

TOPIC: TRENDS IN ADULT EDUCATION AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, 1953-2006

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the history of adult education at Makerere University from 1953 to 2006. Whereas existing scholarship on Makerere University has focused on its governance history, student politics, and the history of academic programmes and units such as political science and history, none has traced the evolution of adult education since its inception in 1953. This study sought to analyse the changes and continuities in adult education in different historical contexts. The study was guided by four objectives namely: to examine the extramural courses and activities at Makerere from 1953-1962; to analyse the changes in the extramural courses and activities in the 1960s; to discuss the nature of extramural courses and activities in the 1970s, and to explain the changes in adult education at Makerere University in the period 1980-2006. This study employed a historical research design and data was obtained from both written and oral sources. The written sources included curriculum documents, course outlines, memoirs, obituaries, departmental handbooks, reports, graduation booklets, minutes of the University Senate and departmental meetings and newspapers. The oral sources included in-depth interviews with members of staff and alumni of adult education. The study revealed that initially adult education did not focus on academic qualifications. Rather, it was tailored towards providing general knowledge on topics such as government, democracy, parliament, economics, and economic development. After 1962, authorities revised the curriculum to focus on academic qualifications because of the need to produce qualified local manpower who would replace expatriates after independence. In the 1970s, tutors of adult education carefully selected topics that would not get them in trouble with the government. Using Bourdieu's theory on taste and Ndlovu-Gatsheni's decolonial theory, the study shows that adult education was revised to address the changing needs at the different periods. The study contributes to the historiography of higher education and Makerere University in particular.