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Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:

A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District

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A research report submitted to the School of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education by course work and research report.

Johannesburg, September 2011

Declaration

I declare that: *"***Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda***: a case study of two catholic secondary schools in Nyarugenge District"* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated by means of complete references. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education by Course work and Research Report at the University of the Witwatersrand.



21st September 2011

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(Signature) (Date)

Acknowledgements

This report is a product of many people's support to who I am most grateful.

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Francine De Clercq, who supervised this report, for being tough, patient and tolerant with some inconveniences, and particularly with her editing and conceptualisation. Without her guidance, this work would not have been successfully completed.

My thanks also extend to the lecturers who taught and brought me about achieving this difficult task. And a special word of thanks goes to my colleagues and classmates for their support, assistance and encouragement to this report.

I also want to thank my family for the sacrifices they made during the previous years of studying towards this degree.

My thanks are also addressed to the school communities in which the study took place, and to the Director of SNEC, the Nyarugenge District Education Officer, and the Regional Inspector of Education in Kigali City for their matchless valuable contributions they made to this study.

Dedication

This report is dedicated to Françoise MUKAKALISA, my wife, Alix KIREZI and Eléonore NIYITEGEKA, my daughters, for their encouragements and sacrifices they made to ensure that this report was completed.

Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore and understand the kind of partnership that exists at secondary school level between government, Catholic Church, school administration and parents. And the way these parties perceive and assume their respective duties and responsibilities, and the relationships with one another in the new school decentralised dispensation. By 2000, Rwanda restructured the education system by initiating school decentralisation reforms and devolving more powers and responsibilities to districts, schools and community.

The literature on education decentralization, state and non-government provider partnerships in education theories is reviewed to identify the main issues to investigate. This study relies on taped in-depth interviews with school committees' members, education officers as well as documents analysis. All this enabled the researcher to answer four research sub-questions: (1) how do school committees perceive and exercise their powers and responsibilities in contributing to school development?; (2) how do school committees and the school administration work together in contributing to school development?; (3) how do Catholic Church authorities contribute to the managerial and/or professional issues and school needs? and; (4) how do the government and the Catholic Church collaborate for school development?

The study discovered that, despite the reluctance of school committees to be involved in school financial management, they were eager to be involved in schools governance and school development. They undertook activities aimed at raising school funds, volunteering in school activities requesting their expertise, contributing to some school decision making and attending successfully school meetings. Moreover, results have shown that the school committees and the school community (school principals, teachers and staff) manage to work together to face the challenges of lack of capacity. Even though the Catholic Church financial support to schools has been reduced, the Catholic Church contributes via its teaching to the mobilization of the community for school development, for charitable actions, and collecting funds from aid agencies.

The study recommends that the government and Catholic Church continue to collaborate to build the governance capacity of the school committees, that school principals and teachers manage to create a welcoming school environment, that the department establish a system

support that provides information about schools' academic and financial performance relative to other schools, closing the gap in the existing regulations and guidelines on the respective power and responsibilities pertaining to each of stakeholders in partnership for school development. The study recommends further studies on the implementation of school decentralization in remote rural schools; the impact of the socio-economic status of school committee members on their commitment to their children's school development; the factors underlying teacher's attitude towards their involvement in financial and administrative decision making; and a comparative research of similar non catholic and Catholic schools and how they implement differently school decentralization.

Key words:

Education decentralization, Non-government provider, Private school, Subsidised school, School decentralization, School committee, School administration, Leadership and management

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADEA:	Association pour le Developpement de l'Education en Afrique
CPR:	Conseil Protestant du Rwanda
CPRE:	Consortium for Policy Research in Education
CRS:	Catholic Relief Services
DEO:	District Education Officer
FERES:	Fonds d'Entraide pour la Réfection des Ecoles Secondaires
GoR:	Government of Rwanda
IBE:	International Bureau of Education
MIFOTRA:	Ministry of Public Service, Skills Development, and Labour
MINALOC:	Ministry of Local Government, Social Affairs and Good Governance
MINECOFIN:	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINEDUC:	Ministry of Education
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organizations
RIE:	Regional Inspector of Education
SBM:	School-Based Management
SNEC:	Secretariat National de l'Enseignement Catholic
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA:	United State of America
VVOB:	Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Technische Bijstand

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provides the background to the Rwandan education system after the dire consequences of the 1994 genocide. Particular attention is given to the government's efforts, in partnership with its partners mostly the churches, to rehabilitate the education system. Then the features of the administrative and political school decentralization in Rwanda which aims at making the education system more efficient are provided. Lastly, this chapter presents a statement of the problem, the aims and objectives of the study, the research questions as well as the rationale behind these questions.

1.1. Background

Between 1990 and 1994, Rwanda went through a period of great political instability which culminated in the genocide between April and July 1994. These atrocities have had serious consequences on the national life, and in particular, on the educational system where much of the infrastructure, including scientific and teaching equipment was destroyed. In addition, the number of qualified teachers decreased during this period as many teachers went into exile.

Education was deliberately to play a prominent role in the social, economic and psychological rebuilding of the country but it was faced with serious problems of access and quality at the various levels of the education system. Immediately after the genocide (September 1994), primary schools opened even though they were in a precarious state. Many schools functioned in borrowed buildings such as churches and private houses, while others in plastic tents, even some under the trees. In 2001/2002, 17,2% of schools were still in need of reconstruction (Obura, 2003: 125). All these factors influenced significantly the quality of education that was offered.

At the secondary school level, the situation was even worse. On the eve of genocide (academic year 1993/1994), the number of students was estimated at 36,815 in 112 schools. After the genocide in the academic year 1994/1995, these figures dropped to 20,533 students in 85 schools. Prior to the 1994 genocide, the number of qualified teachers at the secondary level was always low at 58%, but the genocide worsened the situation, with only 33.3% of qualified teachers in 1994/1995. By 1999/2000, the number of qualified rose back to 42.9% and by 2002/2003, it reached 52.1% or still a lower percentage than before the genocide (GoR, 2003:11, UNESCO-IBE, 2006: 23).

To restore the situation, Rwanda looked for different kinds of partnership with non-state providers, such as churches. The Catholic Church, through its affiliated NGOs like Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and CARITAS-RWANDA assisted government to re-start education in financing, constructing and rehabilitating schools, and providing food for teachers since there were no salaries (Obura, 2003: 109).

This partnership between government and churches in education was not a new one. It existed before the 1994 genocide. Churches were the pioneers in formal education in Rwanda. The first schools were founded by the Catholic "*Peres Blancs*" in early 1900s and the Protestant church followed. The colonial administration decided to leave formal education to churches, keeping control over policy, curriculum, coordination and inspection (Obura, 2003:106). Under the convention, known as "the Jonghe convention", between the Belgian Crown and the Catholic Church, the number of catholic schools and private-subsidized schools (*Ecoles Libres subsidiées*) increased significantly. By 1999-2000, the Catholic Church, through the "*Secrétariat National de l'Enseignement Catholique"* (SNEC) managed 25% of the secondary schools, while the "*Conseil Protestant du Rwanda"* (CPR) managed another 20%. Thus, a total of 44% of secondary schools were managed by churches while another 40% were managed privately or by other organizations. This means that the government was only in charge of less than 20% of secondary schools. By 2007, the balance changed with 36.8% (256 schools) being public secondary schools, 28.08% (195 schools private-subsidized schools) and 35.1% (244 schools) private schools (MINEDUC, 2008).

The Catholic Church always played a leading role among non-governmental providers of schooling although it had its own interests and agendas. Catholic schools, which are cultural agents of the Church, were tasked with disseminating the Catholicism to the next generation, at the same time conforming to government and the community accountability (Belmonte, 2006: 2). Thus, the Catholic school leaders have the obligation to establish a close and strong relationship with the government, parents/community for the sake of the integral education of the youth.

However, since 1985, the relationship between the government and the Catholic Church was weakened because of the lack of government respect for, and the slow implementation of the 1985 Education Act and the 1987 protocol, regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the government and the churches over education. Amongst the Catholic Church's allegations against the government was the appropriation by the state of multiple

management roles which, according to the 1985 agreement and the 1987 protocol, were to be shared. These management roles are the approval, the recruitment and transfer of teacher and headteachers. The Catholic Church was also complaining about the government's failure to involve churches in curriculum development. The poor communication, the lack of consultation, information-sharing in relation to administrative issues made the collaboration difficult on both sides (Obura 2004: 107-109). However, the government made a reconciliatory gesture in 1993 but the issues were still unresolved by 1994.

1.2 Education Decentralisation in Rwanda

Like other developing countries, Rwanda suffers from the poor social-economic conditions, which were worsened by the 1994 genocide. This stirred up a need for rehabilitating education system and contributed to moving the country forward. Decentralization was partly seen as a strategy to speed up the resolutions of these problems caused by the genocide. But there were also pressures from global reforms to modernise and transform the education system into a more efficient and better performing system. Education decentralisation was one of the global reforms pushed by international agencies to promote greater educational efficiency and quality. By 2000, Rwanda decided to embark on administrative and education decentralisation reforms and restructured the education system by devolving more powers and responsibilities to districts and schools.

The Rwandan decentralization process was to be implemented in three successive phases, each having its specific objectives. The first phase (2000-2005) was to set up a strong basis for the subsequent phases with the following objectives:

- to establish democratic and community development structures and to facilitate the functioning of these structures;
- to set a number of legal, institutional frameworks and to undertake policy reforms, especially in promoting democratic elections;
- to undertake extensive sensitisation of the population on the legal and administrative aspects of decentralized governance.

The second and current phase (2006-2010) aims to consolidate and deepen the decentralization process by enhancing effectiveness in service delivery to communities by increasing capacities at levels of administration close to communities (Villages, Cells and Sectors), promoting integrated local economic development and fostering community

participation at the Village level in the planning and management of local affairs. The third phase (2011-2015) is to improve and sustain the achievements of the first two phases (MINALOC, 2007).

By 31st December 2005, the administrative entities of the Republic of Rwanda were gazetted as the Law No 29/2005 which marked the start of the second phase of decentralisation. It provided the Rwandan administration with six different and complementary levels of authority: the Central Government, the Province, the District, the Sector, the Cell and the Village. Following this administrative reform, Rwanda is divided into four (4) provinces and the Kigali City, thirty (30) districts, four hundred and eighteen (418) sectors, and nine thousands one hundred sixty-five (9,165) cells.

With respect to governance structures, each entity that is in direct liaison with the population by the services they deliver has political and administrative structures, except the provinces and the Kigali city which have the role of coordination of district's development planning. The district political structure comprises two separate organs, the District Council and the Executive Committee. The District Council is the supreme legislative organ through which the people can exercise its decision-making, planning and control power to the development of the district. The District Executive Committee, which is elected from the District Council and chaired by the mayor of the district, is a day-to-day contact point between the people and the district council in matters pertaining to service delivery and development. The District Executive Secretariat is the administrative structure which comprises departmental representatives with staff appointed by the central government but managed by the District Executive Secretary (Government of Rwanda, 2006; MINALOC, 2007).

Similarly, at the district level, the Sector Council is the political structure for policy-making decisions for the sector. The functions of the Sector Council include approval of Sector plans and ensuring the follow-up of their implementation. The Sector Council elects the Sector Council Bureau through which it performs its political responsibilities, but the daily administrative responsibilities and the direct service delivery to the population are performed by the Sector Executive Secretariat comprising of the Sector Executive Secretary and other staff appointed and managed by the District. The Sector Executive Secretary reports to the District Mayor, but his/her report has to be approved by the Sector Council before it is sent.

Every member of staff at Sector level submits his/her report to the person with similar responsibilities at District level (Government of Rwanda, 2006).

In accordance with the decentralization reform, the distribution of roles and responsibilities from the national to the lowest level is based on capacities at each level. At the national level, the roles and responsibilities consist of policy formulation, regulation, monitoring and evaluation, and support to those entities in charge of policy implementation (district and sector). This support consists mainly in financing and capacity building. The Provinces, as well as the Kigali City, are not the entities aimed to deliver any direct services to the population, but they play the role of district coordination in line with national policies and programs. They [Provinces/Kigali City] further, coordinate the governance issues within their boundaries and supervise the implementation of national policies at district level through monitoring and evaluation (MINALOC, 2007: 8).

The District is responsible for local economic development planning and coordination of delivery of public services which is done at Sector level. To perform its responsibilities, the fiscal and financial decentralization allows the District to collect locally its own revenues from taxation (property tax, rental income and trade licenses), user charges and other forms of locally raised revenues. The District further receives increasing amounts of financial resources, which are transferred as grants from the centre, and is provided with technically competent human resource transferred from the ministries.

The Sector is intended to be the service provider to the population and to coordinate the community participatory development, as well as collecting data and information needed by the district and other higher levels of development planning. However, it has not much managerial autonomy and capacities to perform its responsibilities as it depends largely on the district. The Cell and the Village are responsible for the needs assessment and prioritisation, mobilising the community, building collaboration and solidarity among community members (MINALOC, 2007: 8-9).

With regard to education decentralization, the educational roles and responsibilities at the national level fall under the governance of four ministries, each of them having specific responsibilities and involvement in education provision and development. Firstly, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), with its affiliated semi-autonomous bodies, has the

major responsibilities of managing the education system. It sets policies, norms and standards for the education sector; oversees the formal system at pre-primary, primary, secondary, technical and vocational training, teacher training, tertiary and adult literacy; and undertakes the lead in planning, monitoring and evaluation at the national level. Secondly, the Ministry of Local Government, Social Affairs and Good Governance (MINALOC) oversees the delivery of all public services, including education. It administers community development funds and monitors performance contracts at decentralized levels. Thirdly, the Ministry of Public Service, Skills Development, and Labour (MIFOTRA) sets and administers salary levels and conditions of service for teachers. Fourthly, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) sets out the broad policy and planning frameworks as well as oversees financial planning (MINEDUC, 2008).

The District is responsible for the recruitment, transfer and monitoring of teachers and directors of public schools; approval of the establishment of schools and to take decisions against them in case of poor performance; assessing training of teachers and other members of staff in the education sector. The district also has the obligation to fund, administer and oversee the schools maintenance, school construction and equipping them; to prepare and allocate the education budget (Government of Rwanda, 2006; MINEDUC, 2008).

The District Education services fall under the Directorate of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and are handled by only one district education official. The district education officer is in charge of many important functions: education service delivery responsibilities, implementation of policy and strategic plans, preparation of education strategic plan for the district and education budget, monitoring and evaluation of all district educational activities, recruitment and management of teachers and the preparation of reports to the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and the Ministry of Public Service, Skills Development, and Labour (MIFOTRA), monitoring of school financial management and use of capitation grant[1] by schools (MINALOC, 2007; MINEDUC, 2008). In reality, this official is overloaded, with poor access to capacities and resources and yet in charge of all these education responsibilities and tasks.

[1] **Capitation grant**: Amount of money (in terms of subsidies) allocated by the central government to the school whose calculation is based on the number of learners attending the school.

The Presidential Order n° 57/01 of 15/10/2006 makes the Sector a direct service provider to the population and collection of data and information needed by higher levels for development planning. However, this is more an intention than a reality as the sector does not play much of a role in educational service delivery. The sector does not have much managerial autonomy nor the capacity and resources to perform effectively its educational responsibilities as a service delivery focal point. Because of the shortage of human resources and capacities, education services at Sector level fall under the desk of social affairs which deals with education and health. Given the excessive workload placed on one official, education responsibilities are restricted to collecting data and information.

The Cell and the Village all together are responsible for educational needs assessment and prioritisation, mobilising community and building collaboration and solidarity among community members in school construction and maintenance through community works, funding the education funds, identifying children who are in the school age and sensitizing parents to send them to school, and advise them those who are attending or those who dropped out of school (MINALOC, 2007; MINEDUC, 2008: 5-7).

Concerning educational decision-making at district, sector and school levels, operational educational decisions are made by education councils and school general assembly. The district and sector education councils comprise elected members (executive committees of these levels and the parents' representatives), principals and education officials of these respective levels, and are headed respectively by the district mayor and the executive secretary of the sector. The District and Sector education officials submit a quarterly report (overview) to the education councils on their operational decisions. The District education officials' daily activities are reported to the mayor of the district through the district executive secretary, who in turn reports to the ministry of education. The sector education activities are reported to the Directorate of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, with a copy to the executive secretary (Government of Rwanda, 2006; MINEDUC, 2008).

At school level, education decentralisation is aimed at strengthening the school management by allocating to schools more managerial decision-making responsibilities, as well as access to funds, which are transferred directly from the district and/or the national level in the form of capitation grants (whose calculation is done according to the number of children attending individual schools). The school general assembly is the supreme organ running the school. It

is made up of parents of children attending the school, school principal, teachers, school staff, two students' representatives, any other person approved by the school general assembly. The school general assembly monitors the implementation of its decisions through its elected school committee comprising the president and the vice-president (both elected from parents), the representative of the association/church which founded the school, school principal (automatically secretary), two teachers elected by their colleagues, two students elected by their colleagues. The school administration in collaboration with the school committee implements decisions made by the school general assembly and report quarterly to it [School General Assembly]. However, given that some professional issues require educational expertise, and as the school committee is not always available, the day-to-day life of the school is managed by the school principal, teachers, and school support staff and report to the school committee and district education official (MINALOC, 2007; MINEDUC, 2008).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The Organic Law n° 20/2003 of 03/08/2003 organising education (article 33) involves parents in building schools, repairing and extending them, providing equipment and materials and other necessary assets that make the school run effectively. Moreover, the law n° 29/2003 of 30/08/2003 (19th and 20th article), which establishes the organisation and functioning of nursery, primary and secondary schools, stipulates that the school general assembly is the organ supplementing the education authorities and is granted with the power and responsibilities to give views and recommendations regarding the general development of the school; to analyse and approve school regulations regarding education and resources management; to analyse and approve the school budget; to analyse, approve, and prioritise the school plan of action and monitor its implementation; to take decisions over the misconduct of teachers and students; to recruit and pay contractual teachers, managing permanent teachers' allowances, within the rates and instructions as fixed by the national level (Government of Rwanda, 2003; MINEDUC, 2008). These responsibilities are very critical for the functioning of schools. In this respect, one may question the degree of commitment of individual school general assembly/school committee to the educational matters and their capacity to accommodate and implement these responsibilities granted to them.

In pursuing school decentralisation, the Rwandan government instituted a new form of partnership with the Catholic Church and other similar organizations. According to the article 34 of the organic law n° 20/2003 of 03/08/2003:

> in government-subsidized schools, the associations that built these schools have the obligation of building, repairing, extending and equipping them. Government alone enrols students, appoints teachers and other supporting staff governed by the labour code and pays them. School administration personnel are appointed according to mutual consent between government and founding associations in accordance with the laws and agreements governing those schools. (Government of Rwanda, 2003: 5)

This article shows the responsibilities pertaining to two parties in education partnership, the government and the churches. The problem is how the government and the Catholic Church understand and translate these responsibilities into strategies and practices. The churches have to adapt their interventions and support to schools within the decentralized school system and in the area of school leadership and management. Drawing from all previous concerns, it is imperative to first have an understanding of how the Catholic Church, the school administration and the community perceives, interprets and uses their powers to perform their duties.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to explore and understand the kind of partnership existing at secondary school level between government, Catholic Church, school management and parents as well as the way these parties perceive and assume their respective duties and responsibilities and the relationship with one another in the new school decentralised dispensation.

1.5 Research Questions

More specifically, this study asks the following questions:

- How do the school committees perceive and exercise their powers and responsibilities in contributing to school development?
- How do the school committees and the school administration work together in contributing to school development?
- How do the Catholic Church authorities contribute to the managerial and/or professional issues and school needs?
- How do the government and the Catholic Church collaborate in contributing to school development?

1.6 Rationale

Since the policy of decentralisation of powers in the public service and to schools has been implemented in 2000, there have been only a few studies done on how school administration, school committees, and different stakeholders, like churches and the community, use their newly acquired powers for school development. Many of the stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, church authority, community...) have little experience in exercising these new powers and responsibilities and it is imperative to research the contribution of the main stakeholders and their effectiveness and impact so far.

This study is seen as important for the following reasons. Firstly, this area of school decentralisation and its impact on school leadership has not been sufficiently examined and researched and this study hopes to close this knowledge gap in Rwanda. Second, school decentralisation is an international trend and yet this reform takes different meanings and has different challenges, depending on the national and local context.

The lessons and recommendations from this study could contribute to the knowledge needed for the improvement of school decentralisation and school leadership and management in secondary schools. In particular, it will provide information and advice on how members of school communities in secondary schools should understand their role and responsibilities and perform effectively their newly granted powers to assist the school leadership in school development.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This section will review the literature on the partnerships in education between governments and various non-governmental providers, more specifically the Catholic Church, parents, and the community. It attempts to probe what the international literature says about community and church involvement in schools and their contribution to school development. This review of literature will also cover the impact of various models and principles of decentralization of decision-making to schools and especially its impact on school leadership and management.

2.1 Partnership between Government and Non-Government Providers

There is no special formula of distribution of responsibilities among different parties in partnership for education. Each country adopts its particular way in which to channel this partnership considering the context in which the education system is evolving. However, to build an effective education system, some responsibilities are usually specific to government, while others can be performed by non-government providers (Lewin & Sayed (2005: xiii). Therefore, this section focuses on the respective roles and responsibilities of government and non-government providers in education. It also identifies the factors likely to hamper the effective collaboration between two partners in education.

2.1.1 Role of Government

Lewin & Sayed (2005: xiv-xv) argue that, even though government is not the sole provider of education, it has the ultimate responsibility to ensure equitable opportunity of access to education for all children, and that the education offered to them is of acceptable quality.

In general, governments' responsibilities consist mainly of the following: setting goals, setting standards of examinations, curriculum development, regulations and incentives on education provision, generating and allocating resource, targeting resources to meet special needs, to assess students' achievement and monitor the state of the system, construction and maintenance and equipment (Lewin & Sayed, 2005: xiv-xv; Fiske, 1996:11). Government has the task of establishing the policy framework for tapping the full potential of any partnership with private providers, parents and community.

In Rwanda, the government establishes procedures, regulations, licensing and strengthening the capacity of public sector agencies that are responsible for regulating, monitoring the

private partners. It is also responsible for making available the information on cost and performance of schools, strengthen the capacity of private providers to mobilize and manage resource and deliver instruction of acceptable quality by facilitating access to capital (MINEDUC, 2005).

2.1.2. Role of Non-government Providers

Kitaev (1999:43 cited in Lewin & Sayed, 2005: 11, 19) defines non-government providers of educational services as:

> all formal schools that are not public, and may be founded, owned, managed and financed by actors other than the State, even in case when the State provides most of the funding and has considerable control over these schools' teachers, curriculum, and accreditation.

Non-government providers may include NGOs, religious organisations and community based organisations, as well as the more conventional profit-seeking private sector.

Relying on Kitaev's definition, one may question on the boundaries between government and non-government providers of educational services. In practice, the clear distinction between government and non-government providers is extremely rare. Rather, a continuum of government/non-government control and financing is more evident (James, 1991 cited in Lewin & Sayed, 2005:18). In some countries, private schools receive state subsidies, in others; the management of public schools is ceded to private institutions under a contract. Thus, to determine the boundaries between government and non-government providers depends on the country's specificity and context. Each country has its particularities (social, economic, political, and ideological) which determine the type of provision of educational services would suit them best.

However, the lack of clarity about the respective roles of government and non-government providers still remain an issue in many countries' education legislation. In Lesotho, the 1995 Education Act defines private schools as 'all schools owned by individuals, groups of individuals or organizations and not funded by the government'. In this respect, all primary schools, founded and owned by the church, are classified as private since the Church has traditionally been seen as the provider of education, even though the government recruits and pays the teachers in these schools (Rose, 2002:2). In Rwanda, there are no clear boundaries between the respective responsibilities of government and non-government educational providers in the private-subsidized schools as it appears in the regulation. First, there are

schools built by government but on a property of private person or an association. Secondly, there are schools built by government with the help of an association but on the latter's property, or schools built by an association on the plot legally granted to it through agreements, but the government contributes to its rehabilitation, extension and/or equipment, except if the government gave it as a gift in writing (organic law n° 20/2003 of 03/08/2003 organising education, art. 28).

The lack of clarity about the respective roles of the government and non-government can result in problems and tensions. In Rwanda, ever since the 1965 protocol between the government and the Catholic Church, which nationalized many primary and secondary church schools, there have been misunderstandings over the ownership of the land, school building and school property in these schools originally founded by churches (Obura, 2003:107). Furthermore, this lack of clarity about the respective roles of the Rwandan government and non-government providers threatens effective collaboration between them and has led different non-government educational providers to create associations to negotiate with the government to take part in the national educational policy dialogue as well as flexibility or facilitation in registration and regulation. In some countries, the government is fearful of losing control over the education system because it is threatened once non-government providers gain free rein in education (Rose, 2006).

Delay et al. (2004) and Chowdhury et al. (2004 cited in Rose, 2006: 222) state the case where non-government providers, in their attempts to put pressure on the government, their relationship became counter-productive. In South Africa, the Alliance of Black Independent Schools, an association representing low budget private schools in inner city areas and informal settlements in Gauteng Province, and the Muslim Schools' Association, representing the vast majority of Muslim schools in South Africa, felt that, because they had been challenging the state on a number of policy and implementation issues, their members had been harassed by state officials. The harassment took the form of frequent visits to schools considered troublesome and deliberate delays and underpayment of subsidies, without which these schools could not function. As a result, these two organisations have largely abandoned their advocacy role. In Bangladesh, because the Non-Government Primary Teachers' Association pushed for the same conditions of service for Non-Government and government teachers, the government decided not to register additional non-government schools for fear of giving them even greater influence.

Despite the tension between governments and non-government educational providers, the latter's involvement in delivering education affects the provision and financing of secondary education. In 2004/2005, private secondary schools enrolled an average of 16.3% of students across the world; in North America/Western Europe 10%, in Arab states 7%, in south and west Asia 18%, in Latin America/Caribbean 22%, and in Sub-Saharan Africa 12% (UIS, 2007 cited by Verspoor, 2008: 8). These figures presented above may be lower compared to the real ones, because in some countries like Malawi and Kenya, some private schools work illegally and, therefore, do not report their statistics (Verspoor, 2008: 17). There are three reasons that induce schools to work illegally. First, the registration procedures are complex. In Rwanda and Kenya for example, the registration of schools involves multiple and complex steps. Second, some school owners do not register to shirk taxation. Third, high costs related to conform to formal standards of provision required by inspection raise fees and make these schools unaffordable for the clientele (Verspoor, 2008: 17).

The way in which the private sector intervenes in financing secondary education varies largely among countries. In the Netherlands and Belgium, 75% of schools are privately operated (Verspoor, 2008: 7). In Mauritius, about 60% of secondary schools are private but publicly financed. In Sub-Saharan Africa, although the trend differs from one country to another, the government provisions of education tend to overlap sometimes with non-government provisions. In Burundi, 80% of the schools are private or community-led schools and half of those schools receive public subsidies; in Mauritania, 90% of students are enrolled in government schools, while in the Democratic Republic of Congo, parents are estimated to pay more than 90% of the cost of secondary schools (Verspoor, 2008:7). In Rwanda, in particular, by 2007, 35.1% of secondary schools were privately operated, another 28.08% operated under partnership between government and non-government providers mainly faith-based organizations and 36.8% were operating publicly (MINEDUC, 2008).

2.2 Arguments about Privatization and Decentralization in Education

By the 1990s, after the EFA declaration, the expansion of basic education and its extension to lower secondary education demanded much greater financing, better managing and governing of the education system. Because of limited state funds due to fiscal austerity measures, greater responsibility for education has been shifted or decentralised to districts, schools and private providers (privatization) in the hope of improving local ownership and accountability, and managerial and financial efficiency (Gershberg, 2003: 1; Dyer & Rose, 2005: 154,106).

Another reason for the role of private sector in education provision should be sought in the international trends to increase the liberalism in education sector (Murphy, 1998: 6; Rose, 2005: 153).

Privatization and decentralization have common, if not close links. Decentralization, as defined by McGinn and Welsh (1999 cited by Rose, 2005: 154) is the shift in the location of those who govern, the transfer of authority from those in one location or level of educational organization (central government) to those in another level (lower entities: provincial or regional, the district and the community or schools level). Privatization, referred to by Rondinelli et al. (1989 cited in Rose, 2005: 154), is a form of decentralization, a shift of power away from the central state which deliberately hands over control to non-government or private bodies, whether it is about the management of material goods, the prerogatives or power of making decisions for the central government by lower entities or institutions.

2.2.1 Privatization in Education

Privatization is assumed to increase access to better quality of provision and better service delivery because competition should lead to cost-effectiveness and efficiency (Rose, 2005: 156). The other underlying belief is that privatization would improve quality because private schools have to attract parents/students by maintaining credibility and quality education and be accountable for what they produce. Yet, UNESCO (2003 cited in Rose 2005: 156) states that there is little evidence to demonstrate that privatization translates into educational benefits in terms of student learning because the process is not well managed within the education sector, and learning outcomes are not an explicit focus of the reforms.

Furthermore, privatization can be seen as an ideological response which may serve other interests which are not necessarily about education quality and equity for all. As most developing countries depend on foreign aid, they tend to accept the injunctions of donors and international agencies that push privatization before they release aids and loans (Davies, Harber, & Dzimadzi 2003: 140). Rose (2005: 158) cites Malawi as a country pushed by international agencies to adopt privatization, lest they should withdraw their aid, as the 40% of the Malawian government budget was come from donor's resources. Moreover, there is a fear of losing power for the central government in decentralizing the responsibilities to the lower levels, hence the tendency to re-centralise the education (Weiler, 1990: 433).

In some cases, privatization led to adverse results because of private sector's impetus to gain more benefits at the expense of the quality of education provision. Privatization was in part a response by governments to its inability to cope with the greater expansion of basic education. In Malawi, the abolition of school fees in 1994 in primary schooling has had as consequence a sudden increase in enrolment which reached 50%, which demanded, in turn, an increase in teachers and school infrastructure, as well as an increased demand in secondary schooling (Kadzamira and Rose, 2003 cited in Rose, 2005: 159). But, the government did not manage to set clear policies and regulations regarding the growth of private sector in education. Moreover, the lack of firm commitment of the government to implement the policy of education privatization, as well as education decentralization, being adopted under the pressure of the international agencies, have resulted in the weakness to monitor and overcome the pace of expansion of enrolment. One of the indicators of this poor situation, is that in 1999, when 85% all of those who sat the Malawi School Leaving Certificate Examination failed (Rose, 2005: 163).

2.2.2 Decentralization in Education

With respect to decentralization, proponents argue that greater decentralization mobilizes and generates more resources that are usually unavailable under centralized management and therefore, it is argued that with decentralization the same resources will be more efficiently utilized (Norrel, 1994: 338) by enhancing flexibility and local democratic participation (Murphy, 1998: 6-7). According to Weiler (1990: 437), that it is this increase of familiarity with local conditions and needs as well as a better match between demand and supply under decentralization that lead to the efficiency of resources management. Furthermore, decentralisation is recognized as a way to contribute in reducing unit costs, particularly when centralised bureaucracies make themselves decisions on even the most minor matters relating to schools in distant locations (Winkler, 1989 cited in Mark, Mukundan, 2003:4).

Empirical evidence from Brazil suggests that the decentralization of primary schooling led to an absolute drop in the overall level of spending on schooling. Between 1988 and 1991, spending on schooling at the federal level dropped from $8.1 billion to $3.9 billion (Behrman, Deolalikar & Soon, 2003: 87).

Obviously, the corollary to greater decentralization reduce the State spending over education and consequently, may also lead to the increase of the level of cost-sharing (on the household

side) between the government and the household, which fills in the gap left by the cuts in government expenditures on education. So, it is the one of the most powerful contributions of the community or parents to education financing.

With regards of the quality of schooling, any decisions taken at the level closest to students, it is argued, will result in better outcomes, as those making the decisions tend to be more acutely aware of the needs of these students (Murphy, 1991 in Walker, 2002). Abu-Duhou (1999: 33) adds that decentralization reforms can enhance students learning in letting educational professionals (principals, teachers) to make important decisions. From this point of view, King and Özler's 1998 (cited in Nasser-Ghodsi, 2006: 9) research states that school autonomy is significantly and positively correlated with student outcomes, as measured by student test scores.

In attempting to assess the impact of decentralization on the students' performance, another study carried out in Dhaka Region in Bangladesh relied on many variables, among them, there is the way School Management Committees are constituted/organized. The results of this study came to the conclusion that in schools where School Management Committees are properly constituted/organized, remain active, and extend the necessary support to the principal, and schooling outcomes are generally satisfactory. Specifically, in non-government secondary schools outside Dhaka City, School Management Committees are properly constituted/organized, function relatively better, and as the test scores indicate, produce better schooling outcomes than schools in Dhaka City where the School Management Committees were not well constituted/organized (Behrman, Deolalikar & Soon, 2002: 25). From the results of these studies referred to above, it is obvious that decentralization does not matter; what does matter is the extent to which School Management Committees are constituted/organized and function.

Many specialists further say that education decentralization is not a panacea as they doubt whether educational decentralization benefits those it is claimed to benefit such as direct beneficiaries (students/parents). Ball (1993) and Smyth (1993 in Walker, 2002) are pessimistic in asserting that the devolution of authority to lower levels serves to legitimize state agencies in many ways. Firstly, it gives the appearance that these state agencies are sensitive to local needs. Second, by shifting decision-making responsibilities to schools, these

agencies can distance themselves from failed policies by blaming schools for poor management and flawed decision-making.

Sayed (2002: 37) argues that decentralization tends to benefit the professional and middle-class parents as it allows rich communities to fund better education services. Benson (1978 cited in Brown, 1990: 61; Fiske, 1996: 27), states that, because all districts are not necessarily able or willing to provide quality educational programs. In addition, full-scale decentralization is not equitable because educational financing would increase in districts with high revenues and fall in districts with lower revenues. Even where there are educational gains, it is the wealthy schools that are most likely to make the greatest gains, which obviously contributes to widening of education inequalities. In South Africa, for example, in the early 1990s, school decentralization was used to protect the privileged position of white schools by giving them relative autonomy to protect their resources and introduce an admission policy (Davies, Harber & Dzimadzi 2003: 139).

Adverse results regarding decentralization can emerge from various factors, each of them acting alone or overlapping each other. But the most important factor is an imbalance between the magnitude of power and responsibilities shifted from central level to lower levels and the means, capacity, and resources allocated to these levels to make decisions and achieve the goals. It can also be the lack of commitment, capacity and ability of the central to support the low levels and those of the lower levels to implement the granted responsibilities (McLaughlin, 1987: 172-173).

According to Sayed (2002: 38), for a country to achieve the goals of education decentralization, some prerequisites are needed, namely, there needs to be an effective democratic system in a particular country with the necessary policies and regulatory framework for educational provision. And there needs to be incentives for people to participate in systems of devolved educational control, the clear policy objectives of the education system, the capacities at different levels in the country in order to implement a policy of decentralisation, and the citizens' capacity to contribute to their children's education.

This means that, at the central level, clear guidelines and capacity to support the decentralized levels are needed, while at the school level, the capacity and style of school leadership and

management are very critical. Therefore, this study will not assess whether school decentralisation in general is effective but whether catholic schools are capable of taking up their decentralised powers in a way that enhances their school performance, and the relationships which characterized both parties in partnership, the government and the Catholic Church.

After defining decentralization and privatization and the way they work, one can draw from these definitions and features various similarities and differences. In developing countries, where the supply of education is still insufficient to achieve universal enrolment, both decentralization and privatization contribute in mobilizing community and parents for owning and financing education by collecting funds from private sector, and parents through school fees.

Mostly, decentralisation is a shift of authority in decision-making over public structures/schools, while privatisation can also be seen as an organisational form of decentralisation when the government deliberately hands control over to non-governmental bodies (Rondinelli et al. 1989 cited in Rose, 2005: 154). However, decentralisation may turn into privatisation when responsibility and resources are transferred from the public to the private sector, and both may occur in parallel to a redistribution of decision-making power from the centre to local levels (Cuéllar-Marchelli, 2003 cited in Rose, 2005: 154).

With regard to the quality of education provision, decentralization and privatization may have divergent effects. Whereas decentralization can enhance students learning in letting educational professionals (principals, teachers) to make important professional decisions (Abu-Duhou, 1999:33), privatization, where public supply is low, provide lower quality schools for students who cannot access selective schools. Conversely, in developed countries where the public education can achieve universal enrolment, privatization offers a competitive alternative in providing higher quality education for students whose parents are able to pay for better quality than is offered in public schools.

Both decentralization and privatization can undermine educational equity and universal access. While decentralization creates disparities between wealthy districts/schools and poor ones, privatization may exclude students whose parents do not afford the cost of their education, and children from rural areas.

Currently, Rwanda is implementing the extension of basic education from 6 years to 9 years, and soon to 12 years. This entails an increase in enrolments, infrastructures, teachers in number and quality, teaching and learning materials and equipments, and so forth. In this instance, the involvement of local communities, parents, and non-government education providers, mainly churches in mobilising funds for education, ownership, and control of schools is an advisable option likely to meet all these challenges for certain reasons. Apart from others proven benefits of decentralization and privatization, cuts in public budget of a developing country do not allow government to meet all the spending on education sector so that the educational goals are met. In the context of this study, this justifies the inevitable collaboration between the government and the Catholic Church.

2.3 School Administrative and Political Decentralisation

The decentralization of educational responsibilities to schools can be viewed conceptually as a formal alteration of governance structures, through which improvement might be stimulated and sustained (World Bank, 2007: 2). School decentralization varies widely from country to country, in accordance with country specificity to which depend policy choices and many forms exist, depending on the degree of power and responsibility (resource generation and allocation, hiring staff, curriculum development …) and the levels (regional, district, local, school site) to which these elements are assigned.

In education sector, the administrative education decentralisation refers to decentralisation of the education governance system and passing powers and authorities from the national to the district office level. Administrative school decentralisation also refers to decentralization of managerial powers from the education departments to school management. Administrative or bureaucratic decentralization is essentially a management strategy where power remains with officials at the top of the organization, but responsibility and authority for planning, management, finance, and other activities is assigned to the lower levels of government or to semi-autonomous authorities (Fiske, 1996: 9-10).

School-based management (SBM) is an administrative concept originated in the United States, which gives educational institutions freedom in administration as well as in the management of teaching-learning activities (Nenyod, 2002: 1). It [SBM] encompasses many models, ranging from fully autonomous schools with authority over every educational,

financial, and personnel matter to more restrictive versions that allow autonomy over only certain areas of school operations (Abu-Duhou, 1999: 30). The School-Based Management goals and forms vary substantially, although they typically involve:

(i) increasing the participation of parents and communities in schools;
(ii) empowering principals and teachers;
(iii) building local level capacity;
(iv) creating school accountability mechanisms for site-based actors and improving the transparency of school processes by devolution of authority; and
(v) improving quality and efficiency of schooling, thus raising student achievement levels (World Bank, 2007: 6, 9).

The second form of school decentralization is political. Political education decentralization involves assigning powers of decision and policy making to citizens or their representatives at lower levels of government. Political decentralization involves a multitude of stakeholders, both inside and outside the government, all of whom will have interest to protect or pursue (Fiske, 1996: 9-10). In educational decentralization also, we may have the political education decentralisation which refers to decentralization of powers to lower level elected bodies and the political school decentralisation which refers to decentralization of decision-making or governance to school assembly (working through its elected body or committee). According to Florestal & Cooper (1997: 3), political decentralization and its inherent redistribution of power and responsibility throughout governance levels have four key features:

- the body that exercises responsibility is legally separated from the central ministry;
- the body acts on its own, not under the hierarchical supervision of the central ministry;
- the body can exercise only the powers given to it by law; and
- the body can act only within the geographic limits set out in the law. Also, such bodies are often supervised by a board of officials elected by the local population.

The local body is fully responsible for its acts; the central ministry has no responsibility unless the law specifies other arrangements. At the school level, particularly, political decentralization involves all stakeholders such as parents, teachers, learners and community

members in the activities of the school, which constitute the School Assembly acting through its elected representative boards.

Naidoo (2005: 40) and Joubert (n.d:2) argue that, even though education systems differ from each other, generally, school body authority includes both explicit authority over financial matters, day-to day school life, and policy decisions, as well as implicit authority involving the culture and values that determine the ethos of a school, all of these within the guidelines established by the state. They add that as education systems differ from each other, the degree of power and responsibility devolved to school-site differ too. To illustrate the case, Gershberg & Winkler (2003: 17) and Naidoo (2005: 40-41;) state that, while in New Zealand, United Kingdom, Australian and USA states, Canada, Spain, Portugal, and Hong Kong, school boards can now hire and fire principals and teachers. Conversely, in South Africa such powers are restricted to additional teachers hired and paid out of their own resource, whereas permanent teachers are only recommended by schools boards to the provincial ministry for approval.

Brown (1990: 60) explains that another difference between political decentralization and administrative decentralization is that, in political decentralization, the presence of local councils and/or boards of education is most evident and people are accountable to the persons who elected them, while in administrative decentralization, personnel are accountable to those higher in the organization.

Considering the goals targeted by the decentralization policy and the policy makers' concerns to uphold the interests of the various stakeholders, these two features of education decentralization can be merged in a unique model. But the optimum balance between them is required (Brown, 1990: 70; Fiske, 1996: 11).

2.4 School Leadership and Management

So far, the debates around school political decentralisation to the communities have been presented. An associated issue is the implication for school leadership and management. But what is meant by school leadership and management?

Even though leadership and management have similar meanings, they have some differences. Leadership tends to be formative, proactive and problem-solving, dealing with such thing as values, vision and mission; whereas management is about execution, planning, organizing and deploying of resources, or making things happen (Bush & Glover, 2003 cited in Earley & Weindling, 2004: 5). Leadership inspires and supports others towards the achievement of a vision of the school; whereas management is the implementation of school policies and the efficient and effective maintenance of the school's current activities (Bush & Glover, 2003 cited in Earley & Weindling, 2004: 5). Bush and Glover (2003 cited in Earley & Weindling, 2004: 4) explored various definitions of school leadership and state that "leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purpose". Sapre (2002 cited in Bush, 2009: 1) states that "management is a set of activities directed towards efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in order to achieve organizational goals". That is to say that successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on personal and professional value (Earley & Weindling, 2004: 4), whereas successful management requires a link between aims, strategy and operational management (Bush, 2009: 2).

Leadership and management of the school are judged by their effect on the quality and standards of the school. Earley & Weindling, drawing from Ofsted (2003b) show the criteria for assessing how schools stand in term of leadership and management. These are: "The quality of leadership of the school, particularly by the head teacher, senior team and other staff with responsibilities. It is therefore important to assess the extent to which:

- Leadership shows a clear vision, a sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school with a relentless focus on pupils achievement;
- Strategic planning reflects and promotes the school ambition and goals;
- Leaders aspire, motivate and influence staff and pupils;
- Leaders create effective teams;
- There is knowledgeable and innovative leadership of teaching and the curriculum;
- Leaders are committed to running an equitable and inclusive school, in which each individual matter;
- Leaders provide a good role model for other staff and pupils" (Earley & Weindling, 2004: 6).

Effective management ideally refers to assessing the extent to which:

- "The school undertakes rigorous self-evaluation and uses the findings effectively;
- The school monitors performance data, reviews patterns and takes appropriate action;
- Performance management of staff, including support staff, is thorough and effective in bringing about improvement;
- A commitment to staff development is reflected in effective induction and professional development strategies and, where possible, the school contribution to initial teacher training;
- The recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff are well managed, and support staff is well deployed to make teachers work more effective;
- Approaches to financial and resources management help the school to achieve its educational priorities;
- The principals of best values are central to the school management and use of resources" (Earley & Weindling 2004: 6).

However, despite these different definitions, one cannot always distinguish neatly the boundaries between leadership and management, even though there have different meanings. These twin concepts overlap and are both necessary for organizational success. Both motivate people and give schools a sense of purpose. They complement each other because, as asserted by (Earley & Weindling, 2004: 5) effective leaders need to draw upon a wide repertoire of both management and leadership skills.

In a same way, there are different forms of school management. Leithwood and Menzies (1998 cited in World Bank, 2007: 8) elaborated on four models of school-based management (SBM), corresponding to whom is in control and power. These models are: administratively-controlled SBM devolving authority to the school principal; professionally-controlled SBM devolving the main decision-making authority to teachers; community-controlled SBM which devolves the main decision-making authority to parents or the community; and balanced-controlled SBM where decision-making authority are shared between parents and teachers, who are the two main stakeholders in any school (these which involve parents and staff in the school management – and not governance are only found in the US and does not exist in developing countries).

Bush (2006) identifies six models of school-based management. According to him, organizations are either hierarchical systems in which managers use rational means to pursue

agreed on goals (formal models), or determine policy and make decisions through a process of discussion leading to consensus (collegial models), or policy and decisions emerge through a process of negotiation and bargaining (political models), or are creation of the people within them (subjective models), or turbulence and unpredictability are dominant features of organizations (ambiguity models), or beliefs, values and ideology are the heart of organization (cultural models).

These collegial and political models advanced by Bush (2006) are the ones which fit best the school decentralization to communities. Since the 1980s, they became the most frequent way to run schools and derived partly from the research findings of school effectiveness and school improvement and official models of good practice (Campbell and Southworth, 1993; Wallace, 1989 both cited in Bush, 2006: 64). In the collegial and political models, power and decision-making are shared among some or all members of the organization who are thought to have a shared understanding about the aims of the institution. It derives from basic premise which emphasize that power should be shared among some or all members of the organization (Bush, 2006: 64).

Such collegial and political models encompass three forms of leadership: transformational leadership, participative leadership, and interpersonal leadership. In the transformational leadership, the central focus of leadership relies on the commitment and the capacity of organizational members which result in extra efforts and greater productivity (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 1999 in Bush, 2006: 76-77). Leithwood (1994) conceptualizes transformational leadership along eight dimensions: building school vision, establishing school goals, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support modelling best practices and important organizational values, demonstrating high performance expectations, creating a productive school culture, and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (Bush, 2006: 77). For Caldwell and Spinks (1990 cited in Bush, 2006: 77), capacity for transformational leadership is required for the successful transition to self-managing schools.

In participative leadership, the decision-making process of the group ought to be the central focus of the group. It is based on three criteria: participation will increase the school effectiveness; is justified by democratic principles; and in the site-based management, leadership is potentially available to any legitimate stakeholder (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 1999 cited in Bush, 2006: 78).

Interpersonal leadership pays attention to the importance on collaboration and interpersonal relationship with staff, students and other stakeholders (Tuohy and Coghlan, 1997 cited in Bush, 2006: 79).

2.5 The Catholic School Leadership and Management

Studies on the relationship between effective leadership and management styles and academic outcomes provided evidence that many catholic schools are characterised by effective school leadership and management. They also provide young people with better values and attitudes, which are associated with better academic outcomes. This section aims at discussing the factors and philosophical principles underlying catholic schools to understand how catholic school leadership and management works and adapts well to school decentralization.

In the USA and elsewhere, catholic schools are reported to achieve better academic outcomes, compared to their public schools counterparts. While some looked at the prior background of students entering catholic schools, others studied factors in the school features. Lauder and Hughes (1999), Goldstein (2001) and Convey (1992) argue that these academic results are often a function of the prior achievement and the cultural background of the students who enrol in catholic secondary schools (Grace, 2003: 155-156). However, there is not much evidence for this point.

Coleman and Hoffer (1982) and Bryk et al. (1993 cited in Grace, 2003: 155) point to the positive effects of catholic educational culture, such as values, culture, social capital (that values relationships that can enhance social cohesion and productivity in an organization), strong internal sense of community, structured environments, sense of mission, and vocational commitment of teachers. The post-Vatican II reforms (i.e after 1965) also had an impact on US catholic schools and the religious and social values and attitudes of adolescents were studied by Greeley and Bryk's (1976, 1982 and 1989). These studies found that catholic schools infuse adolescents with a strong culture of openness to debate and dialogue, and to relationships with wider society than had been the case with the earlier period (Grace, 2003: 152). These findings and many others contradict the traditional thinking that catholic schooling is un-democratic, is intolerant towards other religions, and inspires social divisiveness and elitism. Rather, these studies report that catholic education promotes the idea of a democratic life.

Catholic schools also aim to promote the value of social justice in their students (Bryk et al., 1993 cited in Grace, 2003: 155). However, what is not known is how significant the social justice and mission of common good has contributed towards modern catholic educational practice, given that catholic schooling is among the few faith-based educational system to promote such spiritual, moral and social justice purposes. About the catholic church contribution to the social justice and the common good, Cibulka et al. (1982 cited by Grace, 2003: 154) conducted a study in 50 elementary schools with ethnic minority enrolments of at least 70 % located in Chicago. The results show that catholic schools serve large families and poorer than the average. Many are single parents' families and more than half families are not catholic. Thus, catholic schools do more than meet the educational needs of the catholic poor, but also address the needs of the non-catholic poor, a point which goes against the traditional argument that catholic schools encourage divisiveness, elitism and sectarianism.

Another important element is the philosophy of catholic education which prescribes compliance by those involved in school life to the following principles that underlie activities in catholic schools. According to the Catholic Bishops of British Columbia (2005), parents have particularly an important part to play in educating the community by showing themselves responsible for their children's education, i.e catholic schools demand and secure parental involvement in their kids' education. Also, the priest (and or the parish) is a necessary and integral member of the school community and catholic educators should model collaboration go on.

The important feature of the Catholic Church in schooling is the 'philosophical principle of subsidiarity' as its standard of judgement. This principle relies on a particular view of the nature of the human person, the state and society, and the relation between them, where the role of state is indirect, and consists of enabling human flourishing by tending to the complex conditions that enable individuals to care for themselves (Cullen, 2001: 1-2). According to Jacobs (1997: 57), the principle of subsidiarity locates initiatives and responsibilities at the smallest unit of social organization–with individuals. The philosophical principle of subsidiarity' encompasses three goals for effective leadership and management: parents with pastors and members of the parish board of education must be involved in the school; principals and teachers form a community of educators; and diocesan educational offices and religious orders must assist parents and local school boards (Jacobs, 1997: 66-67; McLaughlin & O'Keeffe, 1996: 30). These are consistent with the ideal of decentralized education system, democracy and effective school leadership.

Convey (1992, cited in Jacobs 1997: 13) contends that high outcomes in catholic schools are also linked to three other factors: the homogenous and rigorous curriculum, good discipline, and supportive school climate. These factors are not directly associated with what make catholic schools distinctively catholic, but that they are a reflection of something deeper, what Jacobs (1997: 13) calls the grammar of catholic schooling, which guides the day-to-day educational decisions in catholic schools. This "grammar of catholic schooling" is conceived as a set of six rules that serve as secure foundation upon which educators in catholic schools build their students' moral and intellectual achievements. These are:

(i) God is the beginning and the end of human existence,

(ii) education is essentially a moral endeavour,

(iii) parents are the primary educators of their children,

(iv) the subject of education is the students,

(v) teaching is an intimate communication between souls, and

(vi) educational decisions are best made locally (Jacobs, 1997: 24).

This grammar of catholic schooling fits well with the notion of school decentralization, especially the third, fourth, and sixth points above-mentioned.

Jacobs (1997: 21) asserts that this grammar of catholic schooling and the three factors mentioned by Convey (1992) (i.e, the homogenous and rigorous curriculum, good discipline, and supportive school climate) are associated with, but not sufficient to explain, catholic schools' effectiveness. He argues that what differentiates catholic schools from public schools is the type of leadership (or source of decision-making) which mobilizes and emphasizes these three effectiveness factors in catholic schools. While in catholic schools administrators, teachers, students, or parents are organized as a community to which everyone desires to belong and be valued as a contributing member, in public schools the hierarchical organizational model of schooling prevails, with decisions emanating from those whose jobs are at the top of the organizational chart and implemented by subordinates. In such a model, several administrative layers report to the principal and teachers frequently report to intermediaries, but with little interactive communication between hierarchical levels (Jacobs, 1997: 21, 55-56).

Thus, it is clear that there are some unique features to the educational process and factors existing in catholic schools which work through the leadership and community. Therefore, the model of decentralised school governance is a policy that fits well with catholic schools.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework is drawn from the literature review around effective school based management, governance and leadership, and how catholic churches contribute to these. This study is inspired by arguments in favour of certain community and non-state institutions' involvement in schooling.

According to advocates of school decentralization, school-based management is an important solution to endemic paralysis of central bureaucracies against various educational problems related to financing, access and quality (Walker, 2002). Those who advocate the advantages of decentralization of educational responsibilities to school level (World Bank, 2007:9; Murphy, 1991 in Walker, 2002) put forward several arguments, among others:

- it gives communities, parents and teachers a stake in local educational decision-making;
- it empowers principals and teachers, and contributes to greater levels of professional commitment by allowing teachers to exercise a voice in decision-making;
- results in better outcomes because decisions are made at the levels that are closest to students, and as those making the decisions are more acutely aware of the needs of these students;
- is viewed as a mechanism that has the potential to promote greater efficiency in the utilization and expenditure of resources. This is achieved, since the decisions are being made by those closest to the point where services are being delivered, thereby resulting in a greater match of services to needs.
- create accountability mechanisms for site-based actors and improving the transparency.

It is also advantageous from a democratic point of view, school-based management and governance is about participatory decision-making as it incorporates the voices of parents, teachers and the community (Walker, 2002). However, the literature also notes that effective school decentralisation depends greatly on a set of prior conditions, otherwise it can worsen

inequalities and become a state strategy to pass burden to lower levels and gain legitimacy (Sayed, 2002: 38), something which will be borne in mind in the study.

The literature reveals how decentralization of powers and responsibilities to school level, shared decision making, and community involvement in school management are important and will be effective, depending on the leadership, relationship between community and schools as well as capacity of the different parties to exercise their newly granted responsibilities and decision-making powers. In reviewing the literature on how Catholic Church authorities assume their school responsibilities, the centrality of the vision and values of school leadership and management were noted. The literature also points to the value of catholic educational philosophy and values which need to be effectively used to bring positive pedagogical and managerial improvements in schools.

Various models of leadership and management which emphasize the involvement of the whole community in the school management are retained for this study:

- Leithwood and Menzies' (1998) four school-based management models;
- Bush's (2006) six models: formal, collegial, political, subjective, ambiguity, and cultural models;
- The catholic philosophy of education and the philosophical principle of subsidiarity (Cullen, 2001: 1-2; Grace & O'Keefe, 2007: 570-571).

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methods

This chapter describes the research methodology used. It provides detailed information on how the research was carried out from conception to the end. This includes research approaches, procedures of getting into the site, sampling methods, and data collection techniques. It also explains how the issues of validity and reliability were handled, and how data have been analysed. The chapter ends up with information around ethical considerations.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 315), qualitative research is an inquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situation by interacting with selected persons in their natural setting. The case study approach is appropriate because it has a focus on a natural setting; an interest in meanings, perspectives and understandings; and an emphasis on process (Woods, 2006; Creswell, 2003: 181). This research is a qualitative case study as it is an inquiry about the quality and effectiveness of school decentralisation in two catholic schools. It investigated the perceptions of school personnel of their responsibilities in school management and governance as well as how they exercised them.

3.1 Sampling Methods

In this study, a purposeful sampling strategy guided the selection of the site and the informants. The purposeful sampling is about selecting information-rich cases for studying in-depth the issues researched (Patton, 2002 cited in McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 319). As advised by McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 319), this sample is often chosen in qualitative research because it is likely to yield important information about the phenomenon the researcher investigates.

3.1.1 District Sample

This case study was conducted in Nyarugenge District, Kigali City. Nyarugenge District is one of three districts in Kigali city, the capital of the country. This district was partly chosen because it has an interesting record regarding school decentralisation.

Nyarugenge district is known for its effective implementation of school decentralization in there schools compared to other districts. First, Nyarugenge is an urban district where the literacy rate is higher than in other districts. Secondly, the socio-economical status of families in urban area is relatively high. Thirdly, the educational facilities needed to support

educational awareness programmes, such as school decentralization, are always more concentrated in urban areas. Therefore, Nyarugenge district provides a conducive environment for the implementation of school decentralization. If schools in Nyarugenge district face challenges in implementing school decentralization, then the challenges are likely to be worse in the 29 other districts.

Also this district was chosen because it is close to where the researcher lives, making it therefore affordable and feasible in terms of time, cost, and mobility.

3.1.2 Schools Sample

Two catholic schools were purposefully selected in this district. The first or "school A is a mixed (catering for both girls and boys) private school, while the "school B" is a subsidized girls' school. These catholic schools are among the best schools in Nyarugenge district in terms of students' performance.

The idea behind the selection of these two schools that some of their different characteristics were assumed to explain a different school leadership, different mobilization of school communities and a different impact on the way their school committees exercised their decentralised powers.

3.1.3 Participants

The total number of interviewees was twenty-three (23). These were selected purposefully because they were considered to be the best person to interview about this topic. In each school, ten interviewees were selected:

- 1 school principal;
- 2 students' representatives;
- 3 parents (1 Chairperson of school committee and 2 any other members of the school committee). To select rich-informants from school committee members, the number of years of membership in the school committee and level of education qualification were considered. It was assumed that the time served in the school committee offers the opportunity to be more knowledgeable about how the school is functioning. It was assumed also that the higher the level of qualification, the higher the level of understanding of how the school system is running. That is why in school B, it was

decided to select the vice-president, who had been a member of the school committee for the last 3 years, over the president who had only been there for three months and therefore was considered to be less knowledgeable about how the school committee was operating.

- 4 teachers (2 teachers' representatives in school committee and 2 non-members of school committee). For teachers, two members of the school committee and two non-members were selected. To get information-rich teacher informants, the length/seniority in the service, then other responsibilities beyond teaching and the level of qualification were all taken into account. In doing so, it was assumed that teachers with a long service at this school were assumed to know more about the school functioning.

To complement the information provided by school community, the Provincial Inspector of Education, the Director of the "Secretariat National de l'Enseignement Catholique" (SNEC), and the District Education Officer in Nyarugenge were also interviewed.

3.2 Instruments of Data collection

This research relied on various instruments of data collection for qualitative research which comprised of interviews with each of the main stakeholders (students, teachers, principals, and parents) and document analysis.

3.2.1 Interviews

In-depth interviews have been conducted face-to-face with interviewees. In-depth interviews have open-ended questions, with few questions. The intention is to understand how individuals perceive their world, how they explain and make sense on the important events in their life (Creswell, 2003: 188; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 350). Interviews were chosen because of its advantages: interaction between interviewer and interviewee provides with them the opportunities, for each, to probe for clarity or more detailed information when needed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 203; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003: 305). Interviews are flexible and adaptable. Even so, the researcher is required to have enough expertise in conducting interviews and patience because, they (interviews) are potentially subjective and can be biased, expensive and time-consuming, lack of anonymity and respondents may feel uncomfortable if the interviewer has not enough expertise (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 203).

The research questions may change and be refined as the inquirer learns to ask and to whom it should be asked, and even sub-questions may emerge on both sides for some clarifications (Creswell, 2003: 184), this may make researcher to become disorganized and skid off the right track. To prevent the researcher from possible diversions and keeping focused, the researcher has relied on an interview guide approach where topics selected in advance, sequences and wording of questions are predetermined (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 351).

The interviews were organized around themes to assess how the different stakeholders or school committees, that is, representatives of parents, teachers, and students implement the school decentralisation and contribute to school leadership and management. As this study is about catholic schools, particular attention has been paid on the different kinds of catholic involvement and support to implementation of school decentralization and leadership and management. Thus, the information was covering main themes such as school's identity, micro-politics and interests of the main stakeholders as well as the way these stakeholders work together and assume their responsibilities.

3.2.2 Document Analysis

Documents provided the researcher with the historical and contextual dimensions that serve as base for extending the understanding and corroborate the information gathered from other sources. These documents has been describing functions and values within the school, the official chain of command and clues about leadership style and values, and suggest official perspective on a topic, issue or process (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 357).

These documents were composed of school policies (e.g school development plans, students and teachers code of conduct), official reports (e.g financial reports), minutes of meetings (e.g., previous school committees meetings, staff meetings, and students meetings), circulars (letters from different high levels and the correspondence between school administration and the school committee). These were collected to provide the researcher with insights and rich information.

3.3 Validity

The validity of the qualitative design is the degree of congruence between the explanations or interpretations of the phenomena and the reality of the world and the mutual meanings between the researcher and the participants. Validity addresses the question whether the researcher captures what s/he thinks is valid (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 324).

To be secure as to whether the data collected contains the information that the researcher thinks they contain, many strategies have been used to increase validity of the data collected.
The use of prolonged fieldwork: occasionally, when gaps or ambiguity found during analysis or transcription of interviews, the researcher returned to interviewees or those have been re-contacted for more clarification (Patton, 2001: 437).

To establish the effective understanding and good relationship between the researcher and the interviewees, the interviews have been phrased in both informants and interviewer's language-Kinyarwanda. Furthermore, to ensure the completeness of the verbal interactions, interviews have been tape-recorded; and every time, after interviews, participant was asked to review her/his responses. As the interviews were tape-recorded, this was consisting of re-playing the conversation and asking interviewees to review a transcript or synthesis of the data from him/her and, if possible to modify any information from interviewee's data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 204,326,355). This has as advantage the positive relationship between interviewer and respondents.

3.4 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, or the extent to which the scores are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collection. Another way to conceptualize reliability is to determine the extent to which measures are free from error. If an instrument has minimal errors, then it is reliable (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 183).
Reliability is the extent to which other researchers would arrive to similar results if they studied the same case using exactly the same procedures as the first researcher (Meredith, Walter & Joyce, 1996: 572).

More editing prevented from errors and ambiguity in wording of the questions in interview protocols, compliance of interview guides to research problems, and the constant consultation with supervisor of this study constitute, among others, strategies to enhance reliability.

3.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is a systematic process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 364).

In this study, the data analysis ranged from the template analysis (classification of data in categories according to the research questions and the interview guide), editing analysis (searching parts of the data illustrating categories of meaning and write memos during the process), and immersion/crystallization (interpretation of the meanings of the data and establishing the interrelations between them) styles (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 364-365).

Data in the form of audio-records interviews, some notes and documents from schools and the Ministry of education were translated, analysed and interpreted in terms of the research questions and the conceptual framework. As interviews were tape-recorded, I simultaneously transcribed and translated the raw data, from Kinyarwanda language to English language, and then analysed.

Reading carefully several times through interview responses and looking for patterns or themes among the participants, and by making a group of varieties of themes in any meaningful way immersed the researcher in the data, and enabled their coding; that is, organizing them into conceptual categories and creating themes in relation with the research questions and the literature review (Neuman, 2003: 460-461).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Qualitative research is more likely to be intrusive and may lead to harm if the researcher does not follow ethical guidelines. Ethical guidelines include policy regarding informed consent, deception, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy and caring (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:334).

Before accessing school's premises for interviewing informants, a letter of request for consent to do the research was sent to the Nyarugenge district authorities and to each of the

school principals. After approval had been granted, the researcher invited the participants to participate and sought their consent. The letter to the participants requesting their consent also provided an explanation of the aim of the research. Students have been participating in this study and, because one of them is minor, her parent's consent was obtained before interviewing her, as McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 143) recommend. The tape recording had been subject of a particular request.

The researcher had also to assure the participants of the anonymity and confidentiality of the information they will give in an effort to protect them from any mental, moral and/or emotional discomfort or harm, as this study involves human beings as participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 143).

Participants have been informed over the following:

- that their participation in this study is voluntary and can, at any time without prejudice, withdraw their consent to this study;
- the importance of the research and assure them that data collected will be used only for the study's purposes and will be kept absolutely confidential and destroyed after the study is completed;
- that the names of participants will be neither asked nor appear on the interview transcripts and the final research report.

In addition, as advised by McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 334), every time, the researcher had to respect for the participants' appointments and join them in a secure setting and convenient time for the interview chosen, most of time at their home and in few cases at school. The schedule for interviews were established in common agreement and understanding between the interviewee and interviewer.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

The qualitative data was collected from a few people in two school communities out of eighteen schools in Nyarugenge district. Therefore, these findings cannot be replicable or generalizable to the other remaining catholic schools. Furthermore, this case study was conducted in the urban area, with its particular features which are different from those in rural districts, and therefore cannot be said to reflect the reality of implementation of school decentralization in catholic schools in Rwanda.

In addition, due to time and resource constrains, this study did not capture all of the information on the implementation of school decentralization in these schools. However, the findings pointed to certain conditions needed for an effective implementation of school decentralization, as well as certain challenges which merit more attention as they can undermine school decentralization.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study of school decentralization in two catholic schools and concludes with a comparison between these schools.

Apart the literature review which provided an understanding of theories underlying school decentralization, the other method of data collection utilised is the delving into official documents. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with school committees' members (school principals, parents, teachers, and students) of the two schools under study. To supplement the information collected from the school committees, the district education Officer, the Regional Inspector of Education in Kigali city, and the Director of SNEC have also been interviewed.

The presentation of findings is organized in three main sections following the first three research questions, namely: (1) how school committees perceived and exercised their powers and responsibilities in contributing to school development? (2) How does the school committees and the school administration work together in contributing to school development? and (3) How do the Catholic Church authorities contribute to the managerial and/or professional issues and needs of these schools?

4.1 The context of the Study

The study was conducted in Nyarugenge District. Nyarugenge is one of three districts in the City of Kigali, and the 30 districts of the country. It has an area of 134 km^2 with 236,990 inhabitants. About 86% of its surface is rural; whereas the rest of the district, representing 14%, is urban. This urban area attracts a lot of people from elsewhere in the country, which makes it densely populated with 1500 inhabitants per km^2. That's in this part of the district wherein two schools under study are located.

As regards to education, in the 2008 academic year, Nyarugenge District occupied the 3rd place among 30 Districts countrywide with a score of 36.57% in 'O' level and the 1st place in Kigali city, whereas it had the 29th place with 58.07% in 'A' level[2]. The distribution of

[2] **'O' level (Ordinary level):** corresponds to first three years of secondary education after which students sit the national examinations. Those who passed them successfully are oriented in different options in the last three years of secondary education.

secondary schools and students per school status in 2009 in Nyarugenge District is shown in the following table.

Table 4.1: Distribution of schools in Nyarugenge District

Status	**Nr of schools**	**Nr of students**
Public	5	2952
Private aided	2	1515
Private	11	7556
Total	**18**	**12.023**

Source: Ministry of Education, 2009

4.2 School A

4.2.1 School Profile

The school A is located in the one of the suburbs of Kigali city. It has been founded by the Congregation of the Josephite Brothers in 1970 as a 'Technical Training Centre'[3] with only 15 students issued with the Vocational Training Certificate. With the 1992/1993 academic year, this vocational training centre was upgraded and became an A_3 level Technical Secondary school. In 2002, it became a Technical secondary school, A_2 with two options (Public Works, and Construction) and a lower level secondary school.

For the 2010 academic year, this school enrolled 613 day students (465 boys and 148 girls) with the majority from neighbouring families while others are from different areas of the city, but all of them are from urban areas. The average distance between the school and the students' residences is estimated at 5 km.

The school management team comprises of 5 people. Three of them are members of the congregation of the Josephite Brothers and hold key positions in the school administration; i.e the school principal, deputy principal, and deputy in charge of discipline. The teaching corps comprises 24 teachers qualified for teaching in secondary school, considering the national requirements and the qualification framework in secondary education. The teacher's

'A' level: corresponds to the last three years of secondary education in which students are oriented to do any options after the first three years. The 'A' level issues the advanced certificate of secondary education.

[3] The Technical or Vocational Centres was not part of the formal education, rather, the non-formal education.

workload is around 20.4 hours out of 25-30 hours per teacher per week in public and subsidised schools, in accordance with the Ministry of Education's instructions.

This school has appropriate buildings in good state and built in hard materials. There are 12 classrooms, 5 rooms for offices, and one staff room; both are in two floors. There is also one science laboratory, one computer room comprising 20 networked computers, one technical workshop, and other facilities like separate latrines for boys and girls, electricity, running water, water tanks, and different playgrounds, except for football. The school does not have dormitory as it is a day school, and there is no accommodation for teachers on the school property. Given the limitations of space, the school infrastructure is concentrated in a small area and is not gardened.

The school provides different services to the community such as a paying internet café, and a counter for people to purchase joinery products made by the learners. The community of Josephite Brothres supplies teaching/learning materials, raising school revenue, and serving the community.

The majority of students are from a low socio-economic background. The school has to face serious social problems and a few disciplinary issues among students. It is worth noting that these social conditions would have an impact on the extent to which the school fees are paid and so to the school's financial management. This school has reported that it is in arrears in recovering the school fees.

The school indicators show that the pupils-teacher ratio for 2010 is 44:1 in the lower level and 55.6:1 in the upper secondary. At national level, the ratio is 16.7:1 in private schools and 18.7:1 in public and subsidised schools in 2008. The school scored 98.25% in "A" level at the national leaver's examinations in 2008 and held the 13th place among private schools and the 57th among all schools at the national level. In the same academic year, the school stands for 8th place in Construction option with an average of 3.15, and the 4th place in Public Works option at the national level with 4.6. The repetition rate in 2009 was 6.25% against 8.4% at the national level.

4.2.2 Participants' Personal Background

Table 4.2: School A Personal Background of the Participants

Participants	**Highest qualification**		**Employment status/other responsibilities (for teachers)**	**Years of membership / Seniority**	**Religious status**
School committee members	PA_1	Bachelor's degree in management	Pensioner	6 years	Catholic Layman
	PA_2	Certificate (A_2) in economical sciences	Accountant in a construction enterprise	2 years	Catholic Laywoman
	PA_3	Engineer in Enterprises Organization	Businessman	3 years	Catholic Layman
School Principal	Masters degree in Social and Economic Sciences		School principal	7 years	Josephite Brother
Teachers	TA_1	Eng.A_1 Construction	Teachers' representative; Head of technical department PW& Constr.	15 years	Catholic Layman
	TA_2	A_2 Arts (literature)	Reporter of the staff and school committee meetings	10 years	Protestant
	TA_3	A_2 Construction	Class teacher (Titulaire de classe)	3 years	Catholic Layman
	TA_4	Bachelor's degree in education	Teaching only	5 years	Catholic Laywoman
Students	SA_1	Grade 12 Public Works	Head boy		Catholic Layman
	SA_2	Grade 12 Construction	Head girl		Catholic laywoman

4.2.3 Role and Responsibilities vested in School Committee

All of the school committee members, teachers, and school principal interviewed said that the school committee's responsibilities consist of examining problems likely to hamper the quality of education and assist the school administration in solving them. They said that the school committee as a linkage between the school administration and parents. According to them, the school committee is a critical organ because it is a witness of what is agreed

between the school administration and parents. When there is a joint action/project between the school and the parents, the school committee serves as the representative organ of both the school and the parents' interests. It is also a channel through which the wishes of both the school and the parents are passed.

Practically, the main responsibility of the school committee is to prepare, convene and head the general assembly meetings. In addition to that, it participates and assists the school in:

- the rational exploitation and the maintaining of the school infrastructure including the buildings lands, and grounds;
- preparing the school budget and monitor its execution and the implementation of other general assembly decisions or agreement between the school and the parents;
- mobilising the parents and other partners to contribute to the school development, and parents to pay tuition fees without delay and subscribe for any school activities/projects, and if necessary to intervene in recovering the school fees arrears;
- formulating the school policies for keeping the school vision in the right track;
- promoting and sustain the discipline among students and teachers;
- preparing and organise the school ceremonies;

4.2.4 School Committee's Perceptions of its Capacity to Exercise its Responsibilities

These responsibilities as perceived by the members can be divided in three major areas.

Resource management responsibilities

The school committee members and teachers participating in the study told the researcher that parents, through tuition fees and any other subscriptions, take the lead in funding the school. In 2009, the school records display the income of 76,787,960 Rwf. Among them 60,787,960 Rwf are from the school fees; this represents 79.2%. The subsidies from the congregation, the donation, and the school production provide the remaining 20.8%. The school principal indicated that some families do not pay tuition fees as expected; in that case, the congregation fills the gap. The school was expecting an amount of 90,290,000 Rwf for its running. But, it received only 76,787,960 Rwf. This means that the school had a shortfall of 13,502,040 Rwf. The congregation does not always fill in the gap. In this case, the school committee advises and negotiates with the school administration to prioritize and postpone less important actions.

For all participants, the school authorities should be accountable to parents. For them, parents' involvement in school budgeting and the monitoring of its execution is critical for many reasons. They said that the school should secure that parents' funds will be managed properly and for their children's education purposes. When parents are represented, they feel valued and committed to serve the school. Moreover, this enables parents and school authorities trust each other and work in a trusting manner.

The school principal expresses the same point of view:

> I am obliged to involve the school committee and parents in the school life; the school needs them to develop. That's the school committee members who sensitise their colleagues to pay tuition fees and for any subscription for the school needs. So, involving them is for the school's interests first, then for the parents' interests". The parents pay their money; they should be informed over the way it is managed. Otherwise they would be reluctant to pay afterwards. (Interview 17th May 2010)

But, to the question regarding the decisions taken by the school committee, the school principal said: *"They do not take any decision, we decide together; and the principal is the one to authorise the expenditures"* (Interview 17th May 2010).

On the school committee and teachers' contribution in solving financial problems, TA_1, TA_2 and TA_4 indicated that, in most cases, the school committee and teachers do not involve themselves in the school financial management and should not as it belongs to the school authority and the congregation of Josephite Brothers. PA_2, PA_3 and TA_3 said the same, adding: *"That's them who founded the school!"* (Interviews 18th, 22nd, and 23rd May 2010).

Both said that the school committee's contribution is restricted to sensitising and persuading parents to pay tuition fees on time and other subscriptions, and put it on the general assembly meeting agenda and blame publicly those who did not pay. PA_3 added that school reports are trusted, accepted and endorsed as such without any further investigation.

These statements seem to imply that the role of the school committee is not significant or passive. TA_3, TA_4, PA_1 and the school principal are satisfied with the way things are done and find that the school committee provides worthy services for the school. They indicated that the school budget is drafted by the school administration and handed down to the school committee which examines it, in accordance with school needs as expressed by the school principal, and amends it, if necessary. Then, the school budget is submitted to the general assembly for final amendments and approval.

Regarding to the monitoring of the school budget execution, PA_1 said that the school committee and school administration agreed on an external audit. The report has been submitted to the school committee and the general assembly, and the school committee could ask explanations to the school authorities in case of apparent mismanagement.

Human resource management responsibilities

This private school is founded by the congregation of the Josephite Brothers and headed by them without any partnership with parents. This is the reason put forward by everyone over the reluctance of parents, and the school committee, to be involved in school resource management. All decisions regarding human resource management pertain to the Congregation of the Josephite Brothers (appointing the school leaders), and the school administration (teachers and staff recruitment and dismissal). The school committee and parents have no say in this area. PA_2 pointed out that

> This school is founded by the Josephite Brothers. That's them who have greater say in teachers' management than parents and we appreciate and trust them [the Brothers] in the way they are managing/running the school. Our crucial concern as parents is to point out to the school administration what is wrong, but about decisions making, we do not have enough power. (Interview 22nd May 2010)

However, the school principal and all teachers praised the role that parents play in funding the school and contributing to the school development. They said that, in compensation, this confers to them powers and responsibilities; and the right to call for proper management and good performance from students.

All school committee members interviewed asserted that they would not tolerate teachers whose behaviours betrayed education principles and standards by not performing well their teaching duties. PA_1 warned: *"we are sweating to pay and dedicate our time for a better education for our children, for their better performance. So, I think we should be aware on our children's instruction"* (Interview 22nd May 2010)

PA_1 and PA_3 added that the school committee can propose to the school principal or other competent authorities to make decisions against poor teachers. The school principal and other respondents stated that, fortunately, such a case requiring this kind of intervention has not happened in this school.

School governance responsibilities

The formulation of school policies involves more people and structures than budgeting. According to PA_1, PA_2, PA_3 and the school principal, the school administration drafts the school policy, passes it through different structures (teachers, students' committees) for their inputs, to the school committee and then to the general assembly for approval. Every parent has a copy of this policy which is also given to any parent when the new students are registering. However, this is not static; if necessary, this is updated using the same procedures. The school committee serves well as a link between the school and the community. The school committee, and in some cases individual informed parents, communicates with parents to support school and government policies or changes brought in the school. For example, the school principal revealed that the school committee informed parents over the objectives/purposes and benefits of the government decision to shift from French to English as medium of instruction.

PA_1, PA_2 and the school principal told the researcher that the school committee can initiate projects; gather insights from parents over what they wish to belong to that project, and consult any other relevant experts. For instance, due to the limited places in national higher institutions, parents are concerned by their children's fate after completing secondary education. They expressed the need to extend the school to tertiary education. The congregation of Josephite Brothers agreed to this proposal. The school committee in collaboration with the congregation and the school administration have undertaken a feasibility study for the extension of the school into tertiary education. Such programmes have started to run since the 2010 academic year.

As expressed by PA_1, PA_2, PA_3 and the school principal, the mechanisms mutually agreed by both parties for the implementation of any decisions or agreements between the school administration, school committee and/or parents is formal or informal communication. Firstly, it is in the basic school authority's responsibilities to report formally to the school committee, which in turn reports to the general assembly (written reports and meetings). Secondly, informal communication (verbal communication) between the school administration and the school committee is another way to [report] or monitor the implementation of decisions. Thirdly, parents get information from students about what is going on in school and inform the school committee. PA_2 said that, although it is an informal source, students provide parents with information on how teachers work. The school

committee and school authorities contact each other and discuss the issue and, if necessary, put it on the general assembly meeting agenda.

4.2.5 Challenges of the School Committee for the Effective Functioning

The school committee faces challenges which prevent them from being more involved in the governance. All the school committee members interviewed stated that the first challenge is the time limit, as the urban life makes people constantly busy. Thus, the daily business of school committee members does not let them to volunteer for the school activities requiring their intervention, i.e., regular meetings and school visits. Parents expect assistance in solving some of their problems. Most of time, they prefer to submit some kind of problems to the school committee before they do to the school administration. But, the school committee is not always available because it does not have a fixed place from which it operates.

The lack of training is another challenge. Most of school committee members are educated and have a socio-economic status relatively higher than the majority of parents. PA_1, PA_2, and PA_3 claimed to feel competent, committed, and aware of what they should do for the development of their children and knowing the basic principles for school transactions and budgeting. However, they indicated that they have not been trained and more training is needed upon certain regulations governing the education system and especially in helping them to perform well the school committees' power and responsibilities. They added that, even though school committee members are educated, their areas of specialization are not necessarily needed by the school or are not related to education. For them, the lower level of awareness on the school committees' functions and responsibilities constitutes a handicap to the effective involvement in the school governance.

They told that the lower awareness of the school committee and parents regarding their responsibilities vis-à-vis their children' education, the more complicated the tasks of the school committee. The school principal asserted that the low awareness of the public, especially the parents would prevent them from interfering with school responsibilities and/or the potential dereliction of their duties.

The school committee has tried to overcome this obstacle by working mostly under the guidance of the school authorities and those informed, and with their commonsense so that things go well. PA_1, PA_3 said that this has some consequences. This would make no informed

parents/school committee members to be passive and those informed to dominate the debates or induce school authorities to impose them some decisions against their please. In reply to the question of how well the not-ever-trained school committee members have performed their duties, the school principal stated:

> Our school committee members are educated and so competent. I recognise that they are not trained and their training would bring added value on the way they perform their duties. But, this lack of training is not a strong obstacle preventing them from performing well their duties. After their education level and training, the other most important thing I would consider is their ownership of the school development and their commitment to contribute, and the parents take this into consideration when they elect them (Interview 17th May 2010)

In electing their representatives, parents consider the ability and the competence of candidates to represent them not only to the school, but, if necessary, to other administrative entities for lobbing, advocacy, searching for useful information, etc.

According to PA_1, PA_2, the school committee is supposedly to negotiate with the school the tuition fees and any other subscriptions relatively affordable by many families and mobilises the parents to pay it on time. Nevertheless, its actions are sometimes unsuccessful due to the economic constrains of some families. The school principal reported about 5.800.000 Rwf of arrears in 2009 and every year there is almost the same amount. This matter focussed the school committee on the recovering of the school fees in arrears instead of taking on other tasks.

The school principal indicated that only students' parents are members of whether the school committee or the general assembly. If a student is no longer studying in the school his/her parent also breaks the membership. These inopportune replacements destabilize the school committee.

4.2.6 Strategies to Enhance School Financial Management

PA_1, PA_2, PA_3 and the school principal said that the best way to bring the school committee, parents and other close partners more involved in school financial management and governance is make information over what is going on in the school as transparent as possible. They stated that they are as much as possible in touch and contact each other. PA_1 added: "*What makes us committed is that the school authority is open. He does not hide anything. We trust each other and work together"* (Interview 22nd May 2010)

They mentioned that parents are also informed. The first step for parents to get involved is the attendance at the general assembly meeting. Every parent is required to attend the general meeting and visit her/his student at school. In stimulating them to regularly attend these meetings, the school committee and the school administration has taken the drastic decision that the students whose parents do not attend the meeting will be expelled from the class until their parents comes to explain the reasons of their absence. The researcher's first visit to the school coincided with many parents coming to explain why they did not attend the last general assembly meeting and ask the school principal what was discussed in the meeting.

The school principal indicated that other strategies to ensure parents attend meetings are to choose relevant topics for the agenda, and the strict observance of decisions made by the meeting. The other strategy consists in involving parents in the implementation of decisions made, especially if their implementation requires a particular expertise from a parent. They find that these strategies have been successful because the attendance of the general assembly meeting is around 80%.

PA_1, PA_3 and the school principal added that the school committee works with sub-committees with each having particular issues to handle. Sub-committees are established whenever problems requiring their intervention emerge. At the time of this study, there was a sub-committee for recovering tuition fees arrears, a sub-committee for problems in the technical section (shortage of technical materials and their high cost), and a subcommittee for the problems with the '*Tronc commun*'[4] and their basic responsibilities are to examine problems pertaining to these areas and make a proposal for solutions to the school committee. Solutions to these problems could be, for instance, putting pressure on any parents who do not pay tuition fee and any other agreed subscriptions, mobilising parents to contribute financially. Sometimes, with the agreement between the school committee and the school administration, the school sub-committee threatened to expel students who do not pay or to refuse to issue academic transcripts. In extreme case of no-payment, the school resorts to the local authorities for recovering the arrears.

The school principal feels indignant that the rigor in implementing this decision is seen by some parents as a way of infringing on their children's right to education but this makes him flexible, and so, students are expelled momentarily and come back, but this disturbs learning.

[4] Tronc commun: First three years of secondary education

4.2.7 School Committee and School Performance

The school principal and all of the teachers interviewed told the researcher that some factors and strategies made the school do well with students' performance. However, PA_2 stated that, previously, students' performance was better than it is today. The cause she is that the old "director of studies" left for other responsibilities and the new one is not experienced enough in organizing courses. PA_2, PA_3 and the school principal asserted that the school committee and students' families play a crucial role in student's performance.

All of the participants of this study found that discipline is a crucial factor for students' performance because it brings a favourable teaching/learning environment and school climate, and prevents students from being distracted. The school committee is very sensitive to disciplinary issues among teachers and students. It mobilises parents to be involved in maintaining this. PA_2 reported that there were some cases of drug use among students last year. But, particular strategies were deployed by the school administration with the assistance of the school committee and individual parents in fighting successfully against this problem. The school has now recovered to its normal situation.

The social interactions between school community members is used to involve and make them sensitive, to feel a sense of ownership and stand united behind the school progress. The school committee instituted a special school day in which the best teachers and students are yearly awarded. The school committee mobilise parents to attend events and pay regularly allowances for teachers' motivation. The school committee also assisted the school in negotiating sites for fieldwork in various enterprises and subscribed to the cost of the study trips. It also advises over the organisation of learning opportunities on the field in various enterprises.

The school principal, TA_3 and TA_4 said that the school committee encourages parents to participating in her/his child education by monitoring homework and school attendance through the "*cahier de communication*" [5]. Also, the school committee acts through sensitization, advices and encouragement to dysfunctional families whose problems prevent their children from attending school, and this reduces students' absenteeism and/or dropouts.

[5] *Cahier de communication*: notebook in which is put all of those concerns the students' behaviour and attendance.

4.2.8 Factors behind Student's Performance

Student's performance is a function of many factors. Some of them impact positively while others impact negatively. Certain strategies were devised by the school to fight those which impact negatively and strengthen those that have a positive impact.

Internal factors behind students' performance

Being a fully private school, it enrols students who have not been enrolled in public and subsidised schools; i.e., those who failed the national primary and 'O' level leavers' examinations. This is seen by those interviewed as the first factor impacting negatively on students' performance because the school works with students with a weak academic background. To overcome this obstacle and compete for a good place among other schools, the school uses strategies to provide a favourable teaching and learning environment. All participants attributed the good standing of the school regarding students' performance to the following strategies: the selective enrolment of students among those who have marks which are near the pass mark and through exams; sustaining the discipline by monitoring closely students' behaviour in the inside and outside of the school; good school organization of timetable; and closer supervision and moral support of students, as well as the devotion of teachers and students. According to teachers, the school principal and students, a daily assembly every morning in which the school anthem is sung and followed by an appropriate speech (daily word: moral lesson) to students by the school authority is a powerful tool to build the moral support and motivation of students. The availability of school authorities to students is a way to feed a competitive spirit among students. Finally, teachers also arrange remedial lessons for those who did not understand well.

External factors behind students' performance

According to school committee members, teachers and the school principal are well used for learning purposes; the school surrounding environment is a powerful source of information to supplement what students learned. Being in an urban area, students and teachers have easy access to internet, libraries, different media, etc…and these contribute to their formation.

TA_2, TA_3, TA_4, PA_2 and the school principal said that the surrounding school environment is rich in information. This can also be more harmful than formative because it is a powerful source of distraction and temptation; some evil things that affects students' behaviour if not

closely supervised. Around the school, there are also many film-houses which show tempting films likely to divert the students (as adolescents) from attending the class. TA_3 added: "*those houses do not show things on what is learnt in class; and all these CDs which students are bringing in their school bags, very few touches on what we teach!"* (Interview 18th May 2010)

All participants claimed that students' discipline is essential for the school committee and parents involved in the school governance, because, without internal and external discipline, there is no good students' performance. PA_2 pointed out: "*we, parents, are commuting from home to school in order to prevent our children from the misconduct, which make us to know often what is going on about how they behave"* (Interview dated 22nd May 2010)

Asking whether this commuting from home to school is not a waste of their time or annoying, she exclaimed:

> Oh! That is rather what we appreciate about this school! It is consuming our time and therefore a bit annoying, but we have no choice, it is our obligation, we should not leave our children's education only to the school. This kind of education would not have any positive outcome and without our intervention the school would not succeed (Interview 22nd May 2010)

The school committee and school authorities requested parents to collaborate in fighting against students' absenteeism by consulting the "*cahier de communication*" and supervising their children's homework. The school day I referred to above spurred the best practices among teachers and students.

4.2.9 School Leadership and Management

All of the teachers interviewed said they taught in non-catholic schools. TA_2 did not find any difference between catholic and non-catholic schools as, according to him, the difference is in the individual school leadership and not a result of belonging to Catholic Church or not. According to TA_1, TA_3 and TA_4, good leadership was also mentioned one of the characteristics of catholic schools, including this one. They differentiate catholic schools from non-catholic schools as the former are led by a clergyperson, and these school leaders dedicate all of their time to students and teachers. In contrast, laypersons have to look after their families first, then the school coming afterwards. Since, catholic clergy do not have families they have more time to dedicate to the schools. In addition, the catholic education principles are also valuable as catholic school leaders, religious or layman, have to comply with these.

The catholic private schools are more rigorous and more organized than catholic-subsidised schools because the latter are subjected to government rules and policies which can alter/impact on the school management and governance. For example, in the private schools, the human resource management and the setting and provision of salaries are flexible than in the public and subsidised schools where they comply with the government regulations. Likewise, in public and subsidised schools, the government guidelines may interfere with schools disciplinary rules (code of conduct, sanction procedures), which may make them less strict than the private schools.

The school principal, TA_2 and TA_4 stated that, in this catholic school, everyone is accountable to all. Students have to work hard and obey teachers and school authorities; teachers have to account for teaching and helping students properly; the school authorities account to teachers and students in facilitating and supporting the teaching/learning process. The school principal added the induction talk happens with every newly recruited teacher to impress upon them what the school believes in. Teachers and students participate in some decision making or make suggestions through departmental and pedagogical meetings and committees.

The school administration operates differently according to the level at which the decisions are delegated: deputy principal, deputy in charge of discipline, accountant… All these and teachers and students' committees make decisions pertaining to their particular duties and/or submit their proposals for solutions to the school administration. Their representatives sit in the general assembly meeting.

On the question about teacher's involvement in solving financial problems, all of the teachers interviewed showed passivity towards administrative and financial issues. They say they do not interfere, but they are kept informed, where necessary, on what is going on in meetings with the school principal. TA_3 stated:

> The administrative and financial problems are the business of the school principal and the proprietors/owners of the school and we trust them; we do not interfere in the school management. However, we are informed when there is a serious problem of no payment, but this did never affect the regularity of payments of our salaries (Interview 18th May 2010)

Teachers also appreciated the way the school authority treats them and is available anywhere for everyone, in the office as in the outside.

All of the teachers interviewed said that their interest pertains most to the professional and disciplinary issues, and the regular payments of their salaries. That is the area in which their participation in decision making is most evident. For instance, teachers put pressure on the school administration when teaching materials are not supplied or delayed. Teachers are currently putting pressure for a supply of adequate teaching/learning materials written in English as the latter became medium of instruction. This abrupt change from French to English led to a lack of materials in English as a teaching language and as a language for teachers. This problem is also mentioned by the school principal as a challenge for the school.

On students' discipline, teachers said they actively participate in decision making, as the school principal does not take any disciplinary sanction against students without consulting them, and especially the class teacher.

Students also participate in some decision making. SA_1, SA_2 acknowledged that they bring practical suggestions, mostly about discipline policies for students and timetable arrangements. They also report any teachers who do not teach well and sometimes ask for remedial lessons.

Students' participation is made through their elected representatives, the class monitors and heads of students' committee (head boy and head girl). Their suggestions are submitted to different authorities (deputy principal, deputy in charge of the discipline) and not necessarily to the school principal. The heads of students committee also sit in the school committee and the general assembly. For better participation in decision-making, SA_1, SA_2 stated that students want to be more consulted by the school administration when deciding on matters affecting their school life. These students pointed out that they are sometimes reluctant (because of their fear to meet the school principal) to explain to the school principal their particular problems.

4.2.10 The Catholic Church's Role in School Development

Catholic Church's actions and support for school development

All of the school committee members and teachers interviewed said that the congregation of the Josephite Brothers makes all kinds of decisions related to school management. The Catholic Church supports financially the school when it encounters any serious financial problem in addition to the tuition fees and other subscriptions from parents which are

responsible for the school daily running. They said the Catholic Church also connects the school to other sponsors, mostly its affiliated aid agencies. For example, TA_2 stated that the Catholic Church authorities negotiated the license for extension of the school to the tertiary education. On the whole, the Catholic Church support is mainly over financial matters (teachers' salaries, teaching materials, construction) and does not cover teacher's professional development, according to the participants.

According to the school principal, this is a technical school, requiring expensive teaching/learning materials and high teachers' salaries; but it is private and run without any subsidies from the government. This makes the units cost higher, and that is why middle and low-income families can only just afford school fees and have sometimes their fees in arrears. In most cases, the "*Economat General des Frères Josephites*" fills the gap in the school budget.

Influence of Catholic values on teaching/learning

TA_2 finds that there is a good teaching/learning environment and that the inherent outcomes relate to effective school leadership and teachers' good behaviours and values. Other participants are unanimous that the influence of the Catholic values work favourably on the teaching/learning. The school is founded and headed by the catholic Josephite Brothers and their goal of "*education under its all forms"* is strongly experienced in education. They instil into the school community (students, teachers and staff) the moral values likely to bring and sustain a good teaching/learning environment by inspiring both teachers and students: these values are: assiduity, constant hard working without wasting time, love of God and working together. They further say that, because the school is dedicated to Saint Joseph, the school authorities require students and even teachers to behave like or identify with Saint Joseph, "a workers model". [So, Saint Joseph is their role model].

All these elements of the Catholic Church applied to education make people assist freely each other. It educates bright students to help the weaker ones and work as a team. They also make teachers work conscientiously, with a commitment to students' performance and a love to help them better as well as their colleagues.

Catholic Church's contribution to teachers' retention and development

PA_1, PA_3 and TA_2 stated that there is not much turnover among teachers in this school. According to them, this is not a result of any Catholic Church support for teacher professional development but rather in the school leadership. They further asserted that the Catholic Church *per se* does not do much directly for them.

However, as PA_2, TA_1 and TA_3 added, it is not easy to deny the Catholic Church's contribution to teachers' retention because what attracted teachers to the school is related to the Catholic Church authorities (teachers' salaries, safe environment), as well as to the leadership style of the Josephite Brothers which inspires the school leadership. Curiously, even those who deny the Catholic Church contribution to teachers' retention hesitated and insinuated that it is not easy to separate it from the school administration which shows good leadership and a factor in teacher retention. PA_1 added:

> Behind what we appreciate as being a good school leadership is a catholic education philosophy. The school belongs to the Catholic Church. It [the Catholic Church] is represented by the members it appointed as school authorities. How can we deny its contribution in all what is being done in this school? (Interview 22nd May 2010)

And TA_3:

> It happens that parents do not pay tuition fees and that causes a huge gap in the school budget. This has never impacted on the regularity of our salaries. We do not know exactly where they [salaries] come from. Surely it is from the congregation! (Interview 18th May 2010)

TA_1 and TA_2 confessed that, in some private schools, when financial problems are encountered, teachers are not regularly paid. School authorities are sensitive and empathetic to teachers' social problems and they should think of teachers' welfare. For example, last year, the school poured in 500.000 Rwf of aid from the rent of some school technical materials (topographical ones) and put it in a "teachers' mutual aid fund/association".

4.3 School B

4.3.1 School Profile

School B is located in the Kigali city centre. It was founded in 1952 and is owned by the Congregation of the Bernadine Sisters. Throughout the years, the school grew and has become a large school with 784 students, comprised of 369 day learners and 415 boarding 0Biology-Chemistry, and the lower level. The majority of its students are from the families

surrounding the school; others are from different areas of the Kigali city, but all of them are from urban areas. The average distance from the school to the students' homes is approximately 5 km.

The school management team comprises 7 people. Three of them are members of the congregation of the Bernadine Sisters and hold some key positions in school administration, i.e., the school principal, the bursar, and the deputy in charge of discipline. It has 24 teachers; it is suitably qualified for teaching in secondary school considering the national requirements and the qualification rate in secondary education. The average teacher's workload is 27 hours per week compared to the Ministry of Education's instructions recommend 25-30 hours per teacher per week in public and subsidised schools.

Even though the main infrastructures have been built a long time ago, it has been regularly maintained; and with other buildings newly built, both are appropriate, safe and in good state and built in hard materials. There are 20 classrooms, 7 rooms for offices, and one for staff room both in two floors, one science laboratory, one computer laboratory comprising 30 networked computers, and other facilities like the latrines, electricity, running water, water tanks, and the different playgrounds excepted for the football. The school has 25 houses (9 separate houses and 16 flats) accommodating 25 teachers.

The majority of the students' parents are middle class. Some of them can hardly pay their tuition fee, as these are more than 200. Those who have approximately 30.000 Frw of monthly income prevail. Others are primary school teachers whose monthly income is relatively low (about 50.000 Frw), few secondary school teachers, very few are in the high standing, around 3-4 percent. The school community has some serious social problems amongst the students.

The school performance indicators indicate that the pupil/teacher ratio for the academic year 2010 is of 41:1 in the lower level and 36:1 in the upper secondary. The pupil/teacher ratio at the national level were of 16.7:1 in private schools, and 18.7:1 in public and subsidised schools in 2008. The school scored 98.82% in "A" level at the national leaver's examination in 2008 and held the 25th place among the government aided private schools and the 41th among all schools at the national level. In the same academic year, the school stands for 9th place in Bio-Chemistry option with an average of 3.81, and the 3th place in Maths-Physics

option at the national level with 4.0. The repetition rate in 2009 was of 1% against 8.4 at the national level.

4.3.2 Participants' Personal Background

Table 4.3: School B Personal Background of the Participants

Participants		**Highest qualification**	**Employment status/others responsibilities**	**Years of membership / Seniority**	**Religious status**
School committee members	PB_1	A_1 secretariat	Official in a NGO (VVOB)	3 years	Catholic laywoman
	PB_2	A_2 expert automobile	Insurance worker	8 years	Catholic Layman
	PB_3	Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences	Administrative assistant of the General Auditor	3years	Catholic Laywoman
School Principal		Bachelor's degree in education (Psychopedagogy)	School Principal	13 rears	Sister in Bernadine Sisters congregation
Teachers	TB_1	Diploma in Geography Bachelor's degree in Demography	Head of teachers' committee	11 years	Protestant
	TB_2	Bachelor's degree in Demography	Deputy Head of teachers' committee	13 years	Catholic Laywoman
	TB_3	Diploma in economic and social sciences Bachelor's degree in accounting	Signatory on the school bank account	25 years	Catholic Laywoman
	TB_4	Bachelor's degree in Arts (French-Kinyarwanda)	None	4 years	Catholic Laywoman
Students	SB_1	Grade 12/MP Geo	Head girl		Anglican church Laywoman
	SB_2	Grade 4	Deputy Head girl		Catholic Laywoman

4.3.3 Role and Responsibilities vested in the School Committee

The role and responsibilities vested in the school committee are similar in both schools. As for the school A, all of the school committee members and the school principal told the

researcher that the school committee collaborates with the school administration in examining the problems likely to hamper the school development and in particular the students' performance and with the school administration make appropriate decisions on how to improve the teaching/learning. The researcher wanted to know how the school committee perceive their duties and to what extent it performs them.

4.3.4 School Committee's Perceptions of its Capacity to Exercise its Responsibilities

The school committee's responsibilities are divided into three following major areas.

Resource management responsibilities

According to the school principal, apart the teachers' salaries, parents, with tuition fees and any others subscriptions, took the lead in funding the school. In 2009, the school records display an income of 134,854,040 Rwf. Among them 113,960,000 Rwf was from school fees, or 84.5%. It shows also an amount of 13,894,040 Rwf from the Ministry of Education as subsidies, or 10.3%. There is a donation from the Congregation (mainly in teaching/learning materials: computers and stationery), and a modest revenue from school farm.
The school committee has established a "school CARITAS Fund" to aid poorer students covering their basic needs. This fund is charitably fed in every general assembly meeting by parents. Some wealthy parents (in rare cases) do take charge of the poorest students. Parents contributed in erection of the fence for the security of the school. At the time of data collection, about 8,000,000 Rwf out of 22,000,000 Rwf planned for the whole project was collected and collection of funds was still going on.

The school principal, PB_1, and PB_3 told that, in establishing the school budget, the school administration drafts the school budget and presents it to the school committee for examination and eventual amendments and finally to the general assembly for approval. The school principal said that, as the school committee cannot be available in daily affairs in the school, the daily budget execution lies with the school principal. However, its monitoring is done by examining the reports from the school administration to the school committee, which in turn submits it to the general assembly. PB_2 told that every decision/agreement between the school authority and the parents is monitored by an *ad hoc* subcommittee which reports to the school committee.

PB_2, PB_3 confessed that the way they analyse the report is not very thorough for two reasons: they do not have enough time, but most importantly they trust the school authority. At the end of the term and the year the school administration reports on the execution of the budget and the implementation of any other decisions or agreement between the school and parents to the school committee and the general assembly.

PB_1 and the school principal asserted that the school committee has the crucial role of sensitising and mobilising parents in whether to approve the amount of the tuition fee or any other subscriptions for the school projects and to honour their promises. They added that decision or proposal related to school fees and/or subscription for any school project is trusted and easily accepted by parents than when it is made by the school authorities. Thus, the ownership of the school development by parents and other partners depends on the efforts that the school committee have deployed to mobilise them.

According to PB_1, PB_2, TB_3 and the school principal, to ensure their involvement in implementation in budget execution, the general assembly appointed two parents as signatories on the school bank account. However, all the big expenditures are authorised by the school principal. For the minor ones, the bursar is allowed to make them from the petty cash without any school principal's authorization.

Human resource management

The human resource management is the area in which the school committee and parents have not much responsibilities like the financial and materials resources), and not for teachers' recruitment or dismissal. However, all participants indicated that the school committee can discuss with the school authority any teachers who do not perform well her/his responsibilities or whose behaviour betrays the teaching standards. But, the school principal asserted that:

> What the school committee is responsible for is to advise the teacher to rectify the ways s/he works and/or behave. This is a public school (subsidised). So, teachers' management should comply with the government regulations governing the public servant management, and there are the competent authorities for that. I do not think that the school committee acts on their behalf or replace them. It should not interfere. However, in the extreme case, the school committee decision is consisting in handing in the case to the government authorities that manage the teachers. It belongs not to the school committee to decide (Interview 1st June 2010)

Despite this, the school principal revealed that school committee can, when the school authority expressed the needs, authorise the school to hire and fire additional contract

teachers. These additional contract teachers are paid from the school own funds or parents subscriptions. The proposal is submitted to the general assembly for approval.

School governance responsibilities

The school principal said that that's the school committee chairperson who convenes and heads the general assembly meeting and determines the agenda (based on the school needs expressed by the school principal of course!), and not the school principal. Every decision/agreement between the school authority and the parents is monitored by an *ad hoc* subcommittee which reports to the school committee.

PB_1, PB_2 and the school principal told that school policies and rules are set but are not static. They are constantly updated and various stakeholders bring their relevant insights for keeping the school vision on the right track. The school committee examines the existing school policy subjected to change and the new proposal to judge whether it complies with the legal framework and instructions from the high levels of administration (Ministry of education, District). According to them, the other important issue for the school committee is to check whether the school policy and/or regulations do not infringe on parents' and students' interests.

Over the necessity of the involvement of the school committee and parents in the school policy, PB_1 and P_3 replied that this way to set the school policy ensures ownership. The school principal said:

> I am able to do the school policy myself without any insights from the school committee members and parents, but I do not know what is best for them, and I am not alone to know the best for the whole school development. Most importantly, the implementation of the school policy in which the key partners (parents, teachers, and students) did not involve would be difficult (Interview 1st June 2010)

Likewise, TB_1, TB_3 recognized that the involvement of the school committee and parents in the school policy formulation had increased their ownership for the school development. But they added that these procedures are applied because they are required by government rules on the functioning of school committees and not for goodwill. They said that sometimes school authorities take a shortcut in taking some decisions for various reasons. The school committee is not always present at school. So, the school would not wait until the school committee is available as their members are busy with their daily business. Another reason is that, in most cases, parents trust the school authorities take the right decisions. The school authorities hope that the school committee will also agree with their decisions.

In keeping with the school vision, the school committee and parents always feel it is worthwhile to promote discipline in the school. The school committee established the school day to encourage the best practices among students and teachers, and has established their own "*Miss-valeur contest*"[6] contest on the yearly basis.

4.3.5 Challenges of the School Committee for the Effective Functioning

The first challenge is the lack of time as the school committee members are busy with their daily business. This prevents the school authorities to call them every time when they need their intervention. The school principal said: "*the school committee members (and parents) have their own businesses. They do not have enough time to dedicate to the daily school activities. What they do is enough. We cannot require them more than that"* (Interview 1st June 2010).

As evidence, the president of the school committee has resigned this year because the [political] tasks were consuming too much of his time, so that he had no any time for the school responsibilities [he was the Governor of one of the provinces of the country].

Only the students' parents of this school have the membership whether the school committee or the general assembly. If the students is no longer studying in the school his/her parent also loses their membership. These inopportune replacements tend to destabilize the school committee. Curiously, one of the school committee members still holds voluntarily the membership, even though he has no longer any child studying in this school.

The second challenge is lack of training of school committee members on their roles and responsibilities. PB_1 thinks that, even though most of the school committee members are educated, some of them are educated not necessarily in the areas needed by the school or related to education. Their lower level of awareness on the school committees' functions and responsibilities is a handicap to their effective involvement in the school management. He states that the school committee works mostly under the guidance of the informed members and the school authorities and their commonsense as well as are helping each other.

[6] Miss-valeur contest: the moral value-based competition among girls

All school committee members are educated and have a socio-economic status that is relatively higher than the majority of the parents. The school principal explained that this would not be the factor impacting on the democratic participation because, in most of time, decisions are made according to the views of the majority of those who sit in the general assembly.

The school principal finds that the school committee has the capacity to perform better in its responsibilities because all its members are educated. Some of them hold the positions allowing them to have access to useful information, understand and interpret them for the wisely and advise to school improvement and development. The president has been a secondary school principal for long time; then official in the Ministry of Education, while another school committee member is a lecturer in one of the Kigali City universities. The school principal said that, this lets her to assume that the level of education could not be the obstacle for them not to perform better their responsibilities, if committed. She reported that this was taken into consideration when parents were electing them. She said: *"We are in town; we do not pick up just anybody"*.

The school committee members are consistent with the school principal's view. On the question "*do you think you are effectively performing better your duties without being trained for that?*" PB_1, PB_2, PB_3 said that they are able to perform their duties. However, they acknowledged that they have not been trained for their duties. They told the researcher that the school committee works mostly under the guidance of those who are informed and the mutual understanding with the school authorities. They are committed to work for school development.

4.3.6 Strategies to Enhance School Financial Management

PB_1, PB_2, PB_3 and the school principal told the researcher that the school committee and the school administration are constantly in touch and contact each other. The school committee and the general assembly meetings are one of the formal and effective channels in which the school authority and the school committee/parents communicate, even though informal communications are also used. The school principal revealed that this school has never faced any attendance problem and both side are committed to sustain this culture.

Every decision/agreement between the school authority and parents is monitored by an *ad hoc* subcommittee which reports to the school committee. Two parents have been appointed as signatories in the school bank account. Volunteering is a strategy to involve parents in the implementation of the decisions made. When the implementation of any decisions requires a particular expertise held by any parents, these parents are requested to participate voluntarily in it even if they are not school committee members.

4.3.7 School Committee and School Performance

On the school committee support to the pedagogical process, various people are perplexed when acknowledging this principle**.** TB_1, TB_2 agreed that pedagogical matters should be a responsibility of the school committee and the individual parents. They add that school committee is competent for that but they warned however that this issue should be treated with caution. According to them, the school committee does not inspect and should not be involved in with teachers' professional responsibilities. TB_1 added: "School committees are consultative organs; they should not be involved deeply in pedagogical matters" (Interview dated 10th June 2010).

However, they advised that the school committee support to the pedagogical process is needed. School committee should sensitise parents to be involved in their children's instruction, in visiting the school authorities and individual teachers to discuss their children's learning difficulties; supervising the homework and learning at home; and be involved when there is fighting against teachers or students' absenteeism.

The school principal, TB_1 and TB_4 revealed that, as some school committee members are experienced educationists, they advise the school authorities and teachers over more innovative teaching/learning strategies. And some of them animate workshops and conferences/lectures for teachers and students when the school authorities express the need. The school committee established teachers' allowances and mobilises parents to subscribe to that. It also organized the school day and mobilised parents to attend the event and subscribe for the awards to the best students and teachers. As expressed by all school committee members, the school principal, and teachers, this school day has a double significance. First, it is an opportunity to establish social interactions between parents and teachers and the school authorities, which is necessary if the school community members need to feel united

for ownership of their school. Secondly, this is an opportunity to initiate and encourage best practices.

4.3.8 Factors behind Students' Performance

Under the advice and collaboration with the school committee, parents, and the school authorities created a school environment and strategies aimed at contributing to students' performance.

Internal factors behind students' performance

All participants stated that the powerful strategies to promote students' performance are: tight students' discipline and teachers' hard work. This offers a favourable teaching/learning environment. TB_1, TB_2, TB_3, and TB_4 stated that the closer supervision of the students' works, the more regular internal assessments (interrogations), and the rational time management also all part of these strategies.

The school principal revealed other strategies to boost students' performance. Every intake is accompanied along its either entire "O" and/or "A" levels. This means that students from different classes cannot be mixed or interchanged with others from another parallel class and form one class the following academic year. According to the school principal, this strategy offers two advantages.

This allows identifying where individual students have learning difficulties in comparison with other students evolved together. This strategy also allows identifying any problems related to any teachers' weakness, because it would show how many students have similar difficulties in such subjects along their studies and why they did have these difficulties. Once these difficulties and their causes are identified, the ways to fix them would be easier.

According to the school principal, TB_1, TB_2, TB_3, and TB_4, this school has another asset in enrolling only students who passed successfully the primary and the "O" level leavers' national examinations. This is combined with the commitment and competition spirit of students and teachers to keep the best place. Furthermore, the school has adopted the

Rwandan development philosophy of "*imihigo*"[7] (accountability/performance contract) from the country's development strategies to the pedagogical area. In fact, each level of school administration (school authorities, classes) should have its "*imihigo*" (performance contract).

This encourages students and teachers to have high expectations and accountability. Every student aspires to Oklahoma University scholarship (for excellence) because many of their elder sisters have benefited from this scholarship. Consequently, teachers work with these objectives to have a higher number of students benefiting from this scholarship.

Even though these two strategies seem to be pedagogical decisions made by the professionals (educators), the school committee and the general assembly brought their suggestions; and the school authority presents its "*imihigo*" to the school general assembly for approval.

The recruitment of best teachers is another factor contributing to students' performance. The school principal said that the school recruits the best and most experienced teachers.

> We do not recruit anyhow. We recruit after a deep analysis of teachers' academic records. But most importantly we sound out the teachers' vocation, as the teaching career is more demanding. To this, we add the teachers' proper supervision and sensitivity to their welfare which impacts favourably on the teachers' retention (Interview dated 1st June 2010)

Most of them are accommodated, which prevent them from wasting time.

External factors behind students' performance

PB_1, PB_2 and PB_3 said that the school committee suggested the school authorities to open the school to parents. Previously, parents were allowed to visit their boarding children once a week. Today parents can visit their children any time and discuss with the school authority and teachers their child's learning difficulties, if any. The school principal, TB_1 and TB_4 revealed that this strategy has been successful because, since then, the number of parents who visit their children increased and this has contributed in sustaining especially students' discipline. When visited, students feel supported, and behave and work properly.

TB_1, TB_2, TB_3 and TB_4 asserted that most students are from families who are aware of educational benefits. These parents motivate, help or supervise their children's learning at home. The school is located in an urban area where other educational facilities are available.

[7] *Imihigo*: Accountability system consisting in that, every employee/institution signs with its employer/upper level institution a performance contract comprising a set of goals to achieve in a given period of time.

The surrounding school environment allows students to access to supplementary information for learning. They (teachers and students) do the personal research outside of the school, on the internet, in journals, various media.

According to TB_3, other parents' volunteering is also likely to contribute to students' performance. For instance, one parent working in an embassy in Kigali has undertaken negotiations for short English courses for students.

4.3.9 School Leadership and Management

According to the school principal, TB_1, TB_2, TB_3, and TB_4, teachers discuss their professional issues and make decisions or suggestions accordingly through departments, pedagogical meetings and committees. Either departments, pedagogical or committee meetings, submit problems and proposals for solutions to the school administration. The school principal meets with them on occasion.

Despite that, TB_1 said that some teachers are not satisfied with the ways they participate in school decision making. Teacher's contribution in decision making is done mainly in the pedagogical area because that is the area where their expertise is sought. Teachers are less involved in financial matters. So, as they are rarely informed upon this kind of problems, they contribute less to their solution. Those who participate do so as parents, not as teachers.

TB_3 teacher said that the school principal goes on keeping teachers away from the management of the parents' subscription for their allowances. She said that some teachers (especially the young ones) expressed the need to be involved; but they not have got any feedback from the school principal. For instance, in 2008 the school administration diverted the teachers' allowances for other purposes (plot buying) without their consent and this has not been refunded. However, this allowance is regularly and collected in full.

TB_3 and TB_4 asserted that, in spite of these few inconveniences, they appreciate the school authority. To the question on things that attract them, TB_3 replied: "*I like this school because I studied in this. I am secure being in this school. Even though the teaching career pays less, when the leadership is good, the teaching career becomes more secure than others"* (Interview 11th June 2010)*;*

while TB_4 said: *"this is a school where I have a sense of fulfilment". About what frustrates them, they responded nothing frustrates them!*" (Interview 15th June 2010).

As regards with students' involvement in decision making, SB1, SB_2 said that most of the time their suggestions are taken into consideration when making decisions. According to them, the areas in which they bring suggestions are learning facilitation and arrangements, and living arrangements (including feeding) for boarding students.

Their suggestions pass throughout a hierarchical channel. They are made in the students' council which submits them to the diverse levels, but not necessarily to the school principal. Students' representatives are elected by them and sit in the school committee.

4.3.10 The Catholic Church's Role in School Development

Catholic Church actions and support for school development

All participants agreed that there was no concrete Catholic Church support and actions for school development. The school principal revealed that the Catholic Church used to help financially its schools, and this one. But, nowadays, due to economic constraints, there is no significant financial support from the Catholic Church. However, the Catholic Church dedicates its clergy to head the school. She said that:

> As catholic Sisters, our presence in this school is also considered as a form of support. We would be occupied with other religious responsibilities, but we can dedicate all our time and energy to this school. Our presence allows us to go beyond what is required in helping students to understand what to do or behave and the love of work in the love of god. Furthermore, as the Bernadine Sisters congregation, we collect materials from our different affiliate agencies. For example, we have acquired from our foreign sponsors some computers to allow students to access them. That's one example, but, there are many others. The home is ours! (Interview 1st June 2010)

According to the maintenance and construction, the school principal indicates that there was a catholic organization called FERES (*Fonds d'Entraide pour la Réfection des Ecoles Secondaires*) which supported catholic schools and their construction and repairs, but due to financial constraints, where there are low funds these are first channelled to new schools.

All participants revealed that the Catholic Church has the crucial responsibility of human resource. First, on the mutual consent with the Catholic Church authorities, the government nominates the school authorities. Secondly, the diocesan representative of the catholic

education countersigns teachers' assessment form after the school principal. This second responsibility of the Catholic Church authorities is bitterly criticised by TB_1 who argues that, as the diocesan representative of the catholic education is not necessarily an educationist, he is not qualified to monitor teaching and learning. Secondly, he is not supposed to know how teachers perform their duties because they are not close to them in their daily teaching activities. Thus, he should not evaluate teachers.

The Catholic Church authorities' responsibilities towards financial management are not really noticeable as the school is subsidised. As stated by the school principal, the school authorities report about their financial management to the government hierarchy. However, the Catholic Church authorities participate in the school committee meetings and contribute with their inputs like others.

Influence of Catholic values on teaching and learning

All participants stated that the discipline that prevails in catholic schools cannot be found elsewhere. They said that the influence of the Catholic values work through the catholic discipline. A clergy person is there to advise students and teachers on how to behave and asserted that such beliefs can empower students and teachers in achieving their goals.

TB_1 said that the influence of Christianity, and not only that of the Catholicism, provides a favourable teaching and learning environment. PB_1, PB_2, PB_3, the school principal, TB_1, TB_2, TB_3 and TB_4 asserted that the school internal organization is such that every student belongs to any catholic movement and/or other charitable associations such as the Red Cross. Through these movements, students are inducted into strong moral values, such as aid to the needy, assisting each other, working hard as a team. These catholic movements also discourage and fight against vices such as cheating, laziness, and divisiveness which are considered as sins and likely to impact negatively on students' work. TB_1 noticed that this encourages the brighter students to aid weaker ones and work as a team. There is no big difference between student's marks (the first in the class can reach 80% while the bottom one has 60%).

According to the school principal, catholic values translate into practice through the school mission statement: '*All in love*'. This educates the school community members to love and

help each other and makes teachers learn from one another and help students to perform better.

Catholic Church's contribution to teachers' retention and development

All participants stated that teachers are relatively stable. Teachers don't leave the school for another one, but leave only for promotion. PB_1, PB_2 and TB_3 find that the Catholic Church has given an attractive proposition in the form of accommodation for teachers. But, no one has reported Catholic Church's actions on teacher professional development.

TB_1, TB_2, TB_4 stated that teachers' retention in this school can be explained by the good school culture and internal organization. The school leadership creates a safe working environment, and promotes teachers' welfare, which is not a direct influence of the Catholic Church *per se*. However, PB_1, PB_2, PB_3, TB_2 and TB_3 stated that one cannot isolate the Catholic Church's impact from teachers' retention because the catholic authorities contribute to the appointment of the school authorities (members of its clergy) who defend the catholic philosophy, as if the Catholic Church was present. To the question whether the Catholic Church does not really contribute in teachers' retention, the school principal replied: "*I am the Catholic Church in this school!"* (Interview 1st June 2010). The school principal said that the Catholic Church authorities provide moral support in sharpening teachers' vocation by recollection (retreat). She also links good teachers' retention to the recruitment of wise and experienced teachers, who have the teaching vocation. The accommodation provided to teachers, she said, is also an attraction.

4.4 Comparisons of Findings between the two Schools

It is now important to compare the findings from the two schools. These schools have much in common and only some slight differences. They are both located in an urban area, and both catholic schools led by clergypersons. School A is a private, mixed day school while school B is subsidised and a boarding girls' school. Findings have not shown any significant differences related to the way they implement school decentralization. The only difference in the school status could have impacted on some aspects of school governance, such as the extent to which the school committees and parents are involved in school financial and human resource management.

The similarities include the school committees' capacity, the socio-economic background of students (lower and middle in the school A, and middle in the school B). In both schools, the majority of school committee members are educated, an assumption which was made by the parents who elected them that the level of qualification and position they hold will be important for them represent them more effectively not only at school, but, most importantly, in facilitating access to useful information, for lobbing, advocacy, and connecting the school to administrative authorities.

Both schools use similar strategies in ensuring parent's involvement in school governance. These strategies are consistent in providing the school committees and parents with the transparent information over what is going on in the school; and in using all formal and informal channels. They find these strategies have been successful because the attendance of the general assembly meeting reaches around 80%.

These schools operate in the same urban environment. Since urban life makes people busy with the daily business, the lack of time is the common challenge preventing school committee members and parents from effective participation in school governance. Another important challenge faced by the school committees is the lack of training, and the lower level of awareness of the public and parents over their responsibilities on their children' education.

Both schools have a strong leadership and accountability system. Students have to work hard and obey teachers and school authorities; teachers have to account for their teaching and helping students properly; the school authorities account to teachers and students in facilitating and supporting the teaching and learning process. These principles constitute key criteria for sounding out teacher's vocation before recruitment and every newly recruited teacher is inducted into this philosophy.

In spite of some inconveniences derived from teachers' non-involvement in financial management, on the whole, teachers are satisfied with the way they participate in professional and disciplinary decisions making. On the basis of what the school principal, teachers, and students said, the decision-making is spread to various structures: departments, teachers and students' committees by which teachers and students participate in decision making and/or bring their suggestions.

However, there are also some differences. One school is catholic and private while the other is catholic and subsidised. This factor is likely to impact on the way these schools operate, and more specifically in the way resources (human, financial, and material) are managed. One has private propriety which it manages as it pleases, while the other is managed jointly with the government. As a result, some differences occur in the participation of the school committees and parents in school financial management and governance; in the Catholic Church power and responsibilities in the school, and its support of the school.

There are also differences in the management of resources (human, financial, and material). In school A, the school committee involvement in school financial management is lower. No-one is aware of the school financial management except school principals, while school B tried to involve the school committee and parents in the financial management by appointing two parents as signatories on the school bank account. As result, in school B, parents are closer to the school and have initiated certain projects, unlike in school A. At the time of data collection, parents had already collected about 8,000,000 Rwf out of 22,000,000 Rwf estimated (and collecting funds was going on) for erecting the school fence to ensure school security. The school committee has also established a "CARITAS Fund", to which parents contribute to aid poorer students covering their basic needs. Some wealthy parents take charge of some of the poorest students. All these initiatives are not fund in school A. On the tuition fees and other subscription, however, there is not much difference: it is estimated at 79.2% and 84.5% of school funding in school A and school B respectively.

The involvement of the school committees in school financial management and monitoring of the budget and implementation of any other decisions is not substantial. But, the explanations for this are nuanced. In school A, the school committee is reluctant because the school is fully private in which parents do not have shares in the school, and this responsibility belongs to the school authority and the founding congregation of Josephite Brothers. In school B, the reason is the lack of time, but most importantly, the reciprocal trust between the school committee and school authority.

In both schools, the school committees have not formal [legally recognized] powers and responsibility over human resource management unlike with financial and material resources. In school A, all decisions regarding human resource management pertain to the Congregation

of the Josephite Brothers (which appoint the school authorities) and the school administration (teachers and staff recruitment and dismissal). By contrast, in school B, the school committee has a responsibility with contract teachers as it can authorise the school to hire and fire additional contract teachers, paid from school funds or parents' subscriptions.

Pedagogically, the two schools operate with different students' backgrounds. The school A enrols students who failed in the national examinations, whereas the school B enrols those who passed successfully the examinations. One can assume that school A made more effort as it managed to stand well in students' performance despite it works with students of a relatively weak background. Many strategies recorded in this study would have contributed to this success, but, as this was not the main aim of the study, its relation has not been strongly established here as it would have needed a different research angle.

Concerning the support of the school committee to students' performance, both school committees engaged in decisions aimed at contributing to students' performance, such as enhancing the discipline among teachers and students; fighting against students' absenteeism; organizing the school day; establishing a reward system which encourages best practices among teachers and students, and teachers' allowances. In school A, the school committee goes on sensitizing, advising and encouraging dysfunctional families with problems which prevent children from attending school. School B uses two strategies to boost students' performance not found in school A. The first is the "*imihigo*" (performance contract) which feeds students and teachers' high expectations, commitment and a competitive spirit. The second is that every intake is accompanied along its either entire "O" and/or "A" levels.

Thus, even though the Catholic Church owns both schools, they are differently managed mainly because of their legal status and the fact that the Church's support and actions differ accordingly. In school A, the private catholic school, the Catholic Church authorities have the prerogative on issues related to resource (human, financial, and material) management. By contrast, in school B, a subsidised catholic school, the Catholic Church authorities have limited powers and responsibility on certain aspects of resources management as the school administration has to report on financial and personnel management to the government (district, Ministries...) and not to the Catholic Church.

As regards human resource, however, the Catholic Church still holds powers and influence because, in catholic subsidised schools (including school B), the government nominates school authorities on mutual consent with the Catholic Church. Moreover, the diocesan representative of Catholic education countersigns teachers' assessment form after the school principal.

The influence of Catholic values on the teaching/learning is the same throughout catholic education which is known to discourage and fight against petty vices which are considered as sins likely to impact negatively on students' work. In both schools, there is no particular Catholic Church contribution to teachers' retention and development, apart from the supply of teachers' accommodation in school B, which is not directly attributed to the Catholic Church.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

This section interprets the findings in terms of the literature framework and the research questions. This study aimed to explore the school decentralised dispensation in Rwanda to understand the partnership and respective roles of government, Catholic Church, school administration and parents in terms of their duties and responsibilities in school governance. The findings were derived from interviews with school committee members, i.e. school principals, teachers, students and parents' representatives. In addition, the District Education Officer, the Director of the "*Secretariat National de l'Enseignement Catholique*" (SNEC), and the Regional Inspector of Education in Kigali City have been also interviewed.

The interpretation of findings is organised according to the three main research questions:

1. How do school committees perceive and exercise their powers and responsibilities in contributing to school development?
2. How do the school committees and school administration work together in contributing to school development?
3. How do Catholic Church authorities contribute to the managerial and/or professional issues and needs of schools? And how do the government and Catholic Church collaborate in contributing to school development?

5.1 School Committee's Exercise of Powers and Responsibilities Regarding School Development

The school committee effectiveness depends on members' understanding of their duties and their capacity to participate in informed school decision making. The school committees worked in collaboration with the school administration and other school close partners in contributing to their children's school development. However, they also face certain challenges which are related to a lack of training, time limitations and some unclear regulations.

5.1.1 The composition of the School Committees and its Implications

The school committee comprised of parents representatives, school principal, teachers and students. The school community is educated and so are parent's representatives which tend to come from a relatively high socio-economic status.

Advantages

Both schools tend to appoint as school committee members parents from a relatively highly educated socio-economic status even though the majority of the school's parents are from the middle and lower socio-economic status. This lack of representativeness of school committee members confirms research results in other contexts (Khan, 2007).

This rather elitist profile of the representatives of school committee members has advantages and disadvantages. Being educated means they can more easily overcome a lack of governance training; they can also access information needed to contribute to school development by using their social capital. Putnam (1993, cited in Khan, 2007: 58) defines social capital as ''features of organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action with partners''. Because some school committee members hold positions in key institutions, their "social capital" facilitates the connection to sponsors, the lobbying with higher level officials (Ministry of education officials, district education officer, etc.) as well as easier access to useful information needed for school development. For instance, in school A, one school committee member owns a private enterprise, while another works for a construction enterprise. In school B, the president of the school committee was a secondary school principal for a long time and became an official in the Ministry of Education, while another school committee member lectures in one of Kigali City Universities. One can assume that, in [s]electing members of the school committee, the school administration is interested in what these committee members can bring to the schools.

That's why school A elected school committee members with access or connection with construction enterprises as it assists with student's fieldwork, since this school has the "Public Work and construction" options. School B enjoyed the strategic connection of high government education officials from its school committee members.

School A committee members assisted in identifying enterprises for students' fieldwork while school B, as a subsidised school, recently benefited from privileged access to the Ministry of Education in terms of the building of a computer Lab, a science laboratory, a library and now is repairing dormitories and teachers' accommodation. It is not easy to establish a relation of cause and effect between these benefits and the highly educated and socially connected members of the school committee. But probably these committee members lobbied to gain access because other schools did not benefit to the same degree from these advantages. Thus, this research reveals that school decentralization was used by parents to elect highly educated parents who could broaden the social capital of the school and contribute to school development.

Disadvantages

Bringing together parents from different socio-economical background in the school committee constitutes a platform for interactions and cross-fertilisation of ideas, experiences and networks between the members, an opportunity to learn from each other, and the means of challenging the traditional thinking that education decision-making belongs only to professionals (Khan, 2007: 58). The findings indicate that parents from lower socio-economical background were quasi-excluded from the school committee. Yet, educational decentralization reforms are promoted for greater efficiency as well as local empowerment and greater democratic participation (Beattie, 1985; Brown, 1990, 1994; Education Commission, 1998 cited in Sui Chu Ho, 2005: 48; Norrel, 1994: 337). Thus, this discriminative appointment of parents onto the school committee could be perceived as infringing on the principle of democratization and the opportunity for all parents to share and learn from one another (Khan, 2007: 58). It also results in a lack of balanced decisions for all parents who will not be as committed to the plans and policies of the school (Giles, 1972: 69, 72-73; Norrel, 1994: 337; Sarason, 1990 cited in Yu, 2005: 263). This can also lead to the lack of ownership of decisions made, as these will tend to reflect the views of parents from higher socio-economical background.

Studying the impact of the socio-economic status on school councils members and how decisions are made in a few schools in Pakistan, Khan (2007: 69) found that, in most cases, socially inclusive school councils rank high in making innovative decisions that bring

educational change, while those who excluded lower socio-economic parents rank low on these decisions because influential council members monopolize decisions and attendance of meetings gradually dropped. This tendency of influential school committee members to dominate decisions is also found in this research. But, it is interesting to note that the attendance on the general assembly meetings is very satisfactory (at 80%). However, one needs to note that, in the long run, this tendency could affect the way some parents will behave and participate more strongly than others.

At the high level, education decentralization bears another dimension. The social capital and its potentials to contribute to school development by mobilizing funds, facilitating the network with sponsors, lobbying higher level officials and accessing useful information prevail more in urban schools than in the remote rural area. The findings of this study are consistent with Benson (1978 cited in Brown, 1990: 61; Fiske, 1996: 27) who sees education decentralization as a tool which perpetuates inequity in education. In this case, it appears as if it worsens the existing education inequities between urban and remote rural areas.

Thus, to be efficient, the school committee needs to be balanced. It [school committee] needs high socio-economic status parents who are able to create a social capital that drives school development. On the other hand, the vast majority of parents should feel represented by parents with whom they share the same thinking. This is critical because school committee decisions are better implemented when supported by parents or the majority of them who think the same.

5.1.2 The capacity of the School Committees

From the literature on the implementation of school decentralization we have learnt that one of the important conditions for school committee members to exercise effectively their role and responsibilities in schools is their level of organization, the working mechanisms they set and the concrete actions they undertake and achieve, and the existence of clear regulations over the responsibilities pertaining to each partner in school governance (Sayed, 2002: 38). The capacity of school committee members is drawn from their level of education as well as their training.

In both schools, school committee members have proven to understand their duties, the school objectives and priorities. They participate in formulating and monitoring school policies. On the financial management, they understand the financial framework in which the school operates, interpret budget, monitor information, communicate to parents, and know the school's funding arrangements and different streams. The members actively participate in the work of the school committees, prepare and head periodically the meetings. The school committees managed to bring the majority of parents to attend the general assembly meetings and make decisions aiming at the school development. Both school principals expressed their satisfaction with the way school committees perform their duties.

With regards to the school committees' capacity and the necessity for clear regulations, the District Education Officer, the Regional Inspector of Education in Kigali City, and the Director of SNEC said that they are satisfied with the way the school committees in schools under study perform their duties and collaborate with the school administration. The District education officer added, however, that despite their level of education, the school committees' capacity remains flawed by a lack of training. The school committee members would perform better their responsibilities if inducted into the various educational policies, rules and regulations and their educational roles and responsibilities (i.e, strategic plans: of the district and the national one as well; national education policy, legal framework for their roles and duties).

The observations of both the District Education Officer and the Regional Inspector of Education concur with those of Sayed (2002: 38) and Keedy and Finch (1994 cited in Talley & Keedy, 2006: 443) in saying that the school committees in these schools, effectively used, these would contribute to school development and market the schools. But, they also bewail this lack of training for school principals, teachers and staff which is likely to impact negatively on the way they build a welcoming school environment for the school committee and parents to involve in school governance.

The existence of clear regulations is another critical condition. The law n° 29/2003 of 30/08/2003 (art. 19) establishing the organisation and functioning of nursery, primary and secondary schools established the School General Assembly, described summarily the general assembly's duties. But, the establishment of the school committee and the definition of its duties, the way to ensure the representativeness of parents from different socio-

economical background, their profile, the length of membership of school committee members, and the periodicity (frequency) of meetings are left to the Presidential Decree (art. 19, paragraph 2) which is still pending. The current Ministry of Education's instructions over the functioning of school committees closed the gaps, but they also have some gap. As a result, as the findings show, their interpretation by stakeholders may conflict with the laws.

When the lack of training is combined with the lack of clear regulations about the school committees' duties and responsibilities, the school committees exercise their power and responsibilities using their commonsense. This leads to school committees and parents becoming reluctant to exercise their duties, or interfere with school administration. A good example is that the school committee asserted to be reluctant to involve directly in some aspects of pedagogical matters, lest the teachers feel invaded in their professional tasks. Despite this, findings show that school committees strive to engage with the school administration in decisions and actions likely to contribute to the school culture of teaching and learning, and so to the students' performance.

5.1.3 The Exercise of School Committees' Responsibilities

The literature on school decentralization points to different forms of decentralisation which depend on their national policy and social contexts. These reforms are also unique and differ according to whom "decision-making authority" is devolved, and on what decisions are devolved (World Bank, 2007: 5).

In Rwanda, the purpose of school decentralisation is to strengthen school management by allocating more managerial and governance decision-making responsibilities at school level. It is also about accessing more funds from society and promoting better school accountability. A main motive behind education privatization and decentralisation is that competition is introduced in education to make schools more accountable to clients or parents. Teachers are not only be made to account to their managers, but also to those who receive their services, i.e. parents who will demand better services if the education provided is not satisfactory, and will use their 'voice' by threatening to withdraw their children if quality does not improve (Tooley & Dixon, 2006: 445; Belfield & Levin, 2002: 22).

In the Rwandan context, human resource does not fall within the school committee responsibilities, recruitment or dismissal of teachers is not included since it is a responsibility of the central government and district, as well as of the proprietor i.e., associations that founded the school (in this case, the catholic church for school A). In subsidized school (such as school B), most teachers are appointed permanently and are paid by the government. However, because of cuts in the education budget, the central government cannot meet all schools' human resources needs and it asks school committees to recommend on the hiring and firing decisions regarding additional contract teachers.

Although the law does not grant school committees powers over human resources management and pedagogical aspects such as curriculum, parents have the right to demand better academic results and contribute to the moral aspects of education of their child at this school. Consequently, school committees are involved with some aspects of schooling and moral issues, and monitor teachers in these respects. The findings indicated that the school committee discusses with the school authority teachers who do not perform well their responsibilities or whose behaviour and morality do not fit with the teaching profession. Parents can propose to the school principal or other competent authorities any corrective decisions against such teachers. This goes against the beliefs of the principal of school B who argued that teachers' management is a government business only.

On the issue of school financial accountability, the school administration involves the school committees. Parents are expected to play a role in funding the school and ensure that their funds are managed properly. There are other positive consequences. Firstly, when parents are involved, they feel valued and committed to assist the school. Secondly, when it is decided to involve partners in school action/project, these decisions are more easily accepted by parents than when it is requested by the school authorities. Thirdly, parents and the school authorities are made to trust one other and work with less suspicion.

However, this study reveals some contradictory trends. There is an imbalance between the way school committees and parents participate in raising school revenues and the way they oversee the management of resources and revenues. In both schools, the school administration tends to keep the financial management as its almost exclusive task, with the school committee and teachers being involved only superficially in the preparation and monitoring of the school budget.

In school B, the mutual trust between the school committee and school leaders is advanced as a reason for the poor participation of the school committees in the financial decision making. However, such trust does not exist as much between teachers and the school administration as many teachers wanted to be involved in the management of parents' subscription for their own allowances. They complained that they did not receive feedback from the school principal, and the school committee was not informed about it. In school A, the findings also indicate that parents are reluctant to involve in some school governance aspects because they did not found the school. Some school committee members claim to be involved with the school management but it is doubtful as these are the exclusive duties of the school administration and the Josephite Brothers Congregation. The Regional Inspector of Education (RIE) in Kigali city confirmed that by saying that, in school A, it is only the school authorities which deal with financial matters.

Thus, the schools' status impacts on the way they are managed. Public and subsidised schools (such as school B) comply with government instructions and are likely to associate more quickly the community in school governance. Private schools (like school A) have the school owners to manage the schools as they please since they do not have to comply with all government instructions. These schools involve the community only when they need them for reasons such as raising funds, payment of school fees and other monetary benefits. This is why school B, unlike school A, managed to introduce in school an accountability process known as "*imihigo*" (consisting in signing for the performance contract). This strategy is commonly applied in the administration of government institutions other than schools. Furthermore, school B has the school committee and parents involved in the financial management with two parents being signatories of the school bank account, while, in school A, it is the exclusive responsibilities of school management. This could explain why, in school B, parents have initiated and supported some construction projects not found in school A.

The catholic teaching or 'golden rule of 'love others as you love yourself (charitable actions) is used to mobilise the community in contributing to problem-solving around school development. School B managed to establish a school CARITAS fund to cover poorer students' basic needs while some wealthy parents also take charge of the poorest students. Yet, these solutions to some educational problems are not found in school A.

5.1.4 The School Committee and School Performance

Advocates of decentralization to schools put forward the improvement of school productivity and students outcomes as an important objective (Talley & Keedy, 2006: 422). However, Leithwood and Menzies (1998) assessed studies by Bauer & Bogotch (1997); Smylie (1992); Short & Johnson (1994); Taylor & Bogotch (1994) and Trachtman & Fauerbach (2001) and concluded that there is an ambiguous empirical linkage between school decision-making and school performance.

Similarly, this study could not establish directly whether the school committees' actions or decisions had a positive impact on students' performance but it is clear that school committees engaged with the school administration or contributed to enabling conditions to improve students' performance in a way they would not have done before, as Talley & Keedy (2006: 423) mention. Deventer & Kruger's (2003: 3) define an enabling culture of learning and teaching as positive attitudes by all role players towards teaching and learning, as well as the presence of quality teaching and learning in schools. The characteristics of positive school culture include: positive school climate, sound home-school relations, management and administration, neat buildings and facilities, sound classroom environment, effective leadership, availability of resources, high professional among educators, healthy relationship between all role players, order and discipline, effective instructional leadership, and shared sense of purpose.

The findings showed that teachers and school committee members collaborated closely in sustaining discipline, a crucial factor for high students' performance because it contributed to a safe climate and conducive relationships between teachers and students, as mentioned by Rogers (2002: 7, 40). The school committees motivated parents as to the demands on their children, the need to visit teachers at school, supervised their homework, and fought against teachers' and students' absenteeism. The school A committee also advised, supported and encouraged dysfunctional families whose problems prevented children from attending school. It also identified and negotiated sites for students' fieldwork, advised on the organisation of learning arrangements with various enterprises as well as contributed to the cost of such field trips.

The school committees encouraged social contacts between school community members and other stakeholders. In both schools, the school committees mobilised various stakeholders to be involved in school life and be united behind the school's development. They organised "school days" and mobilised parents to attend it.

Various intrinsic and extrinsic factors contribute to teachers and students' motivation into doing something that they would not normally do (Daniel, 2002: 393). Motivation can enhance and sustain interest and self-determination (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002: 263-265; Wlodkowski, 1978: 155). The school committees in the study mobilised parents to contribute to the funds for teachers' allowances, teachers and students' award in the hope of encouraging and spread of best practices in schools.

The school committees' support of the pedagogical process is subject of much debate. Some argued against their direct involvement as they are only consultative organs. The DEO and RIE also warned that school committees' support to the pedagogical process should be treated with caution and not addressed *per se* by committee members. In fact, school committees' contributions are least effective in pedagogical areas, because this requires effective organizations, expertise, time and focus. However, educated school committee members are not necessarily education professionals and/or equipped with didactical knowledge. Their interference could lead to the disturbance in the education system. Even if some have this pedagogical knowledge, their involvement in pedagogical matters would be considered by teachers as interference in their professional work. Deventer & Kruger (2003: 259-260) and Sanders & Epstein (2005: 206) explain that parent's involvement in pedagogical matters makes educators feel that their professional terrain is being invaded and Cheng & Townsend (2000 cited in Leithwood & Hallinger, 2002: 110) perceived this as undermining of teachers and principals.

Sanders & Epstein (2005: 215) found that there is resistance in involving families in curriculum design, but not in involving them in fundraising, volunteering, and better communication between parents and school. The RIE and Director of the SNEC state however that school committee interventions are required in some pedagogical areas such as the choice of learning materials (appropriate books and where to get them from) and decisions to prevent teachers and student's misconduct, such as laziness and absenteeism.

Thus, this study shows that parents understand Sanders & Epstein's point that the school committee is a consultative organ, which does not inspect, and should not interfere in, teachers' professional responsibilities or in pedagogical matters. Nevertheless, teachers and the school administration wanted the school committees' mobilization of parents for funding the school or other partnerships on extra-curricular matters.

5.2 School Committees and School Administration Work for School Development

The effective collaboration between the school committee and school administration for school development depends largely on leadership styles. It depends on whether the school administration creates good working conditions and makes available the information required for informed decision making.

5.2.1 School Leadership and Management

According to the literature, leadership and management models differ in the way decision-making is shared throughout the organization and by the locus of power. Bush's (2006) collegial and political models are close to the schools' leadership and management of this study because there is some sharing of power and decision-making among members of the organization with a shared understanding of the aims of the institution. School principals tended to meet with teachers in pedagogical committee meetings to discuss professional issues, seek collective solutions and learn from one another. According to Leithwood & Hallinger (2002: 87-88), this staff collaboration is essential and contributes to teacher professional development, in terms of individual development, school development and educational change in general.

In both schools, decision-making powers were spread throughout different levels, departments and committees. These levels took decisions pertaining to their duties and have proposed solutions to the school administration. Nevertheless, teacher's participation in decision making was restricted to professional and disciplinary issues, as well as payment of their salaries because these are areas which pertained to their interests. Teachers were less involved in financial and administrative matters as these were considered as the exclusive tasks of school principals. Two reasons are found in the literature about the reluctance of teachers to involve in financial and administrative matters.

Talley & Kededy (2006: 443) mention the traditional principal-over-teacher hierarchical pattern, while Cheung & Kan (2009) mention that teachers are overloaded and avoid work which distracts them from their focus on teaching activities. Thus, it is argued that teachers should not spend much time and energy on financial and administrative tasks at the expenses of pedagogical ones (Cheung & Kan, 2009). Jongmans et al. (1999) and Smylie et al. (1996, cited in Leithwood, 2002) argue that teacher who make decisions related to classroom practices have a real positive effect, compared to their involvement in administrative decisions. Marks & Louis (1997 cited in Leithwood, 2002) suggest that teachers should only be involved in school decision making other than in their classroom if it is related to the learning as this is an important area for teachers.

In contrast, Glasman & Nevo (1988: 88, 96) suggest that it is not appropriate to confine teachers' participation to certain areas of decision-making because teachers are partners in managing the school, not only within the framework of their classrooms but also in terms of school-wide decisions which impact on their work**.** The opportunity to contribute to school-wide policies is an important factor for teachers' morale and enthusiasm for the school, and satisfaction with their profession.

The findings of this study show that teachers were not interested in financial and administrative decision making which they understood to be the responsibility of the school leaders. Their interest was more in decision making related to educational and disciplinary issues. In school B, teachers also wanted to be involved in the management of parents' subscriptions of their allowances.

Leaner's participation is also critical as it can result in more balanced decision making, and provides useful dimensions to certain decisions. It also has the advantage of increasing learner's commitment and establishing a good communication between students, teachers, and administration (Giles, 1972: 72-73). The study findings show that students participated through their representation in various committees (heads of classes and school committee) and submitted their suggestions at different levels of decision-making, leading to better informed solutions. Students made good suggestions with discipline policies, living and food arrangements for boarding students, and with certain pedagogical issues, such as remedial classes for difficult subjects, non-performing teachers and timetabling arrangements.

5.2.2 Collaboration between School Committees and School Administration

With school decentralization, school principals have the responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of the school committee and the involvement of all stakeholders in school development. They have to communicate considerable relevant information to these stakeholders about the background to decisions to make, as well as generate effective participative school decision-making (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999: 471-472). In that sense, such leadership should include not only school staff but also members of the school committee and subcommittees, teachers, and at times students (Leithwood & Hallinger, 2002: 655).

Findings show that the school committees exchange information with the school administration about parents' interests and vice-versa. Parents' priorities always come up on meetings' agenda through their representatives on school committees. These findings match Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach's (1999) and Leithwood & Hallinger's (2002) arguments that school committees and school administration should collaborate on the exchange of information when drawing up the school budget and formulating school policies. In fact, school leaders drafted them, and then handed them to the school committees for examination and amendments, if necessary. School committees also checked whether these school policies and budget did not infringe on parents' and students' interests. Thus, on the whole, it is clear that the school committee acted as the representative organ of the school and parents' interests. There was a strong link between the school administration and parents, and the school committee acts as a witness of what is agreed between the school administration and parents, and as the channel for the wishes of the school and parents.

5.2.3 School Committees' Strategies to Enhance School Management

The best way to enhance school management is through transparent communication and information channels with parents for more informed decision-making (Odden & Odden, 1994 cited in Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999: 469). The CPRE's (Consortium for Policy Research in Education) comparative study on the performance of US schools with struggling and with successful School-Based Management (SBM), found that the latter have strong mechanisms for collecting information related to school priorities and for

communicating this information to all school stakeholders (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003: 362-363).

This is also true with the Rwandan school committees. One of the indicators of school committee's capacity to perform was effective working mechanisms to communicate, monitor the implementation of any decisions between school administration and school committee or parents. There were formal (written reports and meetings) and informal (verbal) communication channels. The informal channel managed to get worthwhile information through students about what was going on in school and what was required to inform the school committee. The school committee and school authorities discussed issues together and, if necessary, put them on the general assembly meeting agenda.

School committees instituted the "*cahier de communication*" as a formal mechanism to improve home-school communication and for parents to monitor student discipline and attendance. The general assembly and school committees meetings were the other formal channel through which parents and schools exchange information. School committees ensured that parents attended school meetings and managed to bring 80% of parents to general assembly meetings.

School principals are the persons responsible for making information available since they are usually also the chairperson of the school committee and knew all the aspects about managing the school. They tend to make the necessary information available to all school committee members and set priorities for the agenda (Khan, 2007: 69). In the schools under study, school principals shared all information with the school committee and did not exercise much discretion in fixing agenda priorities. This was because the school committee chairperson (elected by parents) headed the school committee and general assembly meetings. The agenda was based on school needs, as expressed by the principal as well as from what school committee heard from parents. The involvement of parents in the implementation of decisions was also ensured, especially if school committee members have a needed particular expertise.

Leithwood and Menzies (1998 cited in World Bank, 2007: 8) distinguished four models of school-based management according to who is in control and power. These are the administratively-controlled SBM in devolving authority to the school principal; the

professionally-controlled SBM devolving important decision-making authority to teachers; the community-controlled SBM which devolves important decision-making authority to parents or the community; and the balanced-controlled SBM where decision-making authority are shared between parents and teachers. In the case of this study, it is difficult to judge whether school decentralization fits into any model but the findings point that the relationship between the school committees and the school administration fits more closely to the community-controlled SBM model, which devolves important decision-making authority to parents and the community.

5.3 The Catholic Church's Contribution to Managerial and Professional School Issues

The Catholic Church through its various supports and catholic values has the potential to impact positively on the running and development of schools as well as their teaching and learning. As partner in education to government, its interventions can be effective when guided by clear regulations, and taking place in the context of mutual trust and observance of their respective responsibilities.

5.3.1 Support and Actions of the Catholic Church for School Development

In the context of limited state funds due to fiscal austerity measures, government provision cannot satisfy the increasing demand for education and its corresponding financing requirements without the assistance of non-government providers (Gershberg, 2003: 1). Non-government education providers and decentralization in education are two strategies which can contribute to mobilising the larger community to supplement state educational provisions and financing of education. They can also enhance educational efficiency by managing scarce resources, as well as promote greater flexibility, customer choice, more effective accountability and citizen participation (Murphy, 1997:6-7; Norrel, 1994: 338).

The Catholic Church in Rwanda operates in education in two different ways: first, as a non-government provider in partnership with the government and second, as a private provider. It also contributed in mobilising the community and its affiliate organizations in raising school funds, and in solving some educational problems through charitable actions, like donations. As a private provider, the Catholic Church enabled greater flexibility, customer choice, more effective accountability, and local participation in educational decisions, as Murphy (1997)

and Norrel (1994) mention about decentralization and privatization objectives. It did this well than the public sector because it mobilized more effectively the community and parents. For instance, in school A, parents wanted to extend the school to tertiary level. In collaboration with the Congregation of Josephite Brothers, the school administration and school committee undertook a feasibility study of this extension to tertiary level and pressurized the government for licensing, a procedure uncommon in public schools.

The Catholic Church had many ways in which to raise funds through its teaching and operations in the community as well as its affiliate international and national organizations. However, it also faced challenges. Research carried out in countries such as the USA, Zambia and South Africa shows that Catholic schools have suffered from the decline in numbers of religious orders' members (priests, sisters, and brothers) working in schools as managers or teachers with the result that lay administrators and teachers have significantly increased in catholic schools. Bryk et al. (1993) and Grace (2007: 38) explained that there are financial implications and difficulties in holding onto a Catholic identity. Prior to this, operating costs were often reduced because the religious staff generally returned some of their salary to schools (Bryk et al., 1993). In addition, members of religious groups are strongly committed and dedicated teachers living in the community and guided by a gospel-centered spirituality. They provided their services generously and without consideration of much financial remuneration (Grace, 2007: 38). In addition, the increase in demand for schools meant that Catholic schools were over-enrolled and could not cater fully for all schools with the result of reduced subsidies to each of its schools.

Even though this is a small scale study, the findings show a similar trend in Rwandan catholic schools. The District Education Officer, the Regional Inspector of Education in Kigali City, and the principal of school B confirmed that the Catholic Church support to schools has decreased significantly. The Director of the SNEC stated that, after the genocide, as the country was in a critical scarcity situation, the Catholic Church aided schools by supplying various materials and loans. But this kind of support and provisions were no longer provided. This is why Catholic schools in most countries increasingly raise resources from the community (O'Connor, 1998 cited in Grace, 2007).

5.3.2 The Influence of Catholic Values on Teaching and Learning

The Catholic values derive from subsidiarity, which is defined by Cullen (2001: 1-2) as a catholic education philosophy relying on a particular view of the nature of the human person, the state and society, and the relation between them, where the role of state is indirect consisting to enable human flourishing by tending to the complex of conditions that enable the subordinate societies and the individuals to care for themselves. It claims that work efficiency considerations must be mediated by a concern for personal dignity and human respect, especially when work is organized in small communities where dialogue and collegiality flourish (Grace & O'Keefe, 2007: 570-571). Findings of this study concur with this. The availability of the school principal to the community, the good social relations and the mutual respect among school community members were reflections of this human dignity. The catholic teaching also encouraged teachers to help one other, and students to work and debate issues in their catholic movements. Although catholic movements were not set exclusively for academic activities, the social relationships established between students contributed to making them work in teams and help one other to study.

Members of catholic congregations use their religious education through which to filter their teachings and emphasize the mission, spirit, culture, and charisma of catholic education (Grace, 2007: 37). The findings from school participants as well as the District Education Officer, the Regional Inspector of Education, and the Director of the SNEC reflect Grace's statements. They agreed that the Catholic Church instils in the whole school community (students, teachers and staff) its moral values which enable and sustain a better teaching and learning environment and encourage both teachers and students to be committed to their work and study. Unfortunately, in Rwanda, there is today a decline in the number of religious orders working as managers and teachers in schools, which also has negative implications for the catholic school identity. These tendencies are found in the study findings. Thus, to ensure the sustainability of the schools' religious heritage, the Catholic Church could place only a few of its spiritual members in key administrative and managerial positions. These few members could then act as spiritual leaders (Grace, 2007: 37).

According to the law in Rwanda, in catholic subsidised schools, government appoints the school authorities, after consultations with the Catholic Church authorities. The District Education officer and the Regional Inspector of Education saw this as a good opportunity for

the Catholic Church to uphold its school catholic identity because nearly all Catholic Church proposals were taken into consideration. Moreover, the Catholic Church keeps control over staff and any other aspects of school management, as the diocesan representative countersigned teachers' assessment form (after the school principal).

5.3.3 The Catholic Church's Contribution to Teacher Development

Conlon (2004, cited in Nabhania & Bahousa, 2010: 209) sees all formal and informal teachers learning, whether self-directed or school planned and initiated as continuous professional development. This may take the form of workshops, conferences, courses, peer coaching, mentoring, action research, visits to other schools, and/or partnerships between schools and universities (Lieberman 1996 cited in Nabhania & Bahousa, 2010: 209). The continuous professional development of teachers drives their professional development and improves their job satisfaction and retention and by this token, empowers teachers and improves their retention (Rhodes, Nevill, and Allan, 2005 in Nabhania & Bahousa, 2010: 211).

In this study, the Catholic Church contribution to teachers' retention and development did not come with many strategies and support to in-service teacher training or contribution to their welfare. Even though the Catholic Church did not support directly teacher development, it contributed to a conducive learning environment which, in turn, explained the low rate of teacher turnover. Teachers reported that they were satisfied with their schools and did not have any particular problems. Other factors assisting teachers' retention (such as accommodation and other benefits/advantages) were the result of effective school leadership and organization.

However, the shift from members of religious orders to more lay people in catholic schools made the Church invest in teacher continuous professional development to improve its teacher recruitment and retention, even though this teacher development has a religious dimension. The principal of school B and the Director of the *"Secretariat National de l'Enseignement Catholique"* asserted that the Catholic Church also provided moral support through diverse programs, such as retreats. They argued that this contributed to strengthening of teachers' vocation and to their stability, but questioned why this kind of professional

development intervention was not provided to the lay teachers. The school administrations contributed also to teacher's welfare and accommodation which assisted with their retention.

5.3.4. The Catholic Church's Collaboration and Contribution to School Development

In the past, the relationship between Catholic Church and the government over education was a contentious one. Obura (2004: 107-109) mentions the government's lack of respect for the Churches as well as the slow implementation of the 1985 Education Act and the 1987 protocol. Currently, the new regulations resolved some misunderstandings but have not brought about greater clarity of roles. Until now, the outdated 1987 protocol between government and the Catholic Church has not been revised and this is responsible for conflicting interpretations of the new regulations and the 1987 Protocol.

For example, the District Education Officer and the Regional Inspector of Education stated that Catholic Church authorities have no say on school personnel for two reasons. Firstly, the existing state regulations over teachers' recruitment and management in public and subsidised schools do not tolerate any form of discrimination. Secondly, with the low average teachers' qualification rate, Catholic schools cannot use this as an excuse to recruit only catholic teachers.

The principal of school B supported this by saying that personnel management belongs to government and not to the Catholic Church. The Director of the *"Secretariat National de l'Enseignement Catholique"*(SNEC) agreed that the shortage of qualified teachers means that the Catholic Church has to be more flexible and less demanding in recruiting teachers. However, referring to the 1987 Protocol, he stated that the Catholic Church has the right to refuse to have teachers whose behaviour contravenes the catholic ideology and values. This is why such teachers are handed back to government. He added that the Catholic Church also has the right to enter the school at any time to supervise anything. However, there is a mutual understanding between the government and Catholic Church in resolving the lack of clarity in the law and/or conflicting interpretations of the 1987 protocol and the new education regulations.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter's core objective was to investigate the perceptions and understanding of school committees' members, about their functions and they perform them, and to what extent the school administration brings them about participating to the school development and to understand the role of the Catholic Church in enhancing school leadership and management, and how school committees work together for the school development. It did this by interpreting these findings in relation to existing theories reviewed in the literature.

The core principle of school decentralization in Rwanda is that schools become more efficient and self-managed and able to involve and work democratically with the community in school governance. This can be achieved if school committees and parents they represent work in democratic and participatory ways in building their relationships which should work towards the achievement of school goals. For the school committees to fulfil these expectations and responsibilities, they need to know and understand their roles and functions. Likewise, clear regulations underlying their schools functioning are important to serve as a guide. Principals and educators should create an enabling and welcoming school environment and motivate the commitment and ownership of the committees and the community for school development.

The following chapter deals with the strengths and limitations identified by the results, their implications, and the potential lessons one can draw for a more effective implementation of school decentralization in all Rwandan schools.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

The aim of this study was to understand the kind of partnership existing between different stakeholders (the government, parents, Catholic Church and the school community) regarding school governance and school development in the new school decentralised dispensation in Rwanda. The literature review allowed the researcher to understand the general context and theories underlying school decentralization. The study findings yielded useful information on the way school committees, parents, the Catholic Church in two schools work together in contributing to school management and development.

6.1 Conditions for and against the Implementation of School Decentralization

The positive conditions identified are:

- There is eagerness from school committees and parents to contribute to their children's education and collaborate with school leaders on school development. Their participation in decision making needs to be aimed at enhancing the culture of teaching and learning, raising school funds, initiating and funding school projects, attending school meetings, volunteering and using their expertise to contribute to school development;
- There is a need for greater transparency and accountability which requires parents to be involved in the school financial management and in being appointed signatories on the school bank account;
- The strategic selection of educated and with higher socio-economic background parents as school committees members comes from a belief in social capital to obtain useful information and maximise the school potential in overcoming the problem of lack of training;
- There is an increasing scarcity of funds and support from the Catholic Church to its schools but the Church has the potential to mobilizing the community in raising schools funds, either through its affiliate organizations and/or by encouraging school community in charitable actions likely to contribute to school development and needy students;
- There should be trust by the school committees towards school authorities. This is a key factor in making the school administration and the stakeholders work together for

the school development. One should ensure that this does not become a justification for dereliction of the school committees' responsibilities, or a reluctance to be involved (or be involved superficially) in school decisions and monitoring of the school budget execution.

The challenges likely to hinder the implementation of school decentralization are:

- The lack of system capacity: there are not enough government and district interventions aimed at building the school capacity and/or strengthening the school committees and community (school leaders, teachers, students) by providing what is needed to build a welcoming environment which ease the school committees tasks and encourage a safe collaboration;
- Although a big step ahead has been made in revising the outdated 1985 education laws (2003) to adapt to the decentralized and current context, some gaps still endure. There is still conflicting interpretations between the government and the catholic church over the 1987 protocol, the organic law n° 20/2003 of 03/08/2003 and the law n° 29/2003 of 30/08/2003);
- There is some reluctance (passivity) by the school committees in school financial management because of the mutual trust between school committee and the school administration. This could leave the financial school management at the discretion of school leaders. The school committees and parents prefer to be involved in decisions making that raise school funds and other benefits, but not to be so involved in matters relating to resource management, a phenomenon prevailing more in private catholic schools because parents have no financial shares in the school.

6.2 Recommendations for Improving Implementation of School Decentralization

The trends emerging from this study could point to certain measures being necessary for the effective implementation of school decentralization. It is therefore recommended:

- To strengthen the capacities of school committees to govern schools at least once for their membership, preferably before they assume their functions;

- To train school principals and teachers and others staff to manage schools in a way that creates a welcoming and collaborative school environment to enable school committees to perform their responsibilities;
- To conduct a large-scale campaign for familiarising the public with the educational parents' responsibilities;
- To establish a system of support that provides the newly decentralized authorities with information and training about their powers and responsibilities as well as about the school's academic and financial performance;
- To revise existing regulations and guidelines and clarify the respective powers and responsibilities pertaining to each stakeholder in partnership to promote better school education;
- The Catholic Church and the government should consult to accelerate the establishment/updating of the 1987 protocol to prevent any conflicting interpretations of the new educational regulations compared to the obsolete 1987 protocol.

It has been shown that the Catholic Church's main contribution, is in its teachings, promoting moral values, and mobilising the community (affiliate agencies, parents/followers) to contribute to school development. It is therefore recommended to the Catholic Church:

- To re-examine the way in which it could contribute more to school development;
- To increase the mobilization of the community in contributing and involving itself in school development;
- To examine ways in which to collaborate more with school committees, and support their actions.

6.3 Recommendations for Further Research

This study was carried out in a relatively well-off urban area whose features are likely to favour the implementation process of school decentralization compared to the remote rural ones. Other research is needed to study the ways in which schools in remote rural area implement school decentralization.

This study found out that urban schools select the highly educated parents of a higher socio-economic status as members of the school committees. More research should be done on the

impact of this selection on the commitment of the less educated and poor parents to school development.

Teachers were found to be less interested or less involved in the financial and administrative decision making of their schools. A study is needed on the factors behind such attitudes.

Finally, this study looked at Catholic schools and how the Church contributes to school development. What is needed is a specific comparative research of non-catholic and Catholic schools in the same area on how they implement differently school decentralization.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics clearance

Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za • Website: www.wits.ac.za

STUDENT NUMBER: 416616
Protocol: 2009ECE164**C**

05 May 2010

Mr. Barnabe Kabayiza
Ministry of education
P O Box 622
KIGALI
RWANDA

Dear Mr. Kabayiza

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

I have a pleasure in advising you that the Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate has agreed to approve your application for ethics clearance submitted for your proposal entitled:

An Investigation of the Catholic Church Contribution to the Implementation of the School Decentralization in Rwanda: A case study of two catholic secondary schools in the Nyarugenge district"

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

Yours sincerely

Matsie Mabeta
Wits School of Education

Cc Supervisor: Ms. F De Clercq (via email)

Appendix B: Letter to the Mayor requesting the authorization to enter the schools

Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Private Bag 3
WITS, 2050
Republic of South Africa
Cell phone: +250785518346(Rwanda & S.A)
+27734834796 (South Africa)
Email: kabayizabar@yahoo.fr

January 2010

INFORMATION LETTER

THE MAYOR OF NYARUGENGE DISTRICT

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a Masters of Education student at the University of the Witwatersrand doing research as part of my degree requirements. The title of the research is: "**Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District***".**

The research aims to assess how the school administration and school committee in catholic schools under investigation assume their devolved powers and responsibilities and what is the Catholic Church contribution to school decentralization and school leadership.

I am kindly requesting permission to conduct this research project in the **"**[redacted]**"** and the **"**[redacted]**"** where I will conduct semi-structured interviews with the school principal and members of the school committees (teachers, parents' representatives and students).

This exercise is intended to take place during the month of May 2010. The interviews focus mainly on the school committee functions and how these are performed, on school management and decision making as well as how the Catholic Church contributes to improvement in school decentralisation and leadership. Any information collected will be kept private and confidential and no mention of the names of your schools or the people interviewed will be revealed in the report. The data are not meant for public consumption and will be analyzed by the researcher, only to be destroyed upon completion of the research.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully,

Barnabé KABAYIZA

Appendix C: Letter to the school principals requesting the authorization to enter the schools

University of the Witwatersrand
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Private Bag 3
WITS, 2050
Republic of South Africa
Cell phone: +250785518346(Rwanda & S.A)
+27734834796 (South Africa)
Email: kabayizabar@yahoo.fr

January 2010

SUBJECT INFORMATION SHEET

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Dear Sister/Sir/Madam,

I am a Masters of Education student at the University of the Witwatersrand doing research as part of my degree requirements. The title of the research is: **"Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District***".**

The research aims to assess how the school administration and school committee in catholic schools under investigation assume their devolved powers and responsibilities and what is the Catholic Church contribution to school decentralization and school leadership.

I am kindly requesting permission to conduct this research project in your school and for you to facilitate the interviewing of members of your school committee (the principal, teachers, parents' representatives and students). This exercise will be done during May 2010 and the semi-structured interviews will focus mainly on the school committee functions and how they are performed, school management and decision making as well as how the Catholic Church contributes to the improvement of school leadership and management. Any information collected will be kept private and confidential and no mention of the name of your school or the people interviewed will be revealed in the report. The data are not meant for public consumption and will be analyzed by the researcher, only to be destroyed upon completion of the research.

Participation in this study is voluntary and participants may, at any time, without prejudice, withdraw their consent and participation from the study, and will have a sufficient opportunity to ask questions/explanations during the interview with the researcher.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully,

Barnabé KABAYIZA

Appendix D: Approval for carrying out the research from Nyarugenge District

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

KIGALI CITY
NYARUGENGE DISTRICT

Réf 02481/a.07

Kigali, on 20th January 2010

KABAYIZA Barnabé
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Republic of South Africa

RE: Approval for research in schools

Dear Sir,

Referring to your letter requesting the authorization to conduct the research upon **"Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District*";

I take this opportunity to inform you that the NYARUGENGE District has no objection that you conduct this kind of research in secondary schools mentioned above, which would contribute to improve education provision in these schools in particular and in our educational system in general. In this regard, I give you the permission to enter these schools and am asking both the school principals to facilitate you in providing services where necessary.

Kind regards

MUKABUNYANA Brigitte
Vice - Maire
Chargé des Affaires Sociales
District de Nyarugenge

AKARERE KA NYARUGENGE

Théophila NYIRAHONORA
The Mayor of Nyarugenge District

Copy Mayor of Kigali City

B.P 1092 Kigali Tél : 572800 – 575052 Fax 575052
E-mail : dnyarugenge@rwanda 1.com

Appendix E: Approval from the school A to carry out the research

Po. Box 1330 Kigali

E-mail: etsj2002@yahoo.fr

Kigali, on 12/05/2010

KABAYIZA Barnabé
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Republic of South Africa

RE: Approval for carrying out the research

Dear Sir,

Referring to your letter requesting the authorization to conduct the research upon **"Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District*";

Considering the permission issued by the Nyarugenge District authorities to you for the research mentioned above in the school under my responsibility;

I am taking this opportunity to inform you that I have no objection that you conduct this kind of research in the "[redacted]" I am heading. In this respect, I give you the permission too enter the school and carry out the intended research. However, gaining information about your research topic is a matter that concerns the mutual understanding /agreement between you and the informants. So, I am advising you to negotiate with the individual informants in order to get their consent.

Kind regards.

Fr Azarias RWAKAYIGAMBA
The Director of the "Ecole Technique St Joseph de Nyamirambo"

Appendix F: Approval from the school B to carry out the research

[redacted]
PO.BOX 607 KIGALI
Tel. 252575187/0788465767

Kigali, on 25th May 2010

KABAYIZA Barnabé
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Republic of South Africa

RE: Approval for carrying out the research

Dear Sir,

Referring to your letter requesting the authorization to conduct the research upon **"Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District*";

Considering the permission issued by the Nyarugenge District authorities to you for the research mentioned above in the school under my responsibility;

I am taking this opportunity to inform you that I have no objection that you conduct this kind of research in the "[redacted]" I am heading. In this respect, I give you the permission too enter the school and carry out the intended research. However, gaining information about your research topic is a matter that concerns the mutual understanding /agreement between you and the informants. So, I am advising you to negotiate with the individual informants in order to get their consent.

Kind regards

Soeur NAYITULIKI Hélène
The Director of the "Lycée Notre-Dame de Cîteaux Kigali"



Appendix G: Subject Information Sheet for participants

University of the Witwatersrand
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Private Bag 3
WITS, 2050
Republic of South Africa

May 2010

SUBJECT INFORMATION SHEET

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS, NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICER, PROVINCIAL INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION, AND DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER

Dear Sister/Sir/Madam,

I am a Masters of Education student at the University of the Witwatersrand doing research as part of my degree requirements. The title of the research is: **"Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District***".**

The research aims to assess how the school administration and school committee in catholic schools under investigation assume their devolved powers and responsibilities and what is the Catholic Church contribution to school decentralization and school leadership.

I wish to conduct with you a semi-structured interview. This exercise will be done during May 2010 and the semi-structured interviews will focus mainly on the school committee functions and how they are performed, school management and decision making as well as how the Catholic Church contributes to the improvement of school leadership and management. Any information collected will be kept private and confidential and no mention of the name of your school or the people interviewed will be revealed in the report. The data are not meant for public consumption and will be analyzed by the researcher, only to be destroyed upon completion of the research.

Participating in this study is voluntary and you may, at any time, without prejudice, withdraw your consent and participation from this study. You will also have sufficient opportunity to ask questions/explanations during the interview with the researcher.

For further information, you can either email me to kabayizabar@yahoo.fr or call +250785518346 (in Rwanda and South Africa) or +27734834796 (in South Africa).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully,

Barnabé KABAYIZA

Appendix H: Subject Information Sheet for the Audio-Tape Recording Interviews

University of the Witwatersrand
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Private Bag 3
WITS, 2050
Republic of South Africa

SUBJECT INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE AUDIO-TAPE RECORDING INTERVIEWS

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS, NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICER, PROVINCIAL INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION, AND DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER

Dear Sister/Sir/Madam,

I am a Masters of Education student at the University of the Witwatersrand doing research as part of my degree requirements. The title of the research is: **"Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District***".**

The research aims to assess how the school administration and school committee in catholic schools under investigation assume their devolved powers and responsibilities and what is the Catholic Church contribution to school decentralization and school leadership.

I wish to conduct with you an audio-tape recorded semi-structured interview. This exercise will be done during May-June 2010 and the semi-structured interviews will focus mainly on the school committee functions and how they are performed, school management and decision making as well as how the Catholic Church contributes to the improvement of school leadership and management. Any information collected will be kept private and confidential and no mention of the name of your school or the people interviewed will be revealed in the report. The data are not meant for public consumption and will be analyzed by the researcher, only to be destroyed upon completion of the research.

To be tape recorded is an option, you may choose it or not. In the later case, the notes will be jotted down simultaneously with the interview. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may, at any time, without prejudice, withdraw your consent and participation from this study. You will also have sufficient opportunity to ask questions/explanations during the interview with the researcher.

For further information, you can either email me to kabayizabar@yahoo.fr or call +250785518346 (in Rwanda and South Africa) or +27734834796 (in South Africa).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully,

Barnabé KABAYIZA

Appendix I: Consent letter for participants

University of the Witwatersrand
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Private Bag 3
WITS, 2050
Republic of South Africa

CONSENT LETTER

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS, NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICER, PROVINCIAL INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION, AND DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER

I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Mr Barnabé KABAYIZA, about the nature of his study on **" Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District***".**

The research aims to assess how the school administration and school committee in catholic schools under investigation assume their devolved powers and responsibilities as well as the Catholic Church contribution to school decentralization and school leadership.

I may, at any time, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation from this study and have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions/explanations during the interview with the researcher and declare that I am participating voluntarily in this study.

I have received, read and understood the information provided by the researcher regarding this study. I am aware that all the information I give will be treated confidentially and processed anonymously in this study and its final report. I also understand that the data collected for this study will be destroyed by the researcher once the study is completed. I hereby give consent with the understanding that strict confidentiality will be observed and assured.

- Being interviewed
  Yes ☐ No ☐

  Tick the appropriate box

…… …… ……

Signature (initials) Date Place

Appendix J: Consent letter for students' parents/guardian

University of the Witwatersrand
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Private Bag 3
WITS, 2050
Republic of South Africa

CONSENT LETTER

PARTICIPANTS: Students' parents/guardians

I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Mr Barnabé KABAYIZA, about the nature of his study on **" Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District***".**

The research aims to assess how the school administration and school committee in catholic schools under investigation assume their devolved powers and responsibilities as well as the Catholic Church contribution to school decentralization and school leadership.

Participation in this research is voluntary and choosing not to participate will have no adverse consequences. I have received, read and understood the information provided by the researcher regarding this study. I am aware that all the information I give will be treated confidentially and processed anonymously in this study and its final report. I also understand that the data collected for this study will be destroyed by the researcher once the study is completed.

I, the parent/guardian and the student have had the opportunity to ask questions/explanations about the research and I declare that I allowed voluntarily the researcher to interview the child/student under my responsibility. I give consent with the understanding that strict confidentiality will be observed and assured.

- Being interviewed
  Yes ☐ No ☐

  Tick the appropriate box

…… …… ……

Signature (initials) Date Place

Appendix K: Consent Form for Audio-Tape Recording Interviews

University of the Witwatersrand
Faculty of Humanities
School of Education
Private Bag 3
WITS, 2050
Republic of South Africa

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO-TAPE RECORDING INTERVIEWS

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS, NATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICER, PROVINCIAL INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION, AND DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER

I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Mr Barnabé KABAYIZA, about the nature of his study on **" Exploring the Collaborative Role of Government and the Catholic Church in Education Decentralization in Rwanda:** *A case study of two secondary schools in Nyarugenge District***".**

The research aims to assess how the school administration and school committee in catholic schools under investigation assume their devolved powers and responsibilities as well as the Catholic Church contribution to school decentralization and school leadership.

I may, at any time, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation from this study and have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions/explanations during the interview with the researcher and declare that I am participating voluntarily in this study.

I have received, read and understood the information provided by the researcher regarding this study. I am aware that all the information I give will be treated confidentially and processed anonymously in this study and its final report. I also understand that the data collected for this study will be destroyed by the researcher once the study is completed. I hereby give consent with the understanding that strict confidentiality will be observed and assured.

Furthermore, I have received from the researcher the information regarding the advantages of the audio-tape recording interviews over the taking notes during the interview. I hereby give to the researcher the particular consent for the following:

- Being interviewed in jotting down notes Yes ☐ No ☐
  Tick the appropriate box
- Being audio-tape recorded during the interview Yes ☐ No ☐
  Tick the appropriate box

…… …… ……

Signature (initials) Date Place

Appendix L: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL COMMITTEES CHAIRS/MEMBERS

I. Biographical details of respondent

1. Years of membership of the school committee: _____
2. Level of academic/professional qualification: _____
3. Religious denomination: _____
4. Employment status:_____

II. Questions related to functions of school committee

5. What are the main functions and responsibilities of the school committee regarding:
    - The management of resource (finance and materials)?
    - The management of human resource (teachers and other staff)?
6. As a school committee member, how was your training to assume your responsibilities and what are the main challenges that you face in performing them?
7. In the last two years, did you experience any attendance problems by the committee members and the general assembly meetings?
8. What would be the cause of the low attendance and which strategies have you set to stimulate/boost the effective attendance?
9. Do you know if school committees of neighbouring schools share similar challenges?
10. What do you think is needed for your school committee to perform better their responsibilities?

III. Questions related to resource management

11. What are the three main sources of school funding of this school (and classify them according to their importance)?
12. Is the school committee involved in establishing the school budget and how does it monitor its execution?

13. What strategies has the school committee and school leadership set to solve any financial problems?

IV. Questions related to school leadership and management

14. Is the school committee involved in developing or contributing to the mission, improvement and/or policies of the school? If no, why? And if yes, how?
15. Is the school committee monitoring the implementation of its decisions and through which mechanisms?
16. Regarding the relationship between the school committee and the school administration, what are the main points of agreements and points of disagreement?
17. In the last two years, what have been the most critical problems faced by this school?
18. How has the school committee contributed to solving these problems?
19. In the last two years, did you experience any disciplinary problems among teachers and students?
20. If yes, how were they addressed and to what extent does the school committee manage to assist solving this kind of problems?

V. Questions related to students' performance

21. What do you think about the students' performance in this school?
22. Which particular strategies has the school used to boost students' performance in this school and how effective are they?
23. What are the main internal and external school factors which contribute most to students' performance?
24. What has the school committee done to contribute to an improvement of students' performance? And to contribute to a better teaching/learning environment?

VI. The Catholic Church's role in the school development

25. What kind of decisions or actions does the Catholic Church take regarding the management of human and financial resources in this school?
26. What kind of support does the Catholic Church provide to the school that impact on school improvement?
27. What is the influence of Catholicism on the teaching/learning environment in this school and how does it translate into practice?
28. Does the Catholic Church support teachers' retention and teachers' development? If yes, explain how.

Appendix M: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

I. Biographical details of respondent

1. Level of academic/professional qualification:_____
2. Status (lay person /religious person): _____
3. For how long have you been the principal of this school?_____

II. Questions related to functions of the school committee

4. For how long has this school had an operational (active) school committee?
5. What is the socio-economical status for the majority of the school committee members?
6. Does the socio-economical status of some school committee' members impact on the school committee's decisions?
7. What are the main functions and responsibilities of the school committee?
8. Do you think that the school committee is competent (capable) to perform its granted powers and responsibilities in the governance and management of this school?
9. Which indicators (or tangible achievements) are you using in your judgment?
10. What is their support most needed for?
11. In the last two years, did you experience any attendance problems in the school committee members and the general assembly meetings?
12. What would prevent school committee members from effective attendance in the general assembly meetings and which strategies have you set to improve effective attendance?
13. Do you know if school committees of neighbouring schools share similar challenges?
14. Regarding the relationship between the school committee and the school administration, what are the main points of agreements and disagreement?

15. What do you think is needed for the school committee to perform better their responsibilities?

III. Questions related to resource management

16. What kind of decisions are taken by the school committee regarding:
    - The management of resource (finance and materials)?
    - The management of human resource (teachers and other staff)?
17. What are the main sources of school funding (and at least 3 sources and classify them according to their importance) of this school?
18. What are the main school's spending?
19. Who authorize these school expenditures?
20. Is the school committee involved in establishing the school budget and how does it monitor its execution?
21. What strategies have the school committee set to solve any financial problems?

IV. Questions related to school leadership and management

22. Is the school committee involved in developing or contributing to the mission, improvement and/or policies of the school? If no, why? And if yes, how?
23. Is the school committee monitoring the implementation of its decisions and through which mechanisms?
24. How do the school staff and students participate in decision making (and in which decision)?

V. Questions related to students' performance

25. How does this school stand in terms of students' performance compared to the other schools in the district? Are you satisfied about that?
26. Which particular strategies has the school used to boost the students' performance in this school and how effective are they?

27. What are the main internal and external school factors which contribute most to students' performance?

28. What has the school committee done to contribute to an improvement of students' performance? And to contribute to a better teaching/learning environment?

VI. The Catholic Church's role in the school development

29. What kind of decisions or actions does the Catholic Church take regarding the management of human and financial resources in this school?

30. What kind of support does the Catholic Church provide to the school that impact on school improvement?

31. What is the influence of Catholicism on the teaching/learning environment in this school and how does it translate into practice?

32. Does the Catholic Church support teachers' retention and teachers' development? If yes, explain how

Appendix N: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR TEACHERS

I. Biographical details of respondent

1. Level of academic/professional qualification: _____
2. Religious denomination:_____
3. Status (lay person /religious person): _____
4. For how long have you been teaching in this school? _____
5. Other responsibilities in school:_____

II. Questions related to functions of the school committee

6. Do you think that the school committee should have the responsibility on pedagogical matters?
7. To what extent is the school committee competent for that?
8. If yes, in what it is precisely most needed?
9. In what ways does the school committee support the teaching/learning and contribute to the better students' performance?
10. What do you think is needed for the school committee to perform better their responsibilities?

III. Questions related to resource management

11. In the last two years, what have been the financial problems faced by the school?
12. What strategies have the school committee set to solve these problems?
13. What has been the teachers' contribution in particular?

IV. Questions related to school leadership and management

14. Have you ever taught in a non catholic school?
15. What differentiates the non catholic school from the catholic school?
16. Why did you prefer to teach in this school (ex. of things that attract you)?
17. What did you dislike in this school (ex. of things that frustrate you)?

18. In what ways do the teachers get involved in the decision making in this school?
19. How does the school authority encourage the teachers in the involvement in decision making?
20. Are there any problems that prevent teachers from being involved in the decision making? If any, what are they?
21. What should be done to help teachers get more involved in the school decision making?

V. Questions related to students' performance

22. What kind of support does the school committee provide to the pedagogical process and the students' performance?
23. Which particular strategies has the school used to boost the students' performance in this school and how effective are they?
24. What are the main internal and external school factors which contribute most to students' performance?
25. What has the school committee done to contribute to an improvement of students' performance? And to contribute to a better teaching/learning environment?

VI. The Catholic Church's role in the school

26. What kind of support does the Catholic Church provide to the school that impact on school improvement?
27. What is the influence of Catholicism on the teaching/learning environment in this school and how does it translate into practice?
28. Does the Catholic Church support teachers' retention and teachers' development? If yes, explain how.

Appendix O: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS

I. Biographical details of respondent

1. School Level: _____
2. Religious denomination: _____
3. Religious Status:_____

II. Questions related to school leadership and management

4. Have you ever been in another school?
5. What do you appreciate in this school compared to others?
6. What do you dislike in this school?
7. To what extent are students involved in school governance and management of the school? Or how often are students' needs taken in considerations when decisions are being made?
8. Practically, in what do you mostly participate?
9. What should be done to make students more involved in the governance and management of the school?

III. Questions related to students' performance

10. Which elements of the school culture impact positively on the learning environment and contribute to raise the students' performance?
11. Which elements of the school culture impact negatively on the learning environment and contribute to raise the students' performance?

Appendix P: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER IN NYARUGENGE DISTRICT

I. Biographical details of respondent

Position: _____

II. Questions related to functions of the school committee

1. How do the school committees function in the secondary schools in Nyarugenge district and in the secondary schools under study in particular?
2. Do you think that the school committees are competent regarding their granted responsibilities in the governance and management of the schools?
3. In what are they:
    - Most effective?
    - Least effective?

III. Questions related to school leadership and management

4. How would you explain the kind of leadership in the schools under study?
5. Regarding the relationship between the school committee and the school administration, what are their main points of agreements and points of disagreement?
6. What do you think is needed for the school committees to perform better their responsibilities and work more closely with school administration?

IV. Questions related to students' performance

7. Do you think that the school committees are able to address pedagogical matters in schools?
8. If no, why?

9. If yes, in which aspects of pedagogical matters can perform well?

V. The Catholic Church's role in school development

10. What kind of decisions or actions does the Catholic Church take regarding the management of human and financial resources in this school?
11. What do you think about the support of the Catholic Church regarding the development of the secondary schools it owns in Nyarugenge district?
12. What kind of support does the Catholic Church provide to schools that impact on the school development?
13. What is the influence of Catholicism on teaching/learning environment in the schools under study and how are they operating?
14. Does the Catholic Church support teachers' retention and teachers' development? If yes, explain how.

Appendix Q: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR REGIONAL INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION

I. Biographical details of respondent

Position: _____

II. Questions related to functions of the school committee

1. How do the school committees function in the secondary schools in Nyarugenge district and in the secondary schools under study in particular?
2. Do you think that the school committees are competent regarding their granted responsibilities in the governance and management of the schools?

   In what are they:

   - Most effective?
   - Least effective?

III. Questions related to school leadership and management

3. How would you explain the kind of leadership in the schools under study?
4. Regarding the relationship between the school committee and the school administration, what are their main points of agreements and points of disagreement?
5. What do you think is needed for the school committees to perform better their responsibilities and work more closely with the school administration?

IV. Questions related to students' performance

6. Do you think that the school committees are able to address pedagogical matters?
7. If no, why?
8. If yes, in which aspects of pedagogical matters can they perform better?

V. The Catholic Church's role in schools

9. What kind of decisions or actions does the Catholic Church take regarding the management of human and financial resources in this school?
10. What do you think about the support of the Catholic Church regarding the development of the secondary schools it owns in Nyarugenge district?
11. What kind of support does the Catholic Church provide to schools that impact on the school development?
12. What is the influence of Catholicism on teaching/learning environment in the schools under study and how are they operating?
13. Does the Catholic Church support teachers' retention and teachers' development? If yes, explain how.

Appendix R: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR THE DIRECTOR OF SNEC

I. Biographical details of respondent

Position: _____

II. Questions related to functions of the school committee

1. What should be the school committees' functions in general?
2. To what extent are the school committees competent to perform well their granted responsibilities in the management and governance of the secondary schools?
3. According to you, or to what you are aware of, in what are they:
    - Most effective?
    - Least effective?
4. Do you think that the school committees are able to address pedagogical matters in schools?
5. If no, why?
6. If yes, in which aspects of pedagogical matters can they perform better?

III. Questions related to school leadership and management

7. How would you explain the kind of school leadership in the catholic secondary schools?
8. Regarding the relationship between the school committee and the school administration, what are the main points of agreements and disagreement?
9. What do you think is needed for secondary school committees to perform better their responsibilities and work more closely with the school administration?

IV. The Catholic Church's role in schools

10. What kind of decisions or actions does the Catholic Church take regarding the management of human and financial resources in this school?
11. What kind of support does the Catholic Church provide to school that impact on the school improvement?
12. What is the influence of Catholicism on the teaching/learning environment in the catholic secondary schools and how does it translate into practice?
13. How does the Catholic Church contribute to catholic secondary school teachers' retention and teachers' development?
14. Does the Catholic Church support teachers' retention and teachers' development? If yes, explain how
15. What kind of obstacles does the Catholic Church face in implementing its granted power and responsibilities in developing secondary education?

Appendix S: Name codes

School A		School B	
Name	**Code**	**Name**	**Code**
School committee Member (Chair)	PA_1	School committee Member (Vice chair)	PB_1
School committee Member	PA_2	School committee Member	PB_2
School committee Member	PA_3	School committee Member	PB_3
School Principal		School Principal	
Teacher	TA_1	Teacher	TB_1
Teacher	TA_2	Teacher	TB_2
Teacher (Non member of sch. Comm.)	TA_3	Teacher (Non member of sch. Comm.)	TB_3
Teacher (Non member of sch. Comm.)	TA_4	Teacher (Non member of sch. Comm.)	TB_4
Students	SA_1	Students	SB_1
Students	SA_2	Students	SB_2