The 4Rs Framework: Creating A Synergy to Support the Implementation of English Education for Sustainable Development in Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

Rwanda started teaching English to support sustainable development and deliver the five key pillars that would help Rwandans transition from their existing way of life to the society they all desire and are happy to be a part of. As a follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development, the government ensured the standardisation and teaching of English. In order to assist the implementation of English teaching nationally, the theoretical paper explains how the 4Rs Framework—relationship-building, recognition, responsibilities, and reciprocity—combine to generate synergy among many stakeholders and cross-sectoral collaboration. The study presents literature on Rwanda's Vision 2050, education for sustainable development, and teaching using English as a medium of communication. It is founded on a critical literature review. The article discusses options for national transformation while emphasising the importance of locally rooted collaboration. The 4Rs technique is intended to foster discussion among important players about the issues and problems facing the area of education in emergencies rather than serving as a rigid theoretical framework. The study shows the connections between and tensions among the various "Rs," as well as the efficiency of the 4R dimensions in encouraging the teaching of English. The study considered ways to get beyond the approach's drawbacks and difficulties to support sustainable schooling in Rwanda. This framework encourages the creation of a synergistic educational ecosystem that equips students with the information, skills, and attitudes required to actively participate in Rwanda's path to sustainable development.

KEYWORDS

4R Framework; English education; sustainable development; collaboration; synergy.

INTRODUCTION

The prevalence and significance of English have risen steadily in Rwanda as a result of the country's growing interconnectedness. According to the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) (2018), teaching English as a language used in many nations for trade, commerce, science, and information and communication technology (ICT) was a significant shift that occurred in 2009. At the moment, the official language of communication and instruction in schools in Rwanda is English. According to national projections, practically every Rwandan will be able to speak and understand English by the year 2050 (Rwanda Education Board (REB), 2021). The nation was aware of the influence the English language had on the political, economic, and educational landscapes of the world. Rwanda's main trading partners in the East African Communities (EAC)—Burundi, Kenya, Congo, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania—are connected through the English language. As a result, Rwanda encourages its people to learn the necessary English language skills for use abroad (Carter et al., 2023; Rugwiro, 2019; UNESCO, 2021). Additionally, according to the World Bank (2018), English is a universal language that is spoken in the majority of countries, which means Rwanda must work with other nations. Even though recent studies by Ingabire (2020) and Uwanyirigira (2018) emphasise the discrepancy between Rwandan students' English language ability and cognitive academic criteria, Rwanda is making more and more efforts to meet its objective of having all of its population speak English fluently by the year 2050. In fact, this would cause annoyance and a desire to switch the medium of instruction if linguistic abilities did not match the conceptual requirement (Pearson, 2014; Rugwiro, 2019). However, due to the students' willingness to use English as a global language, it continues to be their preferred medium of instruction. Since the country is expanding its worldwide links, English has taken centre stage in Rwandan education and business, even though fluency in the language is still a struggle. The government is actively promoting learning English to achieve educational and economic objectives. This study examined how well the nation has met its objectives and offered suggestions for how it may do so more frequently by implementing the 4R framework.

Background of the study

Rwanda's educational system adopted English as its only language of instruction in 2009, but since then, the nation has struggled to make English "a necessary working language" (Ingabire, 2020; Samuelson & Freedman, 2010). For a nation that was originally Francophone, its execution today presents extremely difficult issues. This study recognises that these difficulties are frequently brought on by the philosophical scepticism that the people facing the changes have toward them. Gatsinzi (2019), Makuza and Musabyemungu (2019), and Reuben (2019) all contend that human behaviour—while not always malicious—is the main factor contributing to the majority of implementation problems. Changes made on an individual or group level may make economic and social issues worse. Therefore, changing public attitudes, perceptions, principles, and behaviours as well as creating the right conditions for these changes to take place are required to achieve such unachievable educational challenges, such as having

English as the primary language of instruction in all institutions (Ingabire, 2020; Mukankusi & Stiburek, 2019). It necessitates fundamental adjustments to the way people think, behave, and interact with other structures in their environment. Perhaps the most powerful tool for influencing people's opinions and attitudes in Rwanda is English education, which will also probably assist the government in resolving its implementation problems. The Rwandan people might feel better capable of embracing the changes as part of daily life.

In recent years, several initiatives have been launched to improve the standard of English instruction in Rwanda. In order to assist its society in acquiring English language competency, the Rwandan government has adopted several curricula, policies, and frameworks for change (Carter et al., 2023; MINEDUC, 2018; REB, 2021). They changed from a knowledge-based curriculum (KBC) to a competence-based curriculum (CBC) in 2014–2015 as a result, recognising the need for sustainable education. Additionally, teacher exchange offered chances for educators from many nations to share their teaching methods and engage in cross-cultural dialogue and professional development. These exchanges can encourage international cooperation and understanding while helping to improve educational quality. The prior frameworks, policies, and procedures include:

- **Vision 2020:** Published in 2000, this policy statement emphasises Rwanda's desire to evolve into a knowledge-based, technology-led economy and places a strong emphasis on technological advances that are integrated into social and economic growth.
- **Draft Curriculum Policy (2003):** Learning should be active (student-centered) as opposed to passive (teacher-centered), and national cultural values that define the national identity must be emphasised.
- **Seven Year Government Programme (7YGP) 2010-17:** This policy places a strong emphasis on the Rwandan curriculum, which teaches cultural values, English, and Kiswahili, to produce graduates who are independent, capable of creating their jobs, and who have a competitive advantage in pursuing local employment prospects.
- **The Harmonised Curriculum Framework for the EAC (2013):** Articles 5 and 103 of the Treaty outline the parties' commitment to harmonising curricula, exams, certification, and accreditation of educational institutions in the Partner States through cooperation among the national bodies responsible for developing such curricula.
- **Studies to Support a Comprehensive Review and Development of the Primary and Secondary Curriculum in Rwanda: synthesis report (2013):** The report provided strong instructions for curriculum change.
- **Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2013-18 (EDPRS2):** The strategic plan acknowledges the critical role that education plays in equipping Rwanda's workforce with the knowledge and attitudes needed to positively impact the economy and raise living standards.

- **Education Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18 (ESSP):** The plan places a strong emphasis on transforming the average Rwandan citizen into skilled human capital for the nation's socioeconomic growth by ensuring equal access to high-quality education that focuses on eradicating illiteracy and advancing science, technology, critical thinking, and positive values.

- **Curriculum and Assessment Policy (2014):** The policy lays out the guiding concepts, goals, and techniques for the Rwandan curriculum, as well as the assessments that should support it.

- **Draft ICT in Education policy (2014):** The policy established guidelines, goals, and tactics for efficiently producing and distributing educational goods (learning resources and materials) for better teaching and learning in Rwanda.

- **The National Curriculum Consultative Conference:** Following these topics, a consultation meeting with 270 participants from all stakeholder organisations and invited foreign delegations was held in November 2013. Participants also talked about the advantages and disadvantages of implementing a competency-based programme.

- **International Partnerships:** To improve English education, Rwanda has created ties with international organisations, foreign governments, and academic institutions (such as Uganda, Benin, Kenya, and Zimbabwe). These collaborations offer assistance with resource provision, curriculum development, and training.

- **Vision 2050:** Life quality, contemporary infrastructure and means of subsistence, prosperity transformation, values for the 2050 vision, and international collaboration and positioning.

It is also unclear whether these initiatives have been effective in changing the English curriculum and teaching methods to promote sustainability. There has not been much empirical research on how well English is taught in the curriculum (Niyomugabo et al., 2018; Uwambayinema, 2019). The few studies that have examined the teaching and learning of the English curricula in Rwanda draw attention to discrepancies, incongruence of approaches, and shortcomings in programmes. The aforementioned educational strategies and policy ideas for adopting English curricula are thought to have had only a limited positive influence because they mainly relied on perceived positive outcomes that were not properly evaluated. Studies have also shown that teachers and students become less and less interested in speaking English in class. Students frequently feel intimidated while speaking in English (Ingabire, 2020), and teachers who are not fluent in the language demoralise them as a result (Reuben, 2018). When it comes to expressing certain points of view during the teaching and learning process, English education has failed both the educator and the student. The language has turned into a hindrance to good communication at the educational level, rather than enhancing learners' ability to critically ponder their selections.

This study urges a reassessment of English education teaching and learning due to the discrepancy between "planned" and "actualised" activities. According to MINEDUC (2018), REB (2021), the notion of quality education is predicated on the idea that educational aims and objectives are realised, with quality being viewed in light of how societies define the purpose of education. Therefore, English education response and training in formal, informal, and non-formal settings should also be understood as a process of assisting society in realising its full potential (sustainable education). Since Rwanda switched to using English as its primary language of communication, its goal in teaching the language is to prepare a workforce that excels in the fundamental subjects that support national sustainability (UNESCO, 2021). As a result, the inclusion of English education in Rwandan curricula ties to the country's requirement for sustainability in that it has the potential to equip its citizens with the values, knowledge, and skills necessary to advance a sustainable society (UNDP, 2017). This study aims to examine the growing difficulties the Rwanda Education Board (REB) confronts in making English a required working language, both in formal and informal situations. This research evaluated how English curricula are being taught and learned using secondary data. The study also described how the 4Rs Framework—relationship-building, recognition, responsibilities, and reciprocity—combines to develop cross-sector collaboration and create synergy among many stakeholders in support of the nationwide implementation of English teaching. In this study, the researcher assessed the effectiveness of the framework by drawing comparisons with Rwanda's practices. While there are undoubtedly human motivations that are the most obvious, it is also helpful to think of English as a unifying language that promotes sustainable development. In doing so, the study seeks to advance knowledge and comprehension of how the 4Rs Framework can facilitate the implementation of English education for sustainable development in Rwanda (Novelli et al., 2015; Novelli et al., 2017). It also aims to offer actionable suggestions for enhancing the efficacy and strength of these initiatives. The research's main objective was to investigate how the 4Rs Framework may be used to establish a synergistic approach that would support the implementation of English education for sustainable development in Rwanda. The study was guided by the following main question:
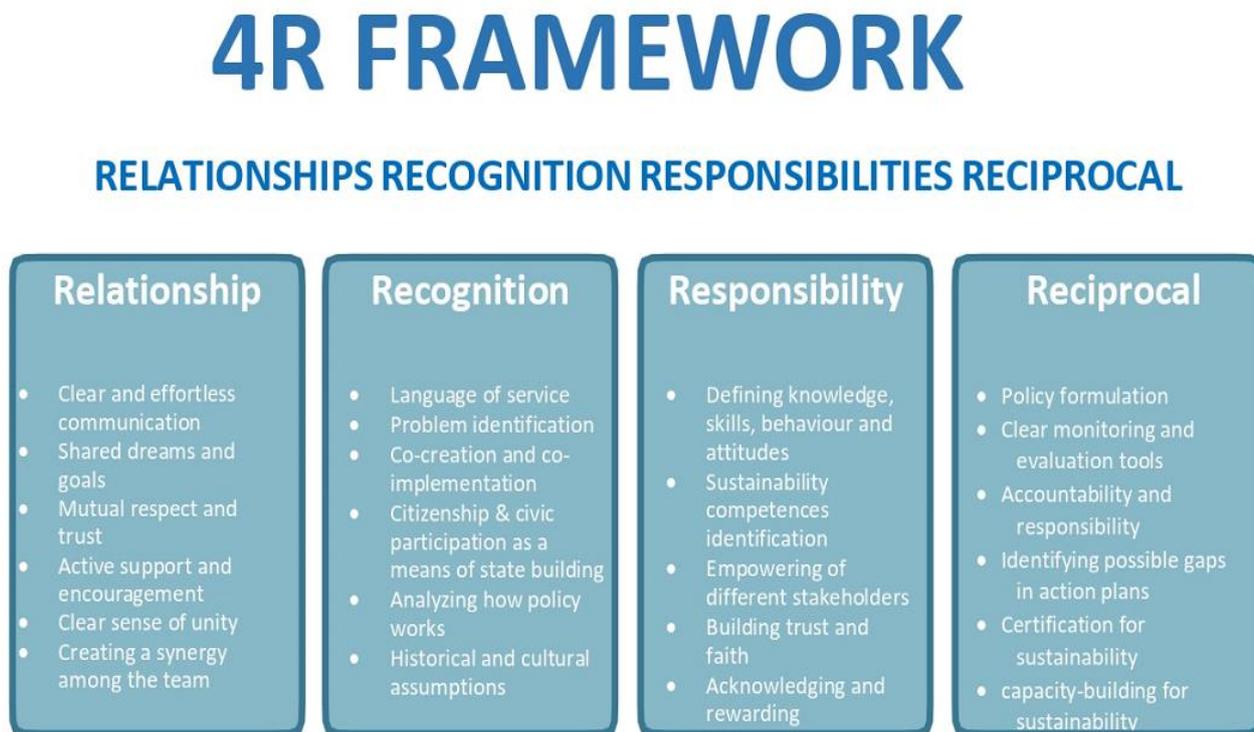
What is the potential of the 4Rs Framework for creating a synergistic approach to support the implementation of English education for sustainable development in Rwanda?

Conceptual framework: The 4R framework

According to the 4R framework, sustainable development is reliant on (i) societal relationship-building (*participatory vision of sustainability*); (ii) societal recognition (*recognising competences that play a crucial role in sustainability transformation*); (iii) societal responsibilities (*competencies for achieving transformation*); and (iv) societal reciprocals (*monitoring and evaluating the process*) (Novelli et al., 2017). The study emphasises the effectiveness of these 4Rs, as it considers it helpful to define these four dimensions for analytical purposes, stressing from the outset that there are logically tight relationships and overlap between these four. It also describes how the 4Rs framework works together to promote

sustainable development through the delivery of English education. The illustration in Figure 1 below can be used to condense these:

Figure 1. *The 4R Framework*

4R FRAMEWORK

RELATIONSHIPS RECOGNITION RESPONSIBILITIES RECIPROCAL

Relationship	Recognition	Responsibility	Reciprocal
• Clear and effortless communication • Shared dreams and goals • Mutual respect and trust • Active support and encouragement • Clear sense of unity • Creating a synergy among the team	• Language of service • Problem identification • Co-creation and co-implementation • Citizenship & civic participation as a means of state building • Analyzing how policy works • Historical and cultural assumptions	• Defining knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes • Sustainability competences identification • Empowering of different stakeholders • Building trust and faith • Acknowledging and rewarding	• Policy formulation • Clear monitoring and evaluation tools • Accountability and responsibility • Identifying possible gaps in action plans • Certification for sustainability • capacity-building for sustainability

RELATIONSHIPS + RECOGNITION + RESPONSIBILITIES + RECIPROCAL = RESULTS

The first "R" of the framework is based on *relationship*-building, which is fundamental to the success of any community development initiative. Relationship-building involves valuing with respect the perspectives, experiences, and knowledge of community members (Edmondson, 2019; Ury, 2015). Meaningful relationships can be made, and trust can be built through active listening, discourse, and genuine interest in the needs and ambitions of the community (Coyle, 2018; Duhigg, 2016). Mutual respect also helps foster synergy and ensures that community members feel empowered and valued in the decision-making process. Additionally, Novelli et al. (2015) stipulate that relationship-building is crucial for understanding the specific needs and priorities of the community. It entails proactively interacting with community members to learn about their goals, problems, and issues that are most important to them. It is argued that building relationships helps in the understanding of the unique cultural, social, and economic features of the country by community development experts. These relationships enable them to match their interventions to the particular needs and goals of the community, making their work more fruitful and durable.

The value of community members' viewpoints, experiences, and expertise is the second "R" of *recognition* (Bersin, 2012; Robbins et al., 2017). Recognition is necessary to validate and

honour the accomplishments, identities, and cultural legacies of individuals and groups. Respect, consideration for their perspectives, and appreciation of their diversity are required of all stakeholders. The concepts of building relationships, accepting responsibility, and reciprocity are interwoven with the foundational idea (Novelli et al., 2015; Novelli et al., 2017). It is easier to create an accountability culture and encourage continued commitment to the development process when roles and contributions from internal and external stakeholders are acknowledged. It is argued that community development programmes can foster a sense of respect, tolerance, and appreciation by using recognition as a guiding principle. This can fortify ties, have long-lasting impacts, and lead to positive social transformation.

Thirdly, the "R" of the framework is *responsibilities*, which promote a sense of accountability and obligations within the community (Novelli et al., 2017). In order to foster a sense of shared accountability and ownership for the success of programmes, community development professionals and organisations should establish strong relationships (Riggio & Kunze, 2016). When relationships are built on trust, transparency, and open communication, community members are more likely to accept responsibility for their own development, actively engage in decision-making, and preserve the positive improvements made possible by the programme. Thompson (2014) therefore suggests that stakeholders in the 4R framework embrace and fulfil their respective duties, which can contribute to the success and longevity of community development projects. This responsible, team-based methodology ensures that initiatives are relevant, considerate, and sensitive to community needs, leading to more significant and sustainable results.

To prevent a return to conflict through more thorough social and psychosocial healing processes, the last "R" stands for *reciprocal*, a process that is crucial for post-conflict cultures (Novelli et al., 2015). It is imperative to establish partnerships and collaborations that are predicated on reciprocal benefits and shared responsibility (Baguma, 2019). We contend that creating good relationships with community members and other stakeholders fosters a sense of shared ownership of the development process and builds trust. Through reciprocity, community members become engaged and share their skills, knowledge, and resources in exchange for outside organisations or agencies offering help, information, and resources. Through the process, educational institutions can clarify what sustainability means to them and work to transform individuals, communities, and organisations, as well as help people acquire the skills necessary to help communities and systems transition to a sustainable future (Grant, 2013).

Pink (2018) states that the fourth R is based on three pillars: (i) visioning, which entails developing a shared understanding of the sustainable state; (ii) back casting, which entails determining the circumstances that would enable the sustainable state and facilitate the realisation of the necessary pedagogies and competencies; and (iii) monitoring and assessing indicators that would help in evaluating the system's progress towards sustainable development. In summary, the 4R framework's emphasis on reciprocity promotes a win-win and

cooperative approach to community development. It emphasises the importance of shared responsibility, equitable benefit distribution, participatory decision-making, and information sharing (Novelli et al., 2015; Novelli et al., 2017) Through embracing reciprocity, community development programmes may fortify links, guarantee sustainability, and provide communities with the opportunity to steer their own development.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers employed a desk research methodology to objectively assess the issues and potentialities in implementing the 4Rs framework to support English education for sustainable development in Rwanda. The study aimed to obtain insights into the integration of the 4Rs approach into Rwanda's English language curriculum through the analysis of authoritative sources and peer-reviewed literature (Ndahayo & Munyangeyo, 2021; Nkurunziza et al., 2022). To better understand the challenges and opportunities of putting the 4Rs framework into practice, the research mostly focused on secondary data analysis, with a special emphasis on how English instruction can support sustainable development. This study explored the potential of the 4Rs approach to enhance English proficiency while fostering sustainable development knowledge and skills among Rwandan students, identifying challenges, impacts, and best practices. The research identifies and screens study titles, abstracts, research summaries, publication years, sources, and methodologies employed in the studies, in addition to the sources and study content. Excluded from consideration were studies whose titles and goals did not correspond with the 4Rs framework or English teaching for sustainable development. Studies released between 2011 and 2023 were included in the analysis, with a significant portion coming from 2019 to 2023. The majority of these studies, which employed both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and satisfied the inclusion criteria, were carried out in the Rwandan environment with an emphasis on curriculum revisions, sustainability, and English education. Excluded from the analysis were studies that did not discuss the 4Rs framework, difficulties, or effects on English education for sustainable development in Rwanda's education systems.

Throughout this literature review, several databases, including university and government libraries and catalogues, African Journals Online (AJOL), PubMed, Google Scholar, and Scopus, were methodically searched. The 4Rs framework, English education for sustainable development in Rwanda, sustainability integration in the English curriculum, curricular reforms and English education in Rwanda, and challenges in putting the 4Rs approach into practice were among the themes that were searched for in electronic databases. The study utilised a thorough definition of the "4Rs framework" and its use in English education for sustainable development in a variety of scenarios. After assessing the reliability and quality of the sources, articles that were deemed to be of insufficient quality were excluded. Data collection and synthesis techniques, such as concept mapping, were used.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Sustainable development is achieved through English education

The findings of the research show the close relationship between the demand for English education and Rwanda's objectives for sustainable development. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2017) states that using English as a medium of exchange makes it easier to access information and knowledge about the world at large, opportunities for employment and economic empowerment, travel and hospitality, higher education and research collaboration, as well as international relations and global diplomacy. Accordingly, the study found that to meet these needs for English education and sustainable development, the government of Rwanda, in collaboration with academic institutions and non-governmental organisations, has been implementing several programmes (MINEDUC, 2018; REB, 2021). The programmes include incorporating English into the national curriculum, providing teacher education courses, promoting English language competitions, and building language centres to facilitate language learning. Rwanda has improved its involvement in the global economy and advanced sustainable development by spending money on English education (UNESCO, 2021). Perhaps the best way to understand how African nations feel about the English language is to look at their educational and economic programmes. The study found that Rwanda has made English education a top priority as a means to sustainable development, and the country's investments and initiatives are consistent with the importance it places on English as a tool for social and economic advancement.

The study further found that Rwanda's economic growth has changed significantly since English became the official language of the nation (Rugwiro, 2019). The World Bank (2020) states that because it is an official language of the African Union, United Nations, Commonwealth of Nations, COMESA, OIF, and EAC, Rwanda's adoption of this language was crucial to the nation's capacity to join communities and pursue sustainable economic development. English proficiency has made a wide range of economic opportunities available to individuals and the country at large. It enabled Rwandans to participate in global affairs, representing their country with effectiveness and playing a proactive role on international platforms. It made it simpler to communicate with foreign governments, organisations, and diplomats, strengthening diplomatic ties and advancing Rwanda's interests internationally. With improved employment, entrepreneurship, and innovation, English proficiency has promoted economic growth and reduced poverty (REB, 2021). It enabled Rwandans to interact with individuals from many nations (UNDP, 2017; UNESCO, 2021), take part in international forums, and add to conversations about sustainable development on a global scale. English proficiency enhanced cross-national cooperation and the sharing of best practices, which might hasten Rwanda's progress toward its sustainable development objectives (Karasenga & Nzanana, 2022). The analysis illustrates how Rwanda's economic change has been greatly accelerated by the country's adoption of English, which has linked the nation and its people to the global community and knowledge economy. This has strengthened diplomacy, boosted economic

opportunities, facilitated innovation, and enabled Rwanda to advance its development aims through cooperation.

The researcher argues that Rwanda may strengthen its standing in the international community, promote cross-cultural exchange, and boost its economy by investing in English education, all of which would contribute to the country's sustainable development (Nizeyimana et al., 2021; Nsengimana, 2021). It is not disputed that English education is essential to Rwanda's sustainable growth. English education may help Rwanda's economy grow, increase its citizens' access to opportunities and knowledge worldwide, foster international collaboration, and enhance the country's efforts to accomplish sustainable development goals (UNDP, 2017; World Bank, 2020). However, Rwanda ought to allocate resources towards English education as part of its broader plans to build a fully sustainable and successful future.

Problems in the effective implementation of English education in Rwanda

The study revealed that many factors have hindered the complete implementation of English education, despite its criticality for Rwanda's sustainable development. The following challenges are among them: the language barrier; the development of teacher preparation and capacity; uneven access; the relevance of the material to the local context; assessment and evaluation; and the involvement of the community and parents (REB, 2020a; 2021). The full introduction of English language education in Rwanda was met with, and continues to be met with, a variety of difficulties (Niyomugabo et al., 2018; Rugwiro, 2019; Uwambayinema, 2019). Ingabire (2020) asserts that the primary obstacles to any carefully thought-out programme are human behaviour and attitude. Studies by Mukankusi and Stiburek (2019), Ndayizeye and Matunga (2020), and Uwanyirigira (2018) have found that limitations on monitoring and assessment (by administrators and departments in charge) are other factors. These include low levels of English proficiency, children's home and educational settings, and low levels of teacher motivation (due to low salaries and a high teacher-to-student ratio). There is proof that teaching and using English in Rwanda presents challenges, especially in educational institutions and other official settings (REB, 2021). Relatively few publications on the subject of English implementation in Rwanda were found through a quick search of the literature from 2009 to the present using the keywords "English implementation in Rwanda" and related terms like "language policies in Rwanda," "problems in English language implementation in Rwanda," "quality English teaching in Rwanda," "English proficiency in Rwanda," and "the quality of English teachers" (Ingabire, 2020; Reuben, 2019). The implementation of English education can be made more effective by focusing on these issues and putting in place the essential solutions, allowing students to develop their language skills and academic and personal interests. The following is a discussion of the issues:

Low teacher motivation

This study found that while high levels of these variables pave the way for high levels of teaching quality, such as the establishment and/or upkeep of appropriate cultural values and pedagogical disposition, low levels of teacher motivation and job satisfaction are associated with lower levels

of perceived teaching quality. A survey carried out in Rwanda by REB (2020a) revealed that educators who lacked motivation divided their time between work-related and non-work-related tasks. It is even more evident from additional research done in Rwanda by Mupenzi and Hategekimana (2020), Ngiruwonsanga et al. (2018), and Nzeyimana and Karangwa (2019) that underpaid teachers find it difficult to devote themselves fully to their work (Baguma, 2019; Silverman et al., 2023). The English education curriculum would not have much time to be fully implemented because of absenteeism by the educators and implementers. The study concluded that educators with higher levels of motivation are more strongly associated with the teaching profession than educators with lower motivation levels. Furthermore, studies by Baguma (2019) and Mupenzi and Hategekimana (2020) show that the majority of secondary school educators were pursuing advanced degrees unrelated to teaching. This shows that there is little incentive for teachers in Rwanda to pursue higher education and that there are higher-paying professions outside teaching. The research concluded that the general deficiency of the educational system, which includes low teacher standards and a lack of facilities and resources, makes teaching unappealing. This makes it difficult for Rwanda to implement effective English language teaching and learning in its educational institutions.

Low levels of English proficiency

A review of a study conducted in Rwanda by Ingabire (2020) reveals that Rwandan educators lack basic literacy skills in the English language. According to REB (2020b), in 2009, when English was first introduced, around 90% of tutors, lecturers, and teachers in schools, teacher training institutes, and universities spoke French. These findings are alarming because the individuals tasked with teaching students English could hardly read, write, talk, or listen for more than a few sentences (Nkengurutse, 2020). It remains worrying even though a lot has happened since it was initially introduced, which was 14 years ago. According to National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) (2023), 77% of people in Rwanda are literate in at least one of the four official languages of the country: Kinyarwanda, English, French, and Swahili. Nonetheless, 14% of Rwandans who are 15 years of age and older are literate in English and Kinyarwanda, 2% in French and Kinyarwanda, and 4% in all three of those languages. The numbers are concerning, given that English instruction only started in 2009. In response to the aforementioned, the researcher argues that while moving from French to English was a wise choice, it was important to keep an eye on and evaluate how English education is implemented across the board (Oyebimpe & Andala, 2021). Even after more than ten years of English training, the research reveals significant inequalities in English literacy among Rwandan educators. Considering the vital role that educators play, this raises questions regarding the quality of English education. In order to promote students' learning, the researchers recommend assessing the implementation and allowing educators time to improve their English.

Students' home and educational environments

The national tongue of Rwanda, Kinyarwanda, was the other official language used there prior to the advent of English instruction (MINEDUC, 2018). According to the studies, English is used

as a teaching medium starting in Grade 4 and is taught in schools as a language (L2) from early infancy through postsecondary education (Ingabire, 2020; REB, 2020b). In opposition to this approach to teaching, theoretical reflections on language acquisition by nativist theorist Chomsky, cognitive scientist Piaget, interactionist theorist Bruner, and social learning theorist Vygotsky suggest that children acquire language in a variety of ways from an early age. Those channels must be developed for learning to occur at that young age. The Rwandan curriculum stipulates that English will be used as a medium of instruction at the P4 level (Nzeyimana & Karangwa, 2019), notwithstanding what the aforementioned theoretical notions imply. The researchers argue that it might already be too late for children in Rwanda to acquire the requisite English language skills. As people age, it is more probable that things will take longer to remain in their memories (Makalela, 2014; Niyibizi, 2015; Oyebimpe & Andala, 2021). It can also be quite rewarding because children can see their most advanced language acquisition skills at this level as they study. Although Rwanda has opted for late English instruction, research on language acquisition suggests that introducing children to foreign languages at an earlier age through diverse means promotes learning. The researcher suggest that while the current strategy may postpone children's ability to speak English, they can still acquire literacy in primary/grade 4 if given the right instruction.

Limitations in monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are very beneficial for any projects, plans, or regulations. According to REB (2021), each educational institution has policies, objectives, planning, and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation help determine whether objectives are being accomplished. These are essential for helping managers, planners, implementers, policymakers, and donors get the understanding and expertise needed to make informed decisions about how to run their programmes (Niyibizi et al., 2018; Ndabaga et al., 2018). Rwanda should create plans that strike a balance between short-term response and long-term strategic impact based on information and evidence made available to the competent ministry or agency (MINEDUC, 2019; REB, 2020a; 2020b). To ensure that all students, including those in remote areas and marginalised groups, have equitable access to high-quality English education, effective monitoring and evaluation help in implementing inclusive policies and targeted interventions. This serves to address urgent needs while building more resilient educational systems in their nation. As stated by Ingabire and Muhirwa (2020), plans for programme monitoring and evaluation are a crucial part of any government strategy. In order to make decisions, guarantee equity in English education, attend to immediate demands, and foster long-term resilience and quality, the researchers recommended the significance of thorough monitoring and evaluation (Ngendahayo & Askell–Williams, 2016; Nizeyimana et al., 2021). For Rwanda's educational institutions to achieve sustainable development, monitoring and evaluation were found to be crucial.

Applying the 4Rs to promote English education and sustainable education in Rwanda

The most important question is: what does this 4R framework represent when it comes to studying the interactions between planners, implementers, and implementing processes? Novelli et al. (2015) suggest that the phrase "in and through" English education be used in this analysis rather than just "to" English education. It ought to consider how the processes and outcomes of implementation mirror specific (socio-economic, cultural, and political) attributes that the Rwandan government has required (Le Saux et al., 2021; Uwambayinema, 2019). Thus, the framework encourages both the implementation process's negative and positive elements while simultaneously impeding it. Consequently, the study's present emphasis is on examining how we may use the 4R framework to examine specific and contextualised "Rwandan problems" and "possible solutions." The aim of this study was to show the application of the 4R framework to situational analysis in the design and assessment of Rwanda's present English education programme. The 4R Framework was viewed as an extra *'procedure'* that might be used to *'reform'* and *'reconstruct'* the Rwandan English education programme, informing the decisions made (Novelli et al., 2017). The framework has also been used to analyse and evaluate how certain initiatives affect the outcomes of sustainable development, either positively or negatively. It is believed that to effectively use the breadth of local knowledge and culture, a greening initiative plan based on complete participatory decision-making (pre and post) must be developed through collaboration between learning institutions and communities.

Relationship-building is essential in community development initiatives

Building relationships is frequently the foundational work that needs to be done on a project before anything else. As to Čirjevskis (2022a), Rwanda needed additional contacts due to the significance of English education for sustainable development. Le Saux et al. (2021) contend that a community's strength comes from the quality of its ties to one another. People can affect meaningful change if they have strong ties. Although it takes effort to establish connections, relationships are essential to community organisations and are valuable. Čirjevskis (2023), and Vinayavekhin & Phaal (2020) advise that parties in a synergistic connection have explicit ground rules to follow, specifically the following: (i) clear and effortless communication; (ii) shared dreams and goals; (iii) mutual respect and trust; (iv) active support and encouragement; and (v) a sense of unity. It is argued that for a synergistic relationship to last, the Rwandan government needs to be able to communicate effectively and without omission; it also needs to work together to accomplish its goals as a team; it needs to be able to pool its unique perspectives and strengths to find a solution; it needs to have a shared objective that will enable them to get past obstacles; and lastly, it needs to encourage and support one another as they grow, learn, and succeed as a pair (Čirjevskis, 2022b; Edmondson, 2019; Ury, 2015). The Rwandan government and the community must jointly develop a sustainable vision for the future, "translating" what obtaining an English education will entail. This ought to be a collaborative process that actively involves the students themselves, as well as members of the local civic society, educators, and other stakeholders (Čirjevskis, 2017; Coyle, 2018; Duhigg, 2016).

Through this approach, synergistic partners are able to accomplish more as a team than they ever could individually while absolving one another of responsibility.

Community involvement validates project accomplishments

Long-sighted leaders are needed with a localised vision of a nation to make sure that humanity functions in a just and safe environment. UNDP (2017) claims that to progress toward sustainable development, Rwanda was expected to comprehend the problem and the perspectives of all impacted cultures and individuals. Questioning the change's driving forces is aided by awareness of historical and cultural presumptions and ramifications (Dushimumuremyi & Sibomana, 2018). Therefore, a vital component of team synergy is an invitation to jointly create and implement the change. This may have been achieved if the Rwandan planners and implementers had worked together on a planned transition. Therefore, the best strategy for developing an idea collectively rather than making incremental progress toward a goal individually is to organise suggesting sessions, promote discussion, and leave the door open to dissent. According to Lynd (2010), team members who want to achieve the best cooperation techniques need to give their all in the workplace. When fresh ideas are welcomed and co-creation is encouraged, the team becomes more cohesive, actively developing the knowledge they wish to gain. It is believed that Rwandan policymakers and implementers, to facilitate sustainable change within the existing educational policy landscape, should adopt a micro- to macro-level approach.

Community development programmes should establish strong partnerships

The Rwandan government should possess community knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes that policymakers and implementers need to pick up in order to achieve change and sustainability once relationship-building and recognition have been achieved (Čirjevskis, 2022b; Penfold et al., 2019). This work is essential to creating synergy since the selection of sustainability skills will change English curricula, pedagogies, and educator training programmes at all levels. Such a strategy promotes stakeholders' feelings of ownership. These skills enable stakeholders to understand the sustainable state that their nation demands. The localised sustainability Rwanda's 2050 vision can be tailored using a pre-set list of common, standard sustainability competencies. Carter et al., (2023) claims that higher-order cognitive talents like reasoning and synthesising are also part of sustainability competencies. These cognitive components also include knowledge and awareness of environmental issues, as well as social skills, values, and emotional intelligence. It has been proposed that these sustainability abilities can help achieve sustainable development. Such a strategy could enable more Rwandan policies that are tailored to the place, time, and context of execution, leading to a programme that is broadly accepted.

Moreover, another way to promote synergy at work is through employee empowerment (Čirjevskis, 2022a). To show that the government has confidence in their abilities and depends on them to deliver exceptional results that benefit everyone, Carter et al. (2022) argue that Rwanda can achieve its greatest success by empowering implementers to make the most of

their skills. Čirjevskis (2023) adds that to improve implementers' accountability, progress must be monitored and acknowledged. Monitoring implementers' progress is thought to be a critical part of promoting synergy in the implementation of English education. At that point, the planners have a clear picture of how hard everyone is working to achieve Rwanda's 2050 goal. According Vinayavekhin and Phaal (2020), implementers must understand their roles and duties to work well. Consequently, progress monitoring and evaluation lead to increased efficiency. According to study findings, implementers would be happier and more engaged if they are acknowledged and commended for their accomplishments.

According to Carter et al. (2022) and Vinayavekhin and Phaal (2020), synergy is more likely to emerge in the workplace when team members have the same vision, values, and goals. In fact, having a shared goal that everyone will work toward can help employees get past their differences. To strengthen the implementation of English education, the Rwandan government should work to tear down the barriers between implementers and management (planners). Čirjevskis (2023) emphasises that doing so can bring the two together in the pursuit of achieving shared objectives while sustaining and expanding the implementation programme. It is argued that the greatest way to establish workplace synergy is for team members to work together to have a bigger influence than they would individually. If it is appropriately promoted, the workplace can easily experience high levels of productivity, efficiency, and employee accountability (Hull, 2022; Carter et al., 2022).

Monitoring and evaluation are vital for ensuring project sustainability

While developing and executing English education is essential to the transformation process, it is equally critical to monitor progress and evaluate results. Through monitoring and assessment, stakeholders can identify any gaps in action plans, issues with the pedagogies used, the competencies targeted, or even their sustainability vision, which allows them to actively participate in the transition process (Čirjevskis, 2017; 2020; 2023). These offer opportunities for excellence, encourage responsibility, and permit substantial modifications in a process that necessitates flexibility and initiative on the part of the worker. The study suggests that a reciprocal management technique can be used to carry out monitoring and assessment successfully (Carter et al., 2022). According to Čirjevskis (2023), reciprocal management is a training method that progressively gives the implementer the authority to take on the role of the planner to develop implementation skills. Through reciprocal management, the implementers thereby take an active role in the implementation process. It also supports the transition of implementers from supervised to independent implementers and highlights methods for appreciating the importance of changes that have already been put in place. The planner simulates the four capability procedures of summarising, questioning, forecasting, and clarifying in reciprocal management through the use of guided supervision. After the implementers feel comfortable with the methods and strategies, they take turns managing similar supervision in classroom environments.

According to the study, reciprocal management has been proven to increase implementers' performance in as little as three years and to last for up to five or ten years (Novelli et al., 2015; UNDP, 2017). The approach proposed makes it possible for the Rwandan government to develop evaluation instruments that can help educational establishments monitor and record their progress towards sustainable growth. Čirjevskis (2019) and Vinayavekhin and Phaal (2020) argue that institutional reputation can be improved, best practises can be showcased, and accountability can be increased, all of which can help overcome resistance to change through the implementation of cohesive policy and benchmarking. The 4R framework makes it possible for planners to take on a distinct and important role in enabling implementers to develop the skills necessary for sustainability to become a reality (Hull, 2022). These can include guidelines for incorporating sustainability into the mission, vision, and action plans. Additionally, they can include active teaching and learning strategies, interdisciplinary teamwork, adaptable management, sustainability certification, and the role of instructors as change agents.

Creating a synergy to support the implementation of English education in Rwanda

A synergy must be created for English education to be effective and have an impact in Rwanda. Čirjevskis (2023) asserts that partnerships and collaborations serve to establish a synergy for the adoption of English into Rwandan education to have an effect and be successful. It is crucial to involve the various stakeholders in English teaching, including the public and private sectors of government, educational institutions, linguists, and non-profit organisations. Together, these parties can develop new resources, pool existing ones, share knowledge, and create collaborative initiatives that promote English instruction.

Second, Falah et al. (2023) argues that to equip English teachers with language proficiency, pedagogical understanding, and awareness of contemporary teaching techniques, thorough and continuous training ought to be a primary focus of teacher preparation and professional development. Professional development offers opportunities such as workshops, conferences, and mentoring programmes to help teachers perform better in the classroom. Teachers in Rwanda should meet in workshops to discuss, organise, and offer options for improving English instruction (Čirjevskis, 2022a; MINEDUC, 2019; REB, 2020b). This helps teachers develop their time-management and organisational skills. Additionally, teachers who possess strong pedagogical skills may identify the unique needs of each learner and modify their lesson plans and delivery techniques accordingly. All student teachers are encouraged to acquire information and comprehension skills, a positive attitude, and values as part of the new teaching methodology being used in teacher training institutions. Individualised, interactive, and collaborative learning methods should be used. Students' autonomous or group knowledge construction would be supported by the way the learning activities are structured. As a result, improving teachers' abilities and knowledge is crucial for improving English education in Rwanda.

Ingabire (2020) identifies the implementation of student support systems as the third technique for assisting students in advancing their English language learning. This can include language clubs where students can exchange ideas in a social setting while also honing their English-speaking skills; language labs where students can improve their listening and speaking skills; tutoring programmes that help students reach their individual academic goals by preparing them for upcoming class materials and making them independent; and more. According to Carter et al. (2023), language exchange programmes also provide additional opportunities for practise and increase confidence in one's command of the English language. In the discussion of Rwanda's English education, the significance of student support services has already been made clear.

Fourthly, to achieve sustainable development, MINEDUC (2018) and REB (2021) state that curriculum alignment must be well-aligned with national educational standards and goals in English. Curriculum alignment is the procedure by which all levels formally examine a course to address the changing needs of students and the workforce (MINEDUC, 2019; REB, 2020b). The development of the curriculum and checking for any gaps that can obstruct academic growth are done in cooperation. The alignment makes it easier for students to see how the course's numerous components work together, which in turn helps them learn English. A higher level of learning is ensured through routine curriculum review and updating that incorporates new teaching strategies, technology, and pertinent information. This also aids teachers in the process of evaluation and keeps them on track. Stakeholder input is necessary to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs of both students and the greater community. As a result, curriculum alignment is more important in Rwanda's English education.

Last but not least, enough resources and infrastructure should be supplied to assist in the implementation of English instruction (REB, 2021). These resources and infrastructure include money, technology, educational materials, and infrastructure. Baguma (2019) and Mukankusi et al. (2020) argue in favour of the aforementioned claim by saying that students who have access to adequate infrastructure attend class more frequently than those who do not. This includes giving people access to books, websites, libraries, and technological tools that make it easier to learn and use new languages. Additionally, the students are given a pleasant, cosy, and friendly impression thanks to the strong infrastructure and resources. Children's comprehension levels are impacted by congested environments in schools. As a result, facilities and resources have an impact on English education in Rwanda. Once all the materials are available, a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism must be put in place to evaluate progress and determine how well English education programmes are working. With data-driven insights, the government can identify problem areas and make informed decisions for continuous improvement.

Rwanda may successfully execute English education projects by fostering cooperation among stakeholders, concentrating on teacher training, student assistance, curriculum alignment, resource allocation, monitoring and evaluation, and community engagement. This

coordinated and thorough strategy will help learners' English language ability, improve their chances for higher education and employment, and advance Rwanda's larger sustainable development objectives. The Rwandan government has provided specifics on how it intends to assess the teaching methods and curricula. The competency-based curriculum, which was introduced in April 2015, was intended to be responsive to the demands of society, the labour market, and students. Linking primary teacher education tactics and techniques with pre-primary and primary school learning and assessment processes is essential to the holistic student-centered approach.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Rwanda's sustained progress and admission into the international community depend on reforming the country's English education system. Its execution is, however, hindered by several issues. Among these problems are a dearth of qualified English teachers, subpar course materials, and limited opportunities for extracurricular English language practice. It is feasible to deal with these problems by using the 4R framework, which uses the four key components: relationship-building, recognition, responsibilities, and recipient. In order to ensure that the necessary resources—such as certified teachers, textbooks, and technology—are easily accessible, stakeholders can work together by using this framework. Additional strategies to enhance preparedness include the development of language learning facilities and professional development programmes for instructors.

Another important factor is relevance, as English instruction should be in line with student requirements and the socio-cultural environment of Rwanda. This can be accomplished by including regional information, cultural components, and practical applications in the teaching of English. Building resilience also entails developing a welcoming climate that promotes creativity, adaptation, and ongoing improvement in English teaching. Collaboration amongst different stakeholders is crucial to building a synergy that supports the implementation of English education. This comprises the public sector, academic institutions, educators, parents, and people of the local community. The difficulties can be overcome more successfully by teaming up, pooling knowledge, and using resources. Overall, a thorough strategy that takes into account the 4R framework and promotes cooperation and synergy among stakeholders is needed for the successful implementation of English education in Rwanda. Rwanda can overcome the obstacles and establish a supportive atmosphere for English language learning, promoting sustainable development and expanding opportunities for its population on a global scale.

Recommendations of the Study

Based on the study on the 4Rs Framework and English education for sustainable development in Rwanda, the study recommends that:

- The 4Rs Framework's tenets should be incorporated into Rwanda's English education curriculum. The curriculum should be integrated with sustainable development goals,

critical thinking and problem-solving abilities should be encouraged, local resources should be used, and a sense of responsibility for sustainable practises should be fostered.

- To improve their knowledge and abilities in delivering education for sustainable development, English teachers in Rwanda need to have access to extensive professional development opportunities. To assist instructors in successfully integrating sustainable development themes into their English courses, this can involve workshops, training programmes, and continuous support.

- To advance English education for sustainable development, it is necessary to encourage collaborations between educational institutions, governmental organisations, non-profits, and community organisations. Partnerships can provide resources, open doors for hands-on learning and community involvement, and help the creation and execution of sustainable development ideas.

- The implementation and effects of English education for sustainable development in Rwanda require rigorous monitoring and evaluation, which calls for the establishment of a system. Regular evaluation of student learning outcomes, instructor practices, and the programmes' overall efficacy will yield insightful input and guide further changes.

- Additional empirical study is required to better understand how the 4Rs Framework, English education, and sustainable development interact in Rwanda. This can encourage the distribution of best practices and the exchange of knowledge among academics, researchers, and policymakers to promote a culture of innovation and constant improvement.

These recommendations aim to enhance the implementation of English education for sustainable development in Rwanda, ensuring its relevance, effectiveness, and contribution to the country's sustainable development goals.

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