver the materials to schools on loan (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R). The winner is assured that he/she will be paid when the capitation grant has been deposited by the government into the school’s account. Other debts that are often taken on by schools, especially rural schools, emanate from the typing, printing and photocopying of exam papers for lower secondary school students and from purchasing basic school materials for both primary and lower secondary school levels (I5.P.N.R). There was no electricity, or any source of power available in the rural schools investigated, which could ease the costs associated with typing and multiplication of exam papers.
Improvisation

In addition to taking on loans from local suppliers, many school leaders interviewed highlighted that they encourage their teachers to make and use second-hand teaching aids whenever there is a lack of specific first-hand teaching materials. The production and use of alternatives to specific teaching aids is referred to as improvisation. Participants in the study being reported in this thesis stated that the technique of improvisation helps their schools to deal with financial constraints inasmuch as improvised materials are made from locally available and low-cost resources (I3.P.B.R, I6.P.K.R, I14.DPS.B.R). Nevertheless, although improvisation seemed to produce relatively good results, participants said that teachers need formal training in order to be able to improvise skillfully (I3.P.B.R). Some materials like computers, computer laboratories, and chemicals, however, are not amenable to improvisation and thus remained unavailable (I8.DPS.M.U).

Community involvement in classroom construction

Whereas there is much evidence for parental disengagement in education of their children, the parents and community have contributed to the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms. Participants in the study being reported in this thesis reported that this contribution has occurred in two ways including Umuganda (i.e. community work) and compulsory financial contributions designed specifically for classroom construction (I2.DPS.K.R, I11.D.K.R, I20.S.K.R). The former is rooted in the Rwandan traditional culture according to which community members seek help from their family, friends, and neighbours to perform a difficult task. It is carried out at the local community level on the last Saturday of every month, and as it is regulated by law, all Rwandans aged between 18 and 65 are required to leave their normal routines to participate in this activity. School leaders stated that, during umuganda, the general public undertook such activities as moulding bricks and/or collecting stones to be used

It is important to mention that Umuganda in Rwanda may be understood as an expression of the Ubuntu worldview. Ubuntu is a term commonly used by Bantu people living in East, Southern, and Central Africa to refer to the human kindness and humaness people express in their communities. It has been reported that, by sharing their meagre resources and helping each other, marginalised communities survived Apartheid discrimination in South Africa just on account of Ubuntu (Mhlaba, 2001). Despite the fact that the literature on Ubuntu emanates mainly from South Africa, the use of the word Ubuntu is widespread in Rwanda. Indeed, the concept has played a significant role in contributing to the post-genocide economic reconstruction of the country given the economic returns from umuganda for the country (Rwanda Governance Board, 2015). Such returns include, for example, the construction of schools, medical centres, rehabilitation of wetlands, and the creation of productive agricultural plots (Rwanda Governance Board, 2015). The government also believes in the potential of the umuganda ritual to contribute to the creation of a socially cohesive society after the genocide of 1994 (Rwanda Governance Board, 2015).

The second way in which community members have contributed to the building of classrooms is according to mandatory fees that every household has to pay as part of the district, or administrative sector’s collection of funds designed for classroom construction. Although such fees are not substantial due to the extreme poverty experienced by the majority of rural families, school leaders suggested that financial contributions, however small, had made a difference (I11.D.K.R, I20.S.K.R). On this, one educational leader at the level of the district reported that the contribution of the local community towards the newly constructed classrooms amounted to 50 per cent of
all construction expenses, with financial contributions from families and the *umuganda* (community work) both contributing to this percentage (I11.D.K.R).

**Dealing with student attrition and the lack of parental involvement**

The strategies adopted by school leaders to deal with student attrition and parents’ lack of involvement in education varied from discussing the issues with parents to reporting them to local administrative bodies. The school-local administration collaboration was especially apparent when parents resisted sending their children to school, or when they were complicit in a student dropping out (I19.RP.M.U, I14.DPS.B.R). Local administration authorities in Rwanda fine parents who jeopardise the government’s aim to increase access to education (I14.DPS.B.R).

Another strategy used to address the lack of parental involvement in education is by the change in the way the school communicates with parents and the introduction of *cahier de communication* (i.e. communication notebook). On this, some school leaders stated that in order to invite parents to school meetings they have given up advertising such meetings in churches on Sundays and are now sending written messages to parents through children (I6.P.K.R, I10.RP.B.R). Similarly, some schools have introduced a *cahier de communication*, which is a student notebook in which teachers and school authorities write any information that needs to be known by parents (I3.P.B.R, I10.RP.B.R). Parents are in turn required to acknowledge receipt of the information by commenting on the information and applying a signature (I10.RP.B.R). Participants said that although much still needs to be done to increase parental involvement in education, these strategies are improving the situation and some progress in relation to parental involvement is being made (I10.RP.B.R).

The above strategies cannot be considered as definitive answers to the challenges faced by school leaders in post-conflict Rwanda. This is because the problems discussed
above are akin to those that Heifetz and Linsky (2002) portray as ‘adaptive problems’, or the kinds of problems for which we do not have ready answers and which take time to deal with. On a related matter, the leadership style that tends to be adopted by most school leaders seems to be inadequate for tackling adaptive problems. This leadership style and its ineffectiveness in handling such adaptive challenges are discussed below.

The leadership style of school leaders

With only a few exceptions, a ‘managerial’ leadership style seemed to be predominant among the school leaders of schools selected. This style becomes particularly apparent when the school principals’ daily work is analysed. Most principals spend a good deal of time performing activities that are managerial in nature. Such activities include the inspection of teachers in classrooms, ensuring attendance of teachers at work, ensuring students’ attendance, managing students’ discipline in and outside classrooms, coordinating activities pertaining to the construction of new classrooms and the rehabilitation of old ones, purchasing teaching materials, managing school finance and resources, and attending meetings at the sector and/or district level (I3.P.B.R, I5.P.N.R, I6.P.K.R). Some of these managerial activities are performed especially by deputy principals. In addition, the predominance of managerial leadership is evidenced by the lack of vision and strategic plans in some of the schools studied (I6.P.K.R). A lack of the concept of vision is purported to be a feature of managerial leadership (Bush, 2007).

Managerial leadership was also apparent in principals’ and deputy principals’ bureaucratic compliance with prescribed government policies and district guidelines. Despite the decentralisation of the education sector that has occurred since 2006, schools are still required to comply with education policies, curriculum, and examination policies designed by higher levels within the bureaucratic hierarchy. For example, it will be recalled from Chapter Six that schools are required to incorporate in
their performance contracts the annual education-related targets of the district. On this, one principal commented that he was going to include the purchase of a fire extinguisher in his school’s performance contract although there was very little chance of the school’s infrastructure catching fire (I3.P.B.R). This school does not have electricity or any other source of power that could cause fire. Similarly, commenting on the requirement according to which district priorities should be incorporated in schools’ performance contracts, another principal stated that performance contracts ought to flow from school to district, not the other way round. He put it this way:

The district ought to formulate education targets based on schools’ needs because schools know better what kids really need. But this is not the case. We first have to know the priorities of the district in education and then incorporate those priorities in our performance contracts and indicate our contribution to achieving them. (I5.P.N.R)

The above comment shows that school leaders’ work is often defined by district procedures. In addition, school effectiveness is defined by compliance with the Ministry of Education policies and the district education priorities when performance contracts are evaluated at the end of the year.

It can be argued that the managerial style of leadership is not sufficient for resolving the adaptive problems facing schools. Few would dispute that such problems as the lack of teacher professionalism and motivation, the lack of parental involvement in education, the problems associated with endemic student attrition, and the challenges of conflict prevention do not have quick and known solutions. As mentioned earlier, these problems are adaptive in nature, and thus they require more adaptive approaches to leadership than managerial leadership to tackle them. As such, they contrast with technical problems which have known solutions and can be dealt with by applying
authoritative expertise and maintaining the school’s current values and ways of performing activities (Linsky & Lawrence, 2011). The focus on the maintenance of current organisational arrangements and the lack of engagement with change and innovation make managerial leadership more appropriate for resolving technical problems.

Notwithstanding the prevalence of managerial leadership, there were two principals whose behaviours tend to reflect a more distributive style of leadership. These principals strove to shape the culture of teamwork from the position of authority in which they are placed (I4.P.A.U, I12.P.KM.U). They also involved teachers in decision-making and empowered them to make decisions on such issues as teacher placement (I4.P.A.U) and management of parents’ contributions designed to supplement teacher salaries (I12.P.KM.U). Empowerment and decision-making processes are essential elements of distributed leadership (Bush & Glover, 2003).

**Conclusion**

This chapter has addressed the third aim of the study by providing a detailed exposition of the current concerns primary school leaders face and of the strategies they adopt to deal with those concerns. The current concerns were organised into five broad themes, namely, ‘conflict prevention’, ‘professionalism’, ‘financial constraints’, ‘student attrition’, and ‘parental disengagement’. An exposition of these problems was followed by a discussion which aimed to disentangle the challenges that can be attributed to the legacy of the violent conflict and those that are attributable to the manifestations of political and economic underdevelopment characterising many post-colonial and developing countries, including Rwanda.

The strategies school leaders adopt to deal with the problems encountered comprised conflict prevention efforts including the creation and support of students’
anti-violence clubs, visiting genocide memorial sites, and commemorating genocide at the school level. Peer-to-peer learning was adopted to deal with deficiencies in the language of instruction, to coach practising principals, especially those who are newly appointed, and to improve classroom teaching.

With regard to dealing with financial constraints, school leaders took on debt and sought financial contributions from parents. Community engagement in classroom construction and the technique of improvisation were also identified as contributing to the reduction of financial problems. Other strategies included fining parents who remove their children from school and changing the way schools communicated with parents as part of dealing with school drop out and parental disengagement in the education of their children.

The managerial leadership style was found to be predominantly adopted by school leaders. It has been argued, however, that this style of leadership is relatively ineffective in dealing with the kinds of adaptive challenges faced by the school leaders who participated in this study. The final chapter to follow provides an overview of the study, along with a discussion, and a conclusion.
CHAPTER EIGHT
OVERVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The Rwandan education system has undergone numerous changes since it was established at the beginning of the twentieth century. These changes have been mainly related to education policy and practice and have affected the primary school system in many respects. For example, since the genocide of 1994, the primary school curriculum has been reformed many times and measures aimed at increasing access to post-primary education have been taken in order to correct pre-genocide educational imbalances and errors (Ministry of Education, 2003). Furthermore, as the effect of the genocide on children’s schooling was so devastating, international aid agencies provided significant assistance to Rwanda to reconstruct and develop the primary school system. For obvious reasons, it is instructive to know how education has been resuscitated and developed by the Rwandan government, as assisted by the international community. In this regard, some studies have been undertaken into how education was affected by the genocide and how it has since been reconstructed (Cantwell, 1997; Obura, 2003; Schweisfurth, 2006; World Bank, 2004), how it contributed to violent conflict in the past and how it can contribute to unity and reconciliation in the present Rwanda (Bridgeland, Wulsin & McNaught, 2009; Hilker, 2011; King, 2008; Walker-Keleher, 2006). While these studies have focused on education more broadly, very few have investigated school leadership specifically in the post-conflict era. In particular, leadership of primary schools has been neglected as a focus of academic attention.

It was with the intention of addressing the latter deficits that the study reported in this thesis was carried out. This final chapter opens with an overview of the significance of the study and its research design and methodology. It goes on to present in the form of a set of assertions a discussion of the key results relating to each of the three research
questions. The transferability of the study’s results is then considered. Finally, consideration is given to the implications of the research for theory, future research, and for policy and practice.

**Overview of the Study**

The study reported in this thesis had three fundamental aims. The first aim was to develop an understanding of the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994, the year in which the genocide occurred and in which the four year civil war ended in the country. The second aim was to develop an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership during the post-genocide period (i.e. from 1994 until 2014). The third aim was to develop an understanding of the current concerns faced by primary school leaders and of the strategies adopted by them to deal with those concerns. As primary education and primary school leadership are intertwined, the history of, and the developments in relation to, primary education were investigated while addressing the first and second aims of the study.

**Significance of the study**

Investigating leadership at the primary school level in post-conflict Rwanda was considered significant for five major reasons. The first reason was that despite the well-documented positive correlation that has been made between school leadership and students’ learning achievement, there is still a distinct lack of empirical data on the problems school leaders in post-new war societies face and on how they deal with those problems (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). The second reason is that school leadership literature has been dominated by the cultural, economic, or political systems of developed countries especially those located in Europe and North America, and has received few insights from the developing world (Nawab, 2011; Oplatka, 2004). Thus,
in this study, the way school leadership is informed and shaped by a developing country’s (i.e. Rwanda) politics and its low socio-economic development has been elucidated. The third reason, perhaps a corollary of the first two, is that the relationship between context and leadership continues to be under-theorised. Indeed, until recently there has been little acknowledgement of the importance of considering context and its influence on leadership practices (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Vroom & Jago, 2007). It follows that the paucity of research on school leadership in post-new war, post-colonial, and developing nations can be partly attributed to the neglect by researchers of the role of contextual factors in informing leadership policy and practices in such societies (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). The fourth reason this study was significant, is that, besides investigating principals’ perspectives, this research considered perspectives of other stakeholders including deputy principals, parents chairing School General Assembly Committees, education officers at the level of the Sector and District, and an education advisor on school management. This consideration is important given the fact that most school leadership insights have come from school principals, with the views of other stakeholders being seldom investigated in school leadership research (Day, Harris & Hadfield, 2010; Owens, 2001). Finally, as discussed later in this chapter, the study’s results have reinforced the need to address the professional development and learning needs of primary school leaders and teachers, particularly in the current post-genocide era which is characterised by endemic educational change, the poverty of households, and ongoing challenges associated with the ideological reconstruction and the implementation of the internationally agreed goals of Education for All (EFA).
Research design and methodology

Guided by the interpretive view (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011), that human experiences and actions hold meanings and need to be interpreted within a social context, the study reported in this thesis set out to investigate school leadership in context, from the educational leaders’ perspective. The participants in this study comprised: the principals, deputy principals, parents leading school committees, sector education officers, district education officers, and a senior education advisor on school management.

The main data gathering methods included semi-structured, in-depth interviews and document analysis. Historical documents alone were analysed to address the first research aim. The second aim of the study was addressed primarily through document analysis, which was supplemented by interviews with education officers and an education advisor on school management. The third aim was addressed by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews and informal observations. The data were analysed using grounded theory methods of data analysis, specifically the use of open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), and analytic induction (Katz, 2001). The open coding process allowed for the identification of concepts which, through constant comparison, were used to generate categories (Punch, 2009). The analytic induction, on the other hand, involved seeking causal explanation for generated categories and provisional themes by pursuing and accounting for negative cases/evidence in the data (Katz, 2001). The analysis led to the development of permanent themes and associated categories for each of the three central research questions.
Summary of the outcomes of the study

Chapters Five, Six and Seven addressed the first, second and third aims of the study respectively. Chapter Five provided an understanding of the historical background to primary education in general and to primary school leadership specifically from colonial times until the genocide of 1994. It enabled the reader to analyse the events that took place before the genocide of 1994 in Rwanda in order to understand key elements of contemporary educational reality. Chapter Six provided an understanding of the developments that have taken place in relation to primary education in general and school leadership especially from 1994 up until 2014. It generated an understanding of what the Rwandan government and the international community did to resuscitate primary education and, in particular, to shape primary school leadership in the post-genocide era. Chapter Seven provided an understanding of the challenges that are of current concern to primary school leaders and the strategies school leaders adopt to deal with those challenges. Attention is now turned to drawing together and discussing the main findings of each of these chapters. This discussion is presented in the form of a set of key assertions arising from the research findings.

The first research aim

Chapter Five addressed the first aim of the study, namely, to develop an understanding of the historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda from colonial times until the genocide of 1994. It charted the history of primary education generally and of primary school leadership specifically with reference to the three political regimes and their respective periods of rule. These regimes and periods of rule include the colonial regime that administered Rwanda from 1894 until 1962, the First Republic from 1962 until 1973, and the Second Republic from 1973 until 1994.
Assertion one

From 1894 until 1994 the three political regimes that administered Rwanda ethnicised access to and opportunities for formal education. This has been one of the contributing factors to the conflict which culminated in the 1994 genocide.

Chapter Five revealed that by ethnicising access to and opportunities for education the colonial governments reinforced ethnic divisions, which contributed to ethnic conflict in the country. The German and Belgian colonial administrations implemented indirect rule policies which intensified ethnic divisions among the three ethnic groups (i.e. Hutu, Tutsi, Twa) making up the Rwandan population (Barnett, 2002; Gourevitch, 1998; Kiwuwa, 2012). Through indirect rule colonisers used their power to strengthen the Tutsi monarchical regime, increased Tutsi hegemony, and reinforced the dominance of Tutsis over Hutus and Twas in all sectors of life including education (Erny, 2001; King, 2008; Lemarchand, 1970). The colonisers prioritised one group of people over another because, it is held, they wanted to weaken any inter-ethnic coalition against their rule (Destexhe, 1995). What further exacerbated divisions among Rwanda’s groups of people was the policy of institutionalising ethnicity whereby mandatory ethnic identity cards were introduced in Rwanda by the Belgian colonial government in 1933 (Barnett, 2002; Meeren, 1996). These ethnic divisions gave rise to the 1959 Hutu-led and Belgian-supported revolution which ended the Tutsi kingdom and established the First Republic in 1961 (Barnett, 2002; Kiwuwa, 2012).

Rather than correcting colonial errors of favouring one group over another, the First and Second Republics, now led by Hutus, continued to use ethnicity to justify formal political power as well as social and economic privileges (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Kroslak, 2008). This situation resulted in ethnic conflict that led to the four year civil war between the then incumbent government and the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF)’s armed forces. The latter launched an armed attack from Uganda in 1990 and was
composed mainly of descendants of Tutsis who had fled Rwanda to neighbouring
countries as a result of the Hutu-led revolution of the late 1950s (Moghalu, 2005). The
civil war culminated eventually in the genocide of 1994, the year in which the RPF won
the war and started to reconstruct the country.

**Assertion two**

Under the three political regimes that ruled Rwanda from 1894 until 1994,
primary education was introduced, resisted, accepted, nationalised, democratised
and ruralised. The implementation of the democratisation and ruralisation
processes was undermined by such school-based challenges as the shortage of
qualified teachers, student attrition, the shortage of educational infrastructure,
and teacher-centred pedagogy.

Between 1894 and 1994 primary schooling was introduced, resisted, accepted,
‘nationalised’, democratised and ruralised (Erny, 2001; King, 2008). After the
establishment of the first school in 1900 by Catholic missionaries, more schools were
constructed by missions to evangelise and train junior workers for the colonial
government. These schools were initially attended by few Hutus as the then incumbent
king and Tutsi chiefs temporarily rejected missionary education (Erny, 2001; King,
2008). Since the 1920s, however, Tutsis’ aversion to schooling decreased, with
preference in schools being given to children from the Tutsi ethnic group. On this,
Lemarchand, (1970, p. 74) stated that, from the mid-1920s up until the end of the 1950s,
“the consensus of opinion among Belgian administrators was that the Tutsi should
remain the sole recipients of secular and missionary education”. Alongside ethnic
imbalance regarding educational access, primary education was also limited by
minimal colonial government support and few physical and human resources.
After political independence of 1962, the First and Second Republics universalised and democratised primary education as part of the correction of ethnic disparities with regard to access to education. The democratisation of educational access was, however, undermined by such problems as the admission of students into secondary schools based on ethnic quotas rather than scholastic performance (King, 2008), the shortage of qualified teachers (République Rwandaise, 1967), academic elitism leading to higher student attrition from grade to grade and from the primary school level to the secondary school level (République Rwandaise, 1966), the shortage of educational infrastructure, and the implementation of teacher-centred teaching (Erny, 2003; République Rwandaise, 1967). Notwithstanding the Second Republic’s political will to address these problems through the implementation of the 1979 school reform, these challenges persisted until the genocide of 1994 (Obura, 2003; World Bank, 1984). The failure of the 1979 reform, which attempted to ruralise primary education, may be partly attributed to Rwanda’s adherence to the World Bank’s Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in the 1980s (Kroslak, 2008). Indeed, through SAPs, developing countries, including Rwanda, were required by the World Bank to decrease state funding of relevant services including that of education (Kroslak, 2008). Therefore, the failure of the 1979 reform can be linked to the decrease in government spending on education in the wake of the implementation of SAPs.
**Assertion three**

Prior to 1925 primary school leadership and management were entirely in ecclesiastical hands. From 1925 until 1994 the church continued to play a significant role in school administration, but its influence on the leadership of primary schools was challenged by the First Republic regime. This influence occurred within a highly centralised education system, which determined the way schools were managed and led.

A series of protocols that were signed between the state and the church shaped and influenced the leadership of primary schools from colonial times until 1994. In the colonial era, the administration of schools was entirely in missionary hands, although the colonial government subsidised those schools which adhered to its curriculum and to other guidelines. The church’s role in school management and administration was, however, challenged by the First Republic regime. As such, the state took over church schools and strove to control the entire primary school system. The centralisation of the education system after independence meant that the state developed the curriculum, inspected schools and classroom teaching, guided the selection of textbooks, and approved and appointed teachers and school leaders, with minimal intervention from the church. Nevertheless, the financial constraints emanating from the implementation of SAPs required the state to cede much of its influence in primary education and primary school administration to the church from the 1980s under the Second Republic.

Although the nature of school leadership has depended on each political regime’s distinctive education laws and policies, there seem to be features of school leadership that are common to all three regimes that administered Rwanda from 1894 until 1994. Such features comprise, for example, the centralisation of school administration and selection of school leaders, the principal’s limited autonomy with regard to decision-making, schools’ compliance with education policies, curriculum, examination policies
designed by higher levels within the bureaucratic hierarchy, and the recruitment of
school leaders based on their teaching experience and qualifications rather than on their
leadership potential. Another common characteristic is that school leaders during the
three political regimes faced similar school-based challenges relating to the shortage of
qualified teachers, a low student completion rate, a lack of financial and teaching
resources, and the teacher-centred pedagogy.

The second research aim
Chapter Six addressed the second aim of the study, namely, to develop an understanding
of the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership in
Rwanda from 1994 until 2014. The rationale behind the pursuit of such an aim arose out
of the recognition that it is instructive to know what the Rwandan government did to
resuscitate and develop education and, in particular, to shape primary school leadership
after the 1994 genocide. It is for this reason that the developments related to primary
education and primary school leadership were deliberately chronicled according to two
periods, namely, the emergency reconstruction (i.e; from 1994 until 1999) and the
reconstruction development (i.e; from 2000 until 2014). These periods were delimited
based on the Rwanda education sector policy, which advises that the emergency phase
terminated in 1999 and the developmental phase started in 2000 (Ministry of Education,
2003).
Assertion one

From the emergency through reconstruction to the development period, primary education has undergone numerous changes. These changes have led to a partial transformation in education during the emergency period and to a significant, but not complete, transformation during the reconstruction development phase.

Various educational initiatives aimed at constructing a conflict sensitive education system were undertaken during the emergency reconstruction period. Such initiatives comprised the change of mission and objectives of the education system with the purpose of correcting errors made by pre-genocide political regimes, the implementation of curriculum changes, the official banning of the identification of teachers and students as Hutu or Tutsi as part of the eradication of ethnic discrimination in schools, and the introduction of English in the Rwandan primary school system for the first time in order to cater for the language needs of the English speaking returnees (Ministry of Education, 2003; Obura, 2003). It is arguable, however, that these changes only led to a partial educational transformation inasmuch as they did not address such pre-genocide entrenched problems as the low completion rate, inadequate teaching materials, and the shortage of qualified teachers.

As far as educational developments during the post-2000 period are concerned, this period was marked by a shift away from the official desire to meet emergency educational demands to that of fulfilling developmental and poverty reduction needs. In this regard, educational changes including the ambitious integration of science and Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the primary school system (Ministry of Education, 2003; Mukama & Andersson, 2008), the dropping of French and the adoption of English as the sole language of instruction at all levels of education (Paxton, 2012; Rwandan Education Board; 2014; Samuelson & Freedman, 2010), and educational reforms aimed at achieving the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and
Education for All (EFA) targets (Ministry of Education, 2008, 2010, 2013) dominated the education arena. Nevertheless, it was argued that by 2014 Rwanda was only progressing successfully in one of these educational endeavours, as it was on track to achieving the UPE and EFA objectives. In this regard, the quantitative expansion of primary education coupled with the quasi-successful implementation of the free and compulsory Nine Year Basic Education (NYBE) programme were increasingly replacing the traditional academic elitism which had historically restricted access to secondary education (Ministry of Education, 2008, 2010). More importantly, the country was introducing twelve years of basic education (Rwanda Education Board, 2014).

Notwithstanding the increase in enrolment rates, it was argued that the expansion of primary education enrolment was prioritised over educational quality improvement. This observation was also reiterated by the Rwanda Education Board and the United Kingdom’s (UK) Department for International Development (DFID) (Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2012; Rwanda Education Board, 2014). Therefore, although the progress in providing UPE and EFA may be a yardstick for ascertaining the degree of educational transformation in the reconstruction development period, it has been argued that such a transformation is far from being complete as the post-2000 educational changes and practices were aimed at achieving quantitative rather than qualitative educational objectives.
Assertion two

Primary school leadership in the pre-genocide era resembled primary school leadership during the emergency reconstruction period. It has, however, witnessed important developments in the post-2000 period (i.e. during the reconstruction development phase).

Chapter Six revealed that the emergency reconstruction period (i.e. from 1994 until 1999) did not witness specific developments in relation to school leadership and management. Despite the fact that the post-genocide educational challenges affected school leadership in one way or another, there were no new policies and initiatives that aimed to improve primary school leadership in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. In this connection, during the emergency period all effort was channelled towards the provision of education more generally, with school leadership being neglected as an area of national concern. It follows therefore, that the characteristics of primary school leadership in the emergency reconstruction phase were similar to those already described in Chapter Five under the pre-genocide era.

Unlike in the emergency reconstruction phase, the post-2000 period saw important school leadership developments. These developments comprised the shift from a centralised school administration to a decentralised one (Ministry of Education, 2010), the introduction of school-based management (Ministry of Education, 2010; Republic of Rwanda, 2012; Paxton, 2012), the introduction of Imihigo (performance contracts) in school leadership and management (Ministry of Local Government, 2012; World Bank, 2011), and the implementation of the school management project managed by Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB) (VVOB, 2014b, 2014c).
The third research aim

Chapter Seven presented the findings related to the third aim of the study, namely, to develop an understanding of the current concerns school leaders face and of the strategies they adopt to deal with those concerns. The challenges identified by the school leaders were categorised in terms of five broad themes, these being, ‘conflict prevention’, ‘professionalism’, ‘financial/resourcing constraints’, ‘student attrition’, and ‘parental disengagement’. With regard to the strategies adopted to deal with these challenges, many of these were commonly pursued by school leaders. They will be discussed later in this section. Attention is now turned to a discussion of significant points arising from the findings relating to the third research question. Once again, this discussion is structured according to key assertions.

Assertion one

The legacies of war, genocide and globalisation have had (and are continuing to have) an impact on the work of primary school leaders in Rwanda.

One of the current school leadership challenges that can be attributed directly to the legacy of war and genocide relates to conflict prevention in schools. Some participants reported witnessing segregationist behaviours in children that possibly emanate from the ideas those children learn from their families, or from the community environment. These ideas were mostly related to ethnicity. Furthermore, school leaders revealed that incidents of genocide ideology have occurred in schools other than their own in the past few years (i.e. during the post-genocide era). The existence of such incidents in schools was also confirmed by Rwandan parliamentarians in their special report on the issue (BBC, 2008; King, 2014). A number of previous researchers such as Bush and Saltarelli (2000), Davies (2004), Smith (2009), and Smith and Vaux (2003), have reported similar findings by highlighting the contribution of schooling to violent conflict. These studies, however, have not indicated how conflict prevention is a challenge for school
leadership, particularly in schools attended by children whose parents belong to the categories of perpetrators, victims, or innocent bystanders as in the Rwandan case (Straus, 2004).

On a related matter, participants appeared concerned about their teachers’ lack of formal documentation about the Rwandan genocide and their lack of confidence while teaching about it. The dearth of textbooks about the Rwandan genocide renders the teaching of the topic difficult for teachers because Rwanda’s history is “problematic” and subject to “variegated interpretation” (Kiwuwa, 2012, p. 62). In addition, as the genocide in Rwanda was an ethnic/identity-based conflict (Bhavnani & Backer, 2000; Uvin, 1999), teaching about it requires making reference to ethnicity. However, the identification of Rwandans as members of ethnic groups (Hutu, Tutsi, Twa) was officially banned in the country as part of the promotion of unity and reconciliation (Fussel, 2001; Power, 2013) and reference to ethnicity may be equated with harbouring genocide ideology (Amnesty International, 2010). It was held by participants that this situation explains teachers’ lack of confidence when teaching about the genocide and its contentious history. In order to deal with this issue, school leaders reported, teachers tend to avoid using participative teaching methods whilst teaching genocide-related topics, a circumstance that indicates how teaching and school leadership are constrained by the legacy of conflict. While a growing number of studies has revealed the potential contribution of history education to reconciliation in post-new war societies (Ahonen, 2014; Diegoli, 2007; Paulson, 2011b; Pingel, 2008), this finding indicates that the meaningful exploration of identities/ethnicity that may lead to reconciliation remains a challenge for school leadership in post-genocide Rwanda.

Furthermore, current primary school leadership in Rwanda is also constrained by the implementation of the multitude of reforms brought about by globalisation and the legacy of conflict. Similar to Chapter Six, Chapter Seven revealed that post-genocide
education in Rwanda has been characterised by endemic education change. Participants reported that leading centrally-prescribed reform is problematic for them as changes are required to be implemented regardless of the school’s capacity and teachers’ readiness to embrace them. In this regard, the most cited example of problematic education reform was the prompt switch from French to English as the medium of instruction at all levels of education. This switch in the language of instruction can be understood against the influence of globalisation and the legacy of conflict on the post-new war education system in Rwanda. In this regard, the elevation of the English language in a country whose schooling was long influenced by the French speaking countries (i.e. France and Belgium) may be explained by the United Kingdom’s heavy influence, through aid, on the Rwandan education policy and planning in the post-genocide era (Schweisfurth, 2006). It can also be linked to the borrowing of education policy and practice from English speaking countries by powerful policy makers who grew up in exile in English speaking nations before the genocide of 1994 (Schweisfurth, 2006). This observation serves, perhaps, to ameliorate Novelli and Lopes Cardozo’s (2008) concern that insights in the emerging field of education and conflict are rarely linked to globalisation.

**Assertion two**

The lack of teachers’ and school leaders’ professionalism has undermined effective primary school leadership. This has been exacerbated by the inability of school leaders to provide professional support to their teachers in relevant areas.

Most participants expressed concerns relating to their teachers’ professionalism. They highlighted that the areas in which their teachers strongly need professional support include the implementation of learner-centred pedagogy, the acquisition of English language competency, and the ability to impart knowledge and skills to children with physical and intellectual disabilities. As a teacher-centred pedagogy was widely applied
during teachers’ and school leaders’ formal education period (Weinstein et al., 2007), school leaders have become perplexed about supporting teachers in the area of learner-centred pedagogy. In addition, most school leaders have grown up in the French dominated school system and are therefore unable to provide professional support and mentoring to teachers in order to raise teachers’ English language competency. The recent integration into regular classrooms of disabled children also requires school leaders to support teachers in the area of inclusive education, but some school leaders are not up to this task. In line with previous studies (Hallinger 2005; Jenkins, 2009; Southworth, 2002), the inability of school leaders to provide professional support to teachers hampers the development of leadership for learning in schools.

In addition to the lack of professional development opportunities in the above mentioned areas, teachers’ professionalism and effective school leadership are also undermined by teacher demotivation. As discussed in Chapter Seven, teacher demotivation may not be directly attributable to the legacy of the war and genocide since participants in this study did not express challenges connected with the lack of security and safety in schools, which usually lowers teachers’ morale and motivation during, and in the immediate aftermath of, war (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). Teachers’ lack of commitment and motivation are primarily attributable to the poor living and working conditions that characterise many developing countries. It can be argued, however, that this demotivation presents a barrier to effective school leadership. To put it another way, it is not an easy task for school leaders to improve student learning through their influence on teacher motivation and commitment. Teacher demotivation is, therefore, an obstacle to teacher professionalism and hampers effective school leadership in those schools participating in this study. This observation aligns with that of scholars who highlight that the lack of teacher motivation and commitment
holds back successful school leadership and school effectiveness (Hargreaves, 2003; Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008; Yong, 1999).

Another challenge to effective school leadership emanates from the insufficient professional development opportunities available to school leaders. Participants (school leaders) stated that they need professional learning opportunities in such areas as accountancy, school leadership and management, and in the English language. A strong need for in-service professional development for school leaders in Rwanda is not surprising since the preparation pre-service school leaders receive in university programmes does not equip them for their roles as school leaders (MINEDUC-VVOB, 2011). This lack of formal leadership and management preparation for prospective school leaders is also common in developing countries more generally (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Harber & Davies, 1997; Oplatka, 2004; Otunga et al., 2008).

**Assertion three**

Some challenges currently facing primary school leaders can be attributed more to Rwanda’s developing country status than to the legacies of the war and genocide that occurred in the early 1990s.

Notwithstanding the relationship that exists between some school leadership challenges and the legacy of conflict, the financial constraint that is faced by most schools featured in this study is more attributable to Rwanda’s developing country status than to the legacies of war and genocide. Although because of the civil war and genocide, the country’s economy declined in 1994, Rwanda has rehabilitated and stabilised its economy to the extent that its economic growth has far exceeded the pre-1994 levels (Malunda, 2012). This tale of growth may persuade one to rule out the legacy of conflict as being the immediate cause of poverty and financial constraints which schools and
households currently face. As in many other developing countries, such factors as a large trade deficit, a non-competitive industrial sector, dependency on external aid, an agrarian economy whereby agriculture is practised on a small, often fragmented, piece of land continue to define the low-socio economic development context of Rwanda (UNDP, 2013). Therefore, in keeping with other developing nations Rwanda’s lack of sufficient financial means and the poverty experienced by many households hamper the development of infrastructure in schools, the provision of educational resources, and effective teaching and school leadership (Bush, 2008; Otunga et al., 2008). Furthermore, as in other low-income countries which have recently attained high student enrolment rates, the financial constraints in Rwandan schools have been aggravated by the ever-increasing number of children joining primary and Nine Year Basic Education schools (Otunga et al., 2008; Rogers & Vegas, 2010).

The student attrition problem in primary schools and the lack of parental involvement in education of their children may also not be attributed directly to the legacy of the genocide which ended 20 years ago. It will be recalled from Chapter Five and Six that even before the war and genocide (i.e. prior to 1994), primary school leadership was constrained by student attrition. The causes of student drop out discussed in Chapter Seven (e.g. childhood pregnancies, family poverty, poor quality education) are common to the literature on school leadership in developing countries (Harber & Davies, 1997; Otunga et al., 2008). Similarly, the lack of parental engagement in the education of their children is not uncommon in developing countries other than Rwanda, and as a result this phenomenon may be better understood against the general context of poverty and a poor domestic revenue/economy characterising low income and developing countries, including Rwanda (Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997; Otunga et al., 2008).
Assertion four

A range of strategies has been adopted by school leaders to deal with the challenges encountered. The managerial style of leadership that is part of those strategies, however, is far from being effective to sort out the adaptive problems facing school leaders.

Aside of the fact that school leaders face the complex problems mentioned above, participants reported that they adopt a range of strategies to deal with the challenges they encounter. The school-based strategies adopted include conflict prevention endeavours comprising the establishment and support of students’ anti-violence clubs, field trips to genocide memorial sites, and the organisation of genocide commemoration events at the school level. There is also a peer-to-peer learning strategy that is used when dealing with teachers’ lack of proficiency in the language of instruction, coaching and mentoring newly appointed school leaders, and when they are attempting to improve classroom teaching. In addition, school leaders take on debts and seek financial contributions from students’ parents whenever they are faced with tough financial problems. Moreover, the collective expression of Ubuntu by the local community through the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms, and the technique of improvisation may further contribute to the reduction of financial constraints.

School leaders also adopt a range of strategies to tackle the problems pertaining to the lack of parental involvement in education of their children and to student attrition. The strategies adopted by school leaders to deal with parents’ lack of involvement in education vary from discussing the issue with parents to reporting them to local administrative bodies. The school-local administration collaboration is especially apparent when parents resist sending their children to school or when they are complicit in a student dropping out. Local administration authorities in Rwanda fine parents who jeopardise the government’s aim to increase access to education.
Another strategy adopted by school leaders to deal with the problems encountered is the reliance on managerial leadership to lead and manage their schools. It has been argued, however, that this style of leadership is ineffective to deal with the adaptive challenges faced by school leaders. As mentioned in Chapter Seven of this thesis, the problems facing school leaders are akin to those that Heifetz and Linsky (2002) portray as ‘adaptive problems’, or the kinds of problems for which we do not have ready answers and which take time to deal with (Fullan, 2005). The strategies and the leadership style adopted by school leaders while dealing with the problems encountered, as revealed by the present study, constitute an important contribution to understanding school leadership in post-new war societies (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013).

The Matter of Transferability

It should be recalled that the three main aims of the study were to develop an understanding of the historical background to primary school leadership, of the developments that have taken place in relation to primary school leadership, and of the current concerns primary school leaders face and the strategies they adopt to deal with those concerns. This research was designed to focus on discovery, insight and understanding, especially from the perspective of the school leaders, thus contributing to the knowledge base and practice of leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda. However, due to the “uniqueness of human events” and “particularistic” nature of qualitative research, the outcomes of this study are limited in the extent to which they can be considered transferable (Yin, 2011, p. 98). This refers to the “extent to which findings of one study can be transferred to other situations” (Merriam, 2009, p. 223).

Specifically regarding the third research question, the study participants were primary school leaders working in six schools located in two districts among thirty districts making up Rwanda. Nevertheless, while it could be suggested that the study’s
findings are limited because the study focuses only on two districts, it may be argued that the findings in the case of this research question are of some relevance to other primary schools/districts throughout the country. This is for three reasons. First, the education policies and practices that are prescribed by the Ministry of Education are required to be implemented by all primary schools in all districts composing the country. Secondly, with the exception of some households located in the capital city and in the major towns of Rwanda, the socio-economic situation of the population in Rwanda is similar across all rural districts. Thus, given that most primary schools in Rwanda are located in rural areas, it is very likely that they operate under similar conditions to the rural schools which participated in this study. Thirdly, the study focused on school leaders working in three administrative categories (i.e. the principal, deputy principal, and parents chairing school committees) who are under the aegis of district supervision and monitoring throughout the country.

Furthermore, the outcomes of the study could be of interest to other primary school leaders and providers of primary education internationally, even though some of them may not be operating under the same conditions as schools in Rwanda. That is, they could be transferable in the sense that readers can relate to them in order to understand their own and others’ situations (O’Donoghue, 2007). On this, Geertz (1973, pp. 6, 7) recommends that researchers provide a “thick description” of the context and phenomenon in question to enable readers to decide on the degree of transferability of the outcomes of the study to other situations. Burns (1994, p. 327) refers to this as “reader or user generalisability”. Specifically, school leaders and other providers of primary education in post-conflict and/or developing countries can relate to the insights generated by this study while reflecting upon their own situation. In addition, the understandings arising from the study reported in this thesis can be used as a valuable
framework for researchers wishing to engage in related studies in Rwanda, or in other post-conflict and/or developing nations.

**Implications of the Research for the Literature, for Further Research, and for Policy and Practice**

The outcomes of the study reported in this thesis may have implications in the substantive area of school leadership for primary schools in Rwanda. The findings related to research questions One and Two provide a framework that can be used to contextualise and understand current issues facing primary school leaders in the country. Such understanding, it is held, is critical for addressing adequately current school leadership problems. Attention is now turned to examining the implications of the study for the literature, for further research as well as for policy and practice arising from the outcomes of the third research question.

**Implications of the study for the literature**

There seems to be a strong belief among scholars that the literature on educational leadership has been dominated by the experiences and practices from developed and Western countries and it is very impoverished in its treatment of experiences from developing nations. Many scholars in the field, including Harber and Davies (1997), Otunga, Serem and Kindiki (2008), Oplatka (2004), and Moorosi and Bush (2011) agree with this observation and recommend more empirical research on educational leadership to be undertaken in developing countries in order to fill the gap existing in the extant literature. The study reported in this thesis has contributed to filling this gap by indicating how politics and societal culture inform leadership practice in Rwandan primary schools. For example, the language of instruction reform and other post-conflict education changes that are not politically neutral have tended to shape the practice of school leadership in the country.
As discussed in Chapter Three, the scant literature on school leadership and management in developing countries has focused more on the challenges that affect school leaders (Bush, 2008; Bush & Oduro, 2006; Harber & Davies, 1997; Otunga et al., 2008) than on the strategies those leaders adopt to deal with the problems they encounter. In contrast, the study reported here has revealed both the challenges and the strategies that school leaders use to deal with the concerns they face at the micro-level of the school. In doing so, the present study contributes to filling a void in the existing literature on school leadership and management in developing countries.

Furthermore, Chapter Three revealed that there is a dearth of research and associated literature on school leadership in post-new war societies. Many insights in the field of education and conflict have not been generated through rigorous research (Novelli & Lopez-Cardozo, 2008). Rather, they tend to be presented in ‘grey’ literature and are mainly generated from evaluations, or assessments of projects undertaken by international aid agencies operating in post-new war settings (Novelli & Lopez-Cardozo, 2008; Paulson, 2011; Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). In similar vein, school leadership within the broader area of post-war education is severely under-researched, which compounds the scarcity of literature in this field (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). The present study is additional and complementary to the literature on school leadership in a post-conflict context. Some of the study’s findings contrast, for example, with studies which tend to overstate the relationship between increasing access to education and the prevention of the resurgence of conflict in post-conflict societies (Novelli, 2010; Ostby & Urdal, 2010). In this connection, notwithstanding Rwanda’s impressive progress in expanding access to education, school leaders face challenges associated with such conflict related problems as the ideological reconstruction and the teaching of contested history. The present study, however, concurs with commentators who argue that education is connected to many causes of conflict including the identity and culture
of ethnic groups, the distribution of resources among those groups, and access to political power by those groups (Degu, 2005; Smith, 2005; Stewart, 2005).

**Implications of the study for further research**

The literature reviewed in Chapter Three of this thesis revealed that the area of educational leadership in post-new war contexts has been neglected as a subject of academic attention. Research into school leadership, specifically, is even more barren terrain (Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013). It is hoped, therefore, that this study will serve to promote further research into ‘school leadership’ in post-new war settings. It might be important, for example, to conduct longitudinal studies of the perspectives of school leaders on how they deal with the contextual complexity in which schools in post-new war societies are located. In doing so, it would be instructive to ascertain the extent to which there is variation in the strategies and leadership styles adopted by school leaders to deal with the problems encountered.

Further research could also adopt more of a critical theory perspective. The research paradigm that underpinned this study is interpretivism, which does not have the same ontological and epistemological assumptions as critical theory (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Although the notion of power, which is crucial in a critical theory-informed research (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013), was referred to while discussing some of the insights generated in this research, the present study did not fully investigate the political and ideological dimensions of the phenomenon in question (i.e. school leadership). Such an investigation may reveal how the challenges faced by primary school leaders can be related to power differentials. For example, a critically-informed inquiry could investigate whether the primary school system, including its leadership, replicates socio-economic and political inequalities and, if this is the case, it could suggest what may be done for the system to contribute to a more equitable society. This
is particularly relevant for a post-new war society like Rwanda in its quest to construct an egalitarian and cohesive society.

Another implication of the present study for further research relates to the need to conduct interviews with primary school teachers. Such interviews would focus on what school leaders in this study have reported about their teachers. In an assortment of comments, school leaders reported that their teachers are not committed to teaching or that they lack professionalism. This suggests that investigating teachers’ perspectives on the challenges facing schools may provide additional insights into primary education and school leadership in post-conflict Rwanda.

Furthermore, future research could investigate further expressions of the *Ubuntu* worldview relating to school leadership in Rwanda. It can also investigate the extent to which this view contributes to effective school leadership in other African contexts. *Ubuntu* is a term commonly used in East, Southern, and Central Africa to depict a higher level of humanness, which is demonstrated through such social values as survival, the spirit of solidarity, compassion, respect and dignity (Brubaker, 2013). In the present study, an act demonstrating *Ubuntu* was evident in the construction and rehabilitation of schools during the *umuganda*, a practice that is rooted in the Rwandan culture and which shows solidarity and generosity among the population. There is a growing interest in investigating *Ubuntu*-related leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa (Brubaker, 2013; Muchiri, 2011). Studying how *Ubuntu* contributes to effective leadership would reveal the influence of societal culture on leadership, thus contributing to the elucidation of the relationship between leadership and context (Muchiri, 2011; Owusu, Kalipeni, Awortwi & Kiiru, 2015).

Lastly, future researchers need to take into account the challenges of conducting fieldwork in post-conflict education environments. King (2009, p. 128) reported that she
experienced three methodological challenges while conducting interviews in post-genocide Rwanda. These challenges comprise “the nature of historical memory, the problems of selective telling (lies, public transcripts, and group narratives), and the difficulties of assembling a group of participants who are ethnically and socioeconomically representative of the country as a whole”. These problems compare with those identified by Cohen and Arieli (2011) who hold that the main challenges of conducting research in post- (conflict) environments include the identification of research participants, mapping individual perspectives on conflict, becoming familiar with the needs, interests and concerns of the study participants and of the society, and the assessment of the quality of the data gathered. They, Cohen and Arieli (2011), add that the existence of a higher level of distrust and suspicion in (post-) conflict settings makes undertaking field research in those environments extremely challenging. It can be argued, however, that the extent to which these challenges affect fieldwork depends on the purpose and nature of the research as well as on whether the researcher is an outsider or insider within the (post)-conflict setting. This being so, an outsider researcher is likely to experience many or all of the above-mentioned problems, whereas an insider researcher is supposedly familiar with the problems and how to go about them. The good news for both outsider and insider researchers is that the challenges and dilemmas associated with reseaching post-new war societies can help them to make sense of the data (King, 2009). On this, King (2009) advises researchers to make the most of the potential conflict-related problems rather than trying to avoid them.
Implications of the study for policy and practice

Implication for leadership preparation

This study has revealed that there is no specific and formal leadership preparation for school leaders (i.e. principals and deputy principals) in Rwanda. The Bachelor of Education (BEd) that is a requirement for becoming either a school principal or a deputy principal does not specifically prepare prospective school leaders to handle the contextual challenges which schools face. Rather, the BEd programmes offered in the College of Education within the University of Rwanda prepare students for teaching either Science, Arts and Languages, Social Studies, Entrepreneurship, or Social sciences and Humanities at the secondary school level (Kigali Institute of Education, 2011). It follows that BEd holders are not only considered specialists in a given subject, but are also qualified to teach the subject (Kigali Institute of Education, 2011). As has been repeatedly argued in this thesis teaching differs greatly from leading and managing schools, a point that resonates with one participant’s expression of the need to acquire school leadership and management skills: “I studied education, but not school leadership and management. So I faced leadership related challenges when I was appointed principal. Managing teachers, students, and parents was not easy for me” (I12.P.KM.U). It would be desirable, therefore, for the Ministry of Education to liaise with Higher Learning Institutions in Rwanda to examine ways of enhancing processes relating to the initial preparation of school leaders.

Furthermore, the necessity for the specific preparation of school leaders is justified by the increasing complexity of their role in the 21st century. While the knowledge of teaching and learning theories is critical to effective school leadership (Botha, 2004), it may be argued that school leaders in Rwanda also require a rigorous and specific preparation for the role. This concurs with Bush’s (2008) observation that as leading schools in the 21st century is becoming too demanding, specific preparation
for principalship is more than ever required. To back this observation, Bush (2008) points out that “the expansion of the role of school principal, the increasing complexity of school contexts, [the] recognition that preparation is a moral obligation, [and the] recognition that effective preparation and development make a difference” are the reasons justifying the need for rigorous school leadership preparation (p. 26). Therefore, even though possessing teaching skills can contribute to effective school leadership (Botha, 2004; The Wallace Foundation, 2013), school leaders need to acquire, through preparation, leadership and management skills in order to lead their schools effectively.

**Implications of the study for the ongoing professional development of school leaders**

It is fortunate that in the past few years primary school leaders have received some professional development under the VVOB-Ministry of Education school management project. Despite the provision of this professional development, however, primary school leaders who participated in this study highlighted the need for further professional learning opportunities to address perceived deficits in their knowledge and skills in such areas as leadership and management, financial management, and English language proficiency. This study has also revealed that school leaders need to develop skills in participative teaching methods in order to provide support to teachers in this area.

The professional learning offered in leadership and management could focus, among others, on adaptive approaches to leadership. As discussed in the previous chapter (i.e. Chapter Seven), the problems facing school leaders are akin to those that Heifetz and Linsky (2002) portray as ‘adaptive problems’, or the kinds of problems for which we do not have ready answers and which take time to deal with (Fullan, 2005). It has been argued in this thesis that adaptive leadership can be more effective than managerial leadership in dealing with the intractable problems facing Rwandan schools. That is, adaptive problems call for adaptive leadership for their resolution, and a strong
reliance on managerial leadership that tends to be the case for school leaders is unlikely to help in dealing with such problems effectively.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that school leaders face adaptive problems, this study suggests that there is very little evidence of adaptive leadership being exercised by those leaders. Adaptive leadership calls for the adoption and adaptation of more than one leadership style to deal with adaptive challenges. It does not relate to a style/theory of leadership on its own. Rather, it is the “practice of mobilising people to tackle tough challenges and thrive” (Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky, 2009, p. 14). On this, it would be desirable for school leaders in Rwanda to mobilise other members of the school’s staff, parents, and the local community to deal with the complex circumstances which schools face. This move requires them to learn about and implement adaptive change, which entails change in their beliefs, values, and ways of doing things (Heifetz et al., 2009; Linsky & Lawrence, 2011).

On related lines, an authentic process of professional learning would equip school leaders with knowledge and skills to deal with the adaptive challenges facing them. Authentic professional learning has been conceptualised as learning that takes place when professionals reflect on their lived experiences to improve practice (Webster-Wright, 2009). According to this conceptualisation, school leaders in Rwanda need to read the broad and local contexts within which their schools are located and learn from experience to solve the challenges they encounter (Webster-Wright, 2009). Indeed, the peer-to-peer learning strategy that was found to be adopted by some school leaders could be reinforced to improve the leadership of school leaders. In this regard, the use of such methods as narrative accounts and story telling that are drawn from school leaders’ lived experiences can enhance the personal learning of practising and aspiring leaders (Clarke, 2015). The use of these methods has also been advocated to allow school leaders to recognise and manage emotions effectively in their workplace.
It follows that, as emotional labour is increasingly involved in school leadership, especially as it relates to the challenges posed by post-genocide circumstances the use of narrative accounts and story telling methods would contribute to enabling school leaders to handle relationships effectively and display empathy (Karareba & Clarke, 2011).

Implications of the study for teacher professional development and for raising teachers’ motivation

Despite the fact that teachers are the most important resource in the education reconstruction process (Vongalis-Macrow, 2006), school leaders reported that their teachers seldom benefit from professional development opportunities which could help them perform their role more effectively. The study reported in this thesis indicated that over the past 15 years the Rwandan government has invested resources to increase enrolment capacity at the primary and Nine Year Basic Education (NYBE) school levels without directly addressing the professional needs of primary school teachers. As a result, primary school teachers continue to teach the way they were taught using colonially inherited teacher-centred pedagogy; they lack confidence to teach controversial and genocide-related topics; they teach in the language (i.e. English) in which they are not competent; they lack the ability to work with students with special needs; and most of them are not ICT literate. These deficits undermine effective teaching and school leadership and call for the development of a systematic professional development strategy for teachers to address them. Such a professional learning strategy is also desirable to implement the many education changes and polices which heavily affect teachers. The implementation of the teacher professional development strategy that is being advocated would require, among other things, that the teacher professional development that is centralised in the Rwanda Education Board and which only reaches a handful of teachers be decentralised to the level of the district or administrative sector.
Teacher demotivation should also be addressed. Given that teachers have a prominent and direct influence on students’ learning (Leithwood et al., 2008), the enhancement of teacher motivation is urgently needed. Ways of enhancing teacher motivation may include, for example, the raising of teacher salaries, providing non-financial incentives to teachers, and addressing equity issues. The latter may relate, for instance, to the fact that the government tends to accept that affluent parents in urban areas supplement local school budgets and teacher salaries, resulting in the widening of inequalities between rural and urban schools. As a result, primary school teachers working in the capital city earn up to three times as much as their colleagues in rural schools. To address these inequalities, it could be proposed that the capitation grant provided by the government to schools on a per-student basis be increased for schools receiving little or no parental contribution.

**Implication of the study for addressing student attrition, and parental disengagement**

This study has revealed that despite the fact that school fees were abolished in 2003/4 and that this contributed to higher enrolment rates at the primary school level, students from poorer households are still dropping out from schools. This issue is a concern for school leaders and needs to be addressed if Rwanda is to continue to be on track for meeting education-related Millennium Development targets. In addition to the local-based strategies for addressing student attrition, the government may reduce it by finding ways of assisting low income families to meet direct schooling costs that are a burden for such families. The same strategy would also be applied for dealing with the lack of parental involvement in the education of their children, when parental disengagement is caused by poverty. Where the ignorance of parents is a cause of parental apathy, ways of educating and sensitising parents about the purpose and importance of education need to be sought.
Conclusion

It is hoped that the outcomes of the study reported in this thesis will inform leadership preparation, development and support for primary school leaders in Rwanda. There is also a hope that the study’s outcomes may inform teacher preparation programmes and in-service professional development for primary school teachers in the country. Overall, the findings could serve as a useful reference to be used by practitioners, the district, the Rwanda Education Board, the Ministry of Education, the VVOB-school management programme, and others outside Rwanda to reflect on their experiences and come up with ways of improving policy and practice.

In order for these education stakeholders to enhance leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda, it could be argued that they need to be aware of the following current school leadership challenges:

- School leaders are required to implement centrally prescribed education changes regardless of the schools’ capacity to embrace those changes.
- The poverty of households and the illiteracy of parents hamper effective community and school leadership.
- As formal schooling has historically contributed to violent conflict, school leaders are currently challenged with ensuring that history does not repeat itself.
- There is a perceived lack of effective professional development programmes for school leaders and primary school teachers.

It must be highlighted, however, that overstating these challenges may hinder academic debate and can paint an overly negative picture of primary education and school leadership in Rwanda. What keeps primary schools running despite the challenges described are the strategies school leaders adopt to deal with the problems encountered. The Rwandan government has also adopted a number of strategies to deal with some of the challenges facing basic education. In this connection, while it is true
that school leaders encounter the complex problems highlighted, significant progress has been made in Rwanda in terms of primary school enrolment, increasing girls’ access to education, textbook delivery, the introduction of free Nine Year Basic Education (which is now evolving towards free Twelve Year Basic Education), and the creation of new teacher training colleges and colleges of education to produce enough qualified teachers for primary and lower secondary education. There is, however, much room for improving primary education generally and school leadership specifically in Rwanda.

Finally, the challenging circumstances within which schools operate in post-conflict Rwanda require the preparation and development of capable, responsible and resilient school leaders who are crucial for exercising adaptive leadership. This requirement also calls for further research into the realities of school leadership as understood and practised in post-conflict societies. Such research can help inform leadership development and support programmes in post-conflict contexts, which meet school leaders’ real, rather than imagined, needs (Harber & Dadey, 1993).
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APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Aide-memoire questions for interviews with principals, deputy principals, and parents

1. In your role as principal/deputy principal, what are the activities that characterise generally your every day and weekly schedule? What importance/significance do you attribute to these activities?

For parents: As a representative of parents in school, what activities/functions do you perform? What importance/significance do you attribute to these activities?

2. Please tell me as much as you can about the challenges/issues that you face as you perform the activities mentioned in question 1? How/Why are those issues challenging?

3. How do you handle/respond to the challenges/issues described above? Why do you handle those issues the way you do?

4. School leaders may face different influences while performing their work. What influences do you face while performing the activities mentioned above? And how do these influences affect/shape your work?

5. The context (socio-economic conditions, culture, environment,...) within which schools operate influence school effectiveness. What are the conditions and circumstances that influence effectiveness in your school? In what ways do these conditions affect your leadership?

6. What strategy does your school adopt to ensure that primary school graduates promote peace and reconciliation in the Rwandan society? Why has the school chosen this strategy?

7. If you were asked how primary school leadership in Rwanda can be improved what would you suggest and why?

8. Do you have anything you can add before we end our conversation?

Anything you think we haven’t spoken about?
Appendix 2: The Kinyarwanda version of the Aide-memoire used during interviews with principals, deputy principals, and parents


3. Ni gute mukemura/muhangana n’ibyo bibazo/imbogamizi? Kubera iki (impamvu) mubikemura gutyo?

4. Ni ibihe bintu bitandukanye (influences) bigenga imikorere y’akazi kawe. Ni gute bigenga imikorere yawe?

5. Imitere re y’aho ishuli ryubatse, umuco n’ubukire/ubukungu bw’ishuli, umuco n’ubukungu bw’abarirereramo cyangwa abarituriye bishobora kugira ingaruka ku musaruro w’ishuli (imyigire y’abanyeshuli,...). Ni mu buhe buryo ibi bigira ingaruka nziza cyangwa nbi ku buyobozi bwanyu?

6. Ni iki ishuli ryanyu rikora kugira ngo abarangije imyaka itandatu y’amashuli abanza bazaharanire amahoro n’ubwiyunge mu muryango nyarwanda? Kubera iki iri shuli ryahisemo gukora gutyo?


8. Hari icyo mwakongera kubyo twaganiriye mbere yuko dusoza ikiganiro? Hari icyo mukeka tutaganiriye hwo ngo tukivugeho?
Appendix 3: Aide-memoire questions for interviews with Education Officers (Sector and District Education Officers).

1. Education in Rwanda was affected by the four year civil war that culminated in genocide in 1994. What policies and practices has post-conflict Rwanda implemented in its efforts to resuscitate/develop primary education and, in particular, to shape primary school leadership?

2. What management bodies have been responsible for the implementation of these policies?

3. What have been the reasons behind, and influences on, the post-conflict policies and practices mentioned above?

4. How can you relate the policies and practices mentioned above to the pre-genocide situation?

5. If you were asked how primary school leadership in Rwanda can be improved what would you suggest and why?

6. Do you have anything you can add before we end our conversation? Anything you think we haven’t spoken about?
Appendix 4: The Kinyarwanda version of the aide-memoire used when interviewing Education Officers

Ikiganiro n’abashinzwe uburezi ku murenge n’akarere

1. Uburezi mu Rwanda bwashegeshwe na genocide n’intambara. Ni izihe ngamba n’ibikorwa byashyizweho na Leta y’u Rwanda nyuma ya genocide bigamije guteza imbere uburezi mu mashuli abanza? Ni izihe ngamba n’ibikorwa bigamije guteza imbere imiyoborere myiza y’amashuli abanza?

2. Ni izihe mpamvu (reasons and influences) zatumye izo ngamba n’ibikorwa byavuzwe haruguru bijyaho?

3. Ni izihe nzego zishyira mu bikorwa izo ngamba? Inzego zikorana gute mu gushyira mu bikorwa ingamba ziteza imbere uburezi?

4. Mubona hari isano iri hagati y’ imiyoborere y’amashuli abanza mbere ya genocide na nyuma yayo? Ni ibiki byakomeje kubah? Ibyahindutse?

5. Ni izihe ngamba zafatwa cyangwa ibikorwa byakwibandwaho kugira ngo ubuyobozi bw’amashuli abanza mu Rwanda butere imbere? Kubera iki izo ngamba n’ibikorwa ari ngombwa?

6. Hari icyo mwakongera kubyo twaganirije mbere yuko dusoza ikiganiro? Hari icyo mukeka tutaganiriyeho ngo tukivugeho?
Appendix 5: Participant Information Letter

Dear (name of participant)

RESEARCH PROJECT TITLE:

Leadership at the Primary School Level in Rwanda: A Study of the Historical Background, Recent Developments, and Current Concerns of School Leaders.

You are invited to take part in a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education degree research study named above. The research is led by Professor Simon Clarke of the Graduate School of Education, University of Western Australia, carried out by the study research student, Gilbert Karareba.

What the study is about:
The proposed study seeks to generate theory on leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda. It has three main aims:

1. To generate theory on the historical background to leadership at the primary school level in Rwanda from colonial times until 1994.

2. To generate theory on the developments that have taken place in relation to leadership at the primary school level from 1994 to the present.

3. To generate theory on the issues which are of current concern to primary school leaders and to investigate strategies adopted by them in order to deal with those issues.

The proposed study will make the following contributions to knowledge in the field of educational leadership in Rwanda in the following ways:

1. It can provide a broad historical background to primary school leadership in Rwanda;
2. It can develop an understanding of the nature of the context within which school leaders work in Rwanda and the strategies they use for dealing with the complexities of their work;
3. It can inform school leadership preparation, development and support in Rwanda;
4. It can provide a valuable framework for researchers wishing to engage in related studies on other levels within the education system of Rwanda and suggest developments for the future.

**Taking part is voluntary:** Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, or to withdraw any unprocessed data you have supplied, you are free to do so without prejudice. You are also free to withdraw at any time up until the stage at which data collection has been completed.

**What we will ask you to do:** The research will involve your participation in a semi-structured interview with the researcher. The interviews will be conducted at a location of your choice.

**Risks and benefits:** As all interview sessions will be conducted at a location of your choice, you will not be subjected to any foreseeable risk. The outcomes of the study, however, will provide insights which can be used to guide and refine educational leadership practices in Rwanda.

**Your answers will be confidential:** The records of this study will be kept strictly private. In any report we make public we *will not include* any information that will make it possible to identify you. Pseudonyms will be used throughout the report. Research records will be kept in a locked file, and only the researchers will have access to the records. (If you wish to have the recordings of your interview destroyed, we will do so after they have been transcribed). It is possible that the results will be published for academic purposes. The data will be kept securely for a period of seven years before being destroyed.

**If you have questions:** If you have any concerns, you can contact the Executive Officer of the Committee for Human Rights, Registrar’s Department, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6009 (Tel: +61 8 6488 6703 Email: kate.kirk@uwa.edu.au). All participants will be provided with a copy of this letter/information sheet and consent form for their personal records.

Yours sincerely
Appendix 6: Participant Consent Form

Project Title: Leadership at the Primary School Level in Rwanda: A Study of the Historical Background, Recent Developments, and Current Concerns of School Leaders.

I ______ (name of participant) _______ have read the information provided and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity and I consent to having the audio interviews recorded.

I understand that all information provided is treated as strictly confidential and will not be released by the investigator. The only exception to this principle of confidentiality is if a court subpoenas documentation. I have been advised as to what data are being collected, what the purpose is, and what will be done with the data upon completion of the research.

I agree that the research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name or other identifying information is not used.

Participant’s signature:--------------------------- Date---------------------------

Contact Telephone:…………………………

Email Contact:………………………………