



FACTORS AFFECTING DISTRIBUTION OF UGANDAN TRADE BOOKS

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KEY WORDS

- ▶ **Academic/Curricular Books:** official textbooks used in schools for study towards national examinations, approved by the national government.
- ▶ **Trade Books:** books that we read for pleasure in our leisure time, such as novels, biographies, self-help, religious and cookery books. They are primarily sold in bookshops, either physically or online. They may be found in places such as airports, train stations, news agents and supermarkets. Alternatively, they may be downloaded from a publisher's website, or from online retailers (Smith, 2012).
- ▶ **Ugandan Book:** written by an author who holds Ugandan citizenship, even if the book is published outside Uganda.

About Uganda

- ▶ Population of about 34.8 million; 56.7% < 18 yrs, 75% < 30 yrs.
- ▶ 2nd youngest country in the world with a median age of 15.5
- ▶ Adult literacy rate of 78.2%
- ▶ Has the source of River Nile
- ▶ Named the Pearl of Africa
- ▶ Agriculture based
- ▶ Oil discovery (reserves worth 6.5 billion barrels by 2014)
- ▶ Hosts over 55 tribes, thus over 55 indigenous languages
- ▶ Official languages are English and Swahilli



The Need for this Research

- ▶ Uganda's potential for socio-economic development

“My journey is at an end, the tale is told, and the reader who has followed so faithfully so far has a right to ask what message I bring back. It can be stated in three words: “Concentrate on Uganda”.

But it is alive by itself. It is vital, and in my view, in spite of its insects and its diseases, it ought in the course of time to become the most prosperous of all our East and Central African possessions, and perhaps the “financial driving wheel of all this part of the world”.

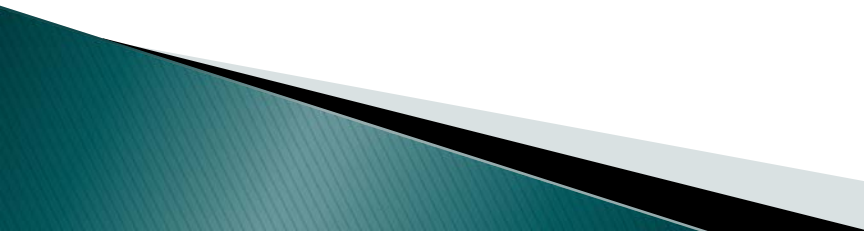
My counsel plainly is: Concentrate upon Uganda! Nowhere else in Africa will a little money go so far. Nowhere else will the results be more brilliant, more substantial or more rapidly realized.

*Uganda is from end to end one beautiful garden, where the staple food of the people grows almost without labour. Does it not sound like a paradise on earth?
“It is the Pearl of Africa”.*

- Sir Winston Churchill
Colonial Secretary of the United Kingdom (1908)



The Need for This Research

- ▶ There is not much research on trade books in particular, in Uganda and in East Africa.
 - ▶ Post-independence governments focused on education as the means to reduce the three bottlenecks to development; **disease, ignorance, poverty**
 - ▶ Government focuses on academic books to educate people
 - ▶ Trade books are just as important as academic books, for education
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Importance of Trade Books

- ▶ Knowledge for socio-economic growth – *The Case of Bake Robert Tumuhaise, CEO World of Inspiration (U) Ltd*



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Importance of Trade Books

- ▶ At the Launch of a City Reading Tent in 2012:

‘If Kampala city residents were reading literature in addition to newspapers, the management of the city would be much easier and cheaper.’

James Mugabi

‘...Writers should write on themes that meet individual goals for Uganda’s population.’

Anne Galiwango,
Director of Educ. & Social Services KCCA, 2012

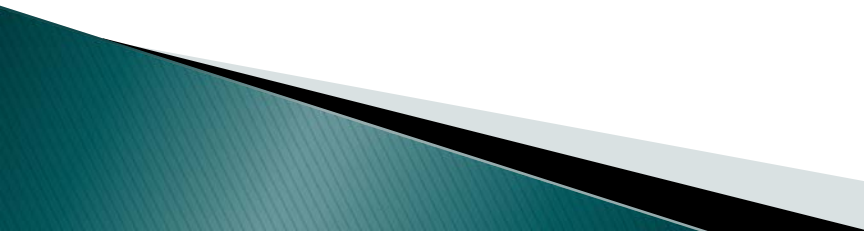
Research Question and Objectives

- ▶ Why aren't readers able to access Ugandan trade publishing books in different formats as easily as they do other literature?

Objectives:

- ▶ To describe the more successful distribution models of Ugandan curricular material (pre-school, primary and secondary school books)
- ▶ To describe the existing distribution models of Ugandan trade books, factors affecting their distribution, and the current and expected roles of stakeholders in their distribution.
- ▶ To give recommendations for more successful distribution of Ugandan trade books

Methodology

- ▶ **Exploratory research;** Qualitative data collection methods (questionnaires, phone interviews); Qualitative analysis of data
 - ▶ **Sample Space:** 5 publishing companies, 5 Bookshops, 5 self-published authors, 5 not-for-profit distributors
 - ▶ Non-probability sampling based on the researcher's judgement
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Factors Affecting Trade Book Distribution

1. History of Uganda's Publishing Industry

- Literacy emerged through teaching of the Koran, then through the European explorers and Christian missionaries by 1879
- 1945; Mrs Huxley's survey showed Ugandans wanted books to make them literate
- British publishers came in to supply the demand for books that the missionaries could no longer supply (eg Macmillan, Longman)
- Books supplied were based on the British academic system, and academic books are still the focus today


Factors continued...

2. Government policy and funding favours academic books

- Privatisation of government businesses in the 1990s, including privatising publishing
- 1993; National text policy and NCDC open bidding system, engaging private publishers to publish curricular books, thus the rise of indigenous publishers
- Government procures textbooks for Govt's primary schools, and partly for secondary schools

Factors continued...

3. Poor Reading Culture

- Consider the definition of reading culture
 - Students (majority population) read only for exams, not for pleasure or self-help
 - Increasing no. of children, but educational facilities and book supply stagnant
 - Oral culture is more animated mixing dance, song, humour and story-telling emotion at once, unlike print books
 - 56 local languages, not enough writers, editors, ethnographers for them
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Factors continued...

4. Publishers' reluctance

- Their dependence on government as ready market for curricular books
- Authors are writing trade books in different formats and selling them in and beyond Uganda, bookshops are selling trade books, not-for-profit organisations are distributing them; only publishers are reluctant to publish and distribute them
- Publishers have more capital to distribute trade books round the country, but are reluctant to

Factors continued...

5. Globalisation and technology

6. Donor Impact

7. Trade policy barriers

8. Ugandan trade book market centered around the capital city; it is costly for non-publishers to take print books further

Tentative Solutions

- ▶ Government policy as an influencer of reading culture and different school teaching methods
 - ▶ Government policy and funding to boost trade literature campaigns and circulation
 - ▶ Community based projects, to involve parents
 - ▶ Technology; making use of the increasing internet access nationwide
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