You are kindly invited to the public defense to obtain the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
of Mr. Mark Kaahwa

Which will take place on 6th November 2019 at 10 am
Venue: Room E.0.05
Brussels Humanities, Sciences & Engineering Campus
Pleinlaan 2 – 1050 Brussel

Assessing the Usability and Effectiveness of Audio Media Technology in Distance and Community Education. A case of Rwenzori Region in Western Uganda

JURY
INTERN:
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Prof. dr. Prof. dr. Koen Lombaerts (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
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EXTERN:
Prof. dr. Prof. Egbert Desmet (Universiteit Antwerpen)
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You are also invited to the reception at QFoyer afterwards.
Please confirm your attendance before 1st of November 2019 via mark.kaahwa@vub.be

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**SUMMARY**

Although audio media technology (AMT) has been researched by previous scholars, there are few empirical studies that have focused on its usability and effectiveness in distance and community education in resource-poor contexts like Uganda. This gap therefore, motivated this study. To achieve this aim, five studies were designed from which five objectives and seventeen research questions were drawn. To provide answers to these questions, we used questionnaires, semi-structured personal interviews, structured and naturalistic observations and experimental study design. The study included the following participants: teachers and distance education university students for distance education and smallholder banana farmers and radio listening club members for community education. Results showed that both teachers and students do not only have required skills to use AMT but feel that AMT is pedagogically beneficial in teaching and learning. In addition, results showed no differences regarding the effect of the use of AMT and conventional teaching strategies on students’ academic performance, which indicates that AMT can independently be used as an instructional strategy in teaching and learning process. For community education, although smallholder farmers and radio listeners had low initial knowledge on banana farming practices and financial literacy respectively, their knowledge levels significantly increased after AMT intervention in the form of radio broadcasts and audio CDs. Generally, the PhD research results demonstrate that a blend of audio media technology in the form of radio broadcasts, podcasts and audio CDs is an effective way not only in formal teaching and learning but also in information dissemination for community education and development. The Dissertation provides evidence from which resource-poor countries can design instructional strategies and disseminate developmental programmes to the rural communities through AMT.

**CURRICULUM VITAE**

Mark Kaahwa was born and raised in a humble family in Nyarubingo Village Kyenjojo district, Uganda. Although he almost failed to attend school due to fees problems, the hand of God has lifted him from Primary to doctoral studies with sponsorship through out. He holds a Bachelor of Social & Philosophical studies, Post graduate Diploma in Education, Masters in Educational Planning & Management and currently pursuing a PhD in Educational Sciences. He is a professional teacher who has not only written on paper and chalkboard but has “written” on the lives of tens to thousands of students. Mark is an accomplished teacher who has taught at all levels of education right from Kindergarten to University. He joined Mountains of the Moon University in Uganda in 2006 as a Personal Assistant to the Registrar Academic and in 2008 upon excellent service he was promoted to Ag. Assistant Registrar, a position he held up to 2010 before being transferred to the Faculty of Education, first as assistant lecturer and later in 2011 as Head of Department Preservice and Inservice departments and Ag. Dean from 2013 to 2015. He has done a lot of community service in the Albertine region in Uganda including but not limited to training Primary School headteachers in Primary School improvement planning and effective management of schools, training primary school teachers in pedagogical skills and other continuous professional trainings. He currently has 3 published articles in international peer reviewed journals, 2 articles under review, 2 articles published under conference proceedings. He has attended and presented papers at four international conferences in Spain Valencia, Tanzania Mzumbe University, South Africa Cape Town and Austria Vienna. When it comes to assignments, you can expect a 100% reliability from Mark, he is a team builder and a result-oriented person. Ahead in his career, he foresees touching many more lives in his teaching, research and community service.