

**IMPACT OF FRONT PAGE HEADLINES ON THE READERSHIP OF A NEWS PAPER
A CASE STUDY OF BUKEDDE AND NEW VISION NEWSPAPERS**

BY

BOB AMBROSE NUWAGIRA (BIT) (Mak)

2009/HDO3/15008U

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION OF
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

APRIL 2011

ABSTRACT

This research study set out to find out the effects of front page headlines on the readership of newspapers. In defining the objectives, the research was revolved around the different attributes that are always emphasized when front page headlines are written and presented: style, diction, font, word play, among others, and how they influence readership.

Realizing that success for newspaper editors and publishers is when their publications are actually read, the researcher looks at the role of persuasion in attracting readership in commercial publications especially when it is ground in the front page headlines. This study was based on the social judgment theory of communications which ascertains that individuals' reactions to a persuasive message is either to accept, reject or be non-committal depending on how they are involved in the issue.

With key informants being interviewed and questionnaires sent out to the respective readership demographics, the findings based on content analysis revealed amazing patterns.

The results reveal remarkable patterns where majority where it was found out that the desire to seek information by the public overrides the persuasive appeal of front page headlines in interesting potential readers to printed copies of the newspaper. But at the same time the results show that majority of those who read Bukedde say their biggest motivation are the catchy headlines. It was discovered that the readership has a lot in determining the outlook of the headlines and that's why editors and publishers take extra attention in making the headlines appealing.