CHAPTER 1 THE EMERGENCE OF THE SATELLITE SCHOOL TYPE

The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) implemented the Fast-track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in the year 2000 to redress a colonial land ownership pattern in the country that was skewed in favour of Whites (Matondi, 2012; Mutema, 2012). The land ownership pattern reconfigured because of the FTLRP. Over 700 million hectares of land, previously owned by only 4,000 White commercial farmers, were rapidly redistributed to over 300,000 indigenous Zimbabwean households (Moyo, 2011; Mutema, 2012). In a very short period, the former White-dominated Large Scale Commercial Farming Areas (LSCFAs) were transformed into Fast-track Land Reform Resettlement Areas (FTLRRAs) for the fast-track land reform beneficiaries. The resettlement of the land beneficiaries in former White-owned LSCFAs where schools were very few presented the government with an urgent need to establish schools for the children of the land beneficiaries (Chakanyuka, Chung & Stevenson, 2009; Parliament of Zimbabwe [PoZ], 2012; Mutema, 2014). The GoZ implemented the FTLRP when it was reeling from the effects of economic sanctions imposed by Britain and her allies in the year 2000 over the FTLRP, and a decade of economic meltdown that commenced in 2000 (Sadomba, 2011; Zhou & Zvoushe, 2012). Consequently, the government had neither the capacity nor resources to establish conventional schools and other social amenities in FTLRRAs. For expediency and as a stopgap measure, the government allowed the land beneficiaries to convert old farmhouses and tobacco barns into temporary school infrastructure and promised to construct conventional schools within 10 years (Chakanyuka *et al.,* 2009; PoZ, 2012). The unconventional and unregistered schools are officially known as satellite schools in Zimbabwe's education system.

The unplanned and hastily executed FTLRP inadvertently culminated in the mushrooming of satellite schools in Zimbabwe's FTLRLAs.

There are 1,855 satellite schools in Zimbabwe, comprising 839 satellite secondary schools and 1,016 satellite primary schools (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE], 2017). **Table 1.1** shows the distribution of satellite schools in Zimbabwe by province. In comparative terms, Mashonaland West Province has the highest number of satellite schools in the country at primary and secondary school levels.

Table 1.1: Number of Satellite schools in Zimbabwe by Province (MoPSE, 2017:4)

Province	Primary schools	Secondary schools
Bulawayo	5	4
Harare	4	5
Manicaland	72	134
Mashonaland Central	108	98
Mashonaland East	88	105
Mashonaland West	236	181
Masvingo	173	94
Matebeleland North	132	77
Matebeleland South	67	39
Midlands	131	102
Grand Total	1,016	839

As shown in **Table 1.1**, Mashonaland West Province has 417 satellite schools comprising 236 and 181 primary and secondary schools, respectively. Satellite schools are quite prevalent in this province because it was a predominantly commercial farming area that had the largest number of White-owned large-scale commercial farms before the FTLRP in 2000 (MoPSE, 2015).

Satellite schools do not meet the Minimum Schools Functionality Standards (MSFS), which are prerequisites for registration with the

MoPSE (PoZ, 2012). Consequently, satellite schools are unregistered institutions. The MSFS are the minimum benchmarks expected of each school to provide quality education (Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture [MoESAC], 2013b). These standards represent the basic quality requirements that a primary or secondary school in Zimbabwe must meet to qualify for registration with the MoPSE.

To qualify for registration, a school must have at least one standard administration block, a standard teacher's house, and a standard classroom block (PoZ, 2012; MoESAC, 2013b). Additional preliminary requirements include a safe source of drinking water within 500 meters of the school campus and adequate ablution facilities for both staff and learners (PoZ, 2012; MoESAC, 2013b). Over 1,800 satellite schools in the country remain unregistered due to their failure to meet these preliminary MSFS. This raises significant concerns about the quality of education provided by satellite schools.

For purposes of paying salaries to teachers, the MoPSE attaches each satellite school to a nearby registered school officially known, as the 'mother school' (PoZ, 2012). The school head of the 'mother school' is the substantive head of the satellite school (Chakanyuka *et al.,* 2009; PoZ, 2012). This effectively makes the satellite school an extension or appendage of the 'mother school' in terms of learner enrolment, staffing, and administration. The MoPSE also appoints a Teacher in Charge (TIC) to head each satellite school (PoZ, 2012; Mangwaya, Jeko & Manyumwa, 2013). The term TIC refers to a teaching head of a satellite school in Zimbabwe's education system.

Although satellite schools were established as a stopgap measure to allow the government to establish conventional schools (Chakanyuka *et al.,* 2009; PoZ, 2012), they are still operational two decades after the commencement of the FTLRP in 2000. Thousands of learners in FTLRRAs experience their whole school careers under unconventional

teaching and learning conditions in satellite schools (Chakanyuka *et al.,* 2009; PoZ, 2012). Several researchers raised concerns about the quality of education in satellite schools. Studies by Chakanyuka *et al.* (2009), Hlupo and Tsikira (2012), PoZ (2012), Jenjekwa (2013), Mangwanya *et al.* (2012), Mavhunga and Mazodze (2014), and Tarisayi (2015). consistently indicate that the satellite school type provides the lowest quality of education in Zimbabwe. The studies attribute the poor quality of education in satellite schools to poor infrastructure, inadequate instructional resources, long distance to school, negative parental attitudes towards education, and poor living conditions for teachers. Learners in satellite schools, like all other learners in the country, have constitutional and inalienable rights to quality education.

Quality education is a multi-dimensional phenomenon comprising the context, inputs, transformation process, and outputs dimensions (Tikly, 2011; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). A close analysis of the existing studies of satellite schools reveals that they focused on the impact of context and resource input factors on the provision of quality education in the schools. This has created a knowledge gap on the nature and quality of the transformation processes in satellite schools. The transformation process dimension of quality education comprises the teaching, learning, and management processes (Ballantine & Hammack, 2012; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012).

The scholarly silence on the nature and quality of pedagogical and management processes in satellite schools is continuing in recent studies. A qualitative study by Sithole (2017) explored factors affecting the motivation of teachers in satellite schools. The study focused on factors in the context and input dimensions of quality education. Tarisayi (2017) conducted a qualitative study on how fast-track land reform beneficiaries utilise social capital to construct teaching and learning infrastructure in satellite schools. A multiple case study by

Tarisayi and Manbibi (2017) analysed the relations between satellite schools and their 'mother schools'. Mwiinde and Muzingili (2020) carried out a qualitative study of satellite schools in the Binga District of Zimbabwe. The authors found that the poor quality of education in the schools is a consequence of dilapidated infrastructure, lack of funding from parents and the government, and the long distance that learners walk to school. These complexities to the provision of quality education fall under the context and inputs dimensions of quality education. There is a knowledge gap regarding the prospects and complexities of quality education in satellite primary schools, particularly in the context of pedagogical and management processes. The knowledge gap is addressed in this book.

The thesis on which this book is based sought to address the following main research question: How can the prospects and complexities of quality education in satellite primary schools be adapted to enhance the provision of quality education? The main research question was sub-divided into the following sub-questions that were also used as interviewing questions:

1. What is the nature and quality of pedagogical processes in satellite primary schools in the provision of quality education?
2. How is the nature and quality of management processes in satellite primary schools implemented during the provision of quality education?
3. How are the prospects and complexities of quality primary education in satellite schools currently managed?
4. How can quality education be improved in satellite primary schools?

Definition of Terms:

Quality education: Cheng (2003) defines quality education as the character of the set of elements in the context, inputs, transformation process, and outputs of the education system that provides services that completely satisfy both internal and external strategic

stakeholders by meeting their expectations. In the context of this book, the term quality education refers to a relevant and holistic education that equips learners with both cognitive and non-cognitive skills to enable them to function effectively and productively in their society.

Fast-track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP): It entails the unplanned, rapid, and phenomenal distribution of White-owned farms to landless indigenous Zimbabweans that started in the year 2000 (Matondi, 2012; Mutema, 2012).

Fast-track Land Reform Resettlement Areas (FTLRRAs): These are the former White-owned commercial farming areas that were allocated to landless indigenous Zimbabweans following the FTLRP that commenced in the year 2000 (Moyo, 2011; Mutema, 2012).

Satellite school: An unregistered school type established in FTLRLAs following the FTLRP in 2000 to provide education to the children of fast-track land reform beneficiaries (Munjanganja & Machawira, 2014; Tarisayi & Manik, 2017).

Small rural school: A rural school headed by a teaching head, characterised by an enrolment below the national average and few teachers (Ngcobo, 2016).

'Mother school': A registered primary school to which a satellite school is attached for management and administrative support (PoZ, 2012; Munjanganja & Machawira, 2014).

Teacher in Charge (TIC): A term used to refer to the teaching head of a satellite school in Zimbabwe (Chakanyuka *et al.,* 2009; PoZ, 2012).

Multi-grade class: It occurs when one teacher is responsible for teaching learners belonging to at least two different grade levels in a single classroom (Joubert, 2010; Taole, 2017).

Multi-grade Teaching (MGT): The teaching of learners of different grade levels by one teacher at the same time in a single classroom (Pridmore, 2007; Joubert, 2010).

Pedagogical processes: Teaching and learning techniques, approaches, methods, and strategies (Ballantine & Hammack, 2012).

Management processes: They involve planning, organising, controlling, leading, supervising, and supporting school activities to accomplish set goals (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012; Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Double-Sessioning (DS): A school practices DS if it caters to two separate groups of learners during the school day using the same buildings, equipment, and other facilities (Bray, 2008).

The book comprises six chapters, organised as follows: Chapter 1 articulates the research problem and outlines its context. It also presents the main research questions and sub-questions, definitions of terms, and the demarcation of the chapters.

Chapter 2 is the first of the two literature review chapters of this book. This chapter reviews the literature on the conceptual and theoretical framework of quality education. It covers the following issues: The elusive concept of quality education; Models of quality education; School effectiveness research; Theoretical framework; and Rationale for quality education.

Chapter 3 is the second and final literature review chapter. It examines the literature on quality education in small rural primary schools, offering historical and contextual background to the quality education question in satellite primary schools. Additionally, the chapter reviews the quality education initiatives implemented by the Government of Zimbabwe to enhance primary and secondary education in the country.

Chapter 4 describes and justifies the interpretive-qualitative research methodology that was adopted to generate data for this book. It covers

the following methodological issues: Research paradigm; Research approach; Research design; Population and sampling procedures; Data generation; Data analysis; Trustworthiness; and Ethical issues.

Chapter 5 presents an analysis and discussion of the findings on which the book is based. The findings are presented, analysed and discussed in the context of sub-questions, the reviewed literature, and the theoretical framework.

Chapter 6 gives a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The chapter also discusses areas for further research.

This chapter articulated the quality education question in satellite primary schools and its background. It established that existing studies explored the quality of education in satellite schools in terms of contextual and input factors. There is a knowledge gap on the nature and quality of pedagogical and management processes in satellite primary schools that the book fills. These processes fall under the transformation process dimension of quality education. The chapter also presented the main research question, sub-questions, definitions of terms, and demarcation of chapters. The next chapter reviews the literature on the conceptual and theoretical framework of quality education.