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Upgrading Extension Programs from Diploma to Degree level at the University of Zambia

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore the views of stakeholders regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. This paper is an extract from the thesis submitted for the award of a Master degree. The objective was to explore on the views of stakeholders regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. Through the findings of the study, it may add to the body of knowledge. The study may also help the curriculum specialist at the University to adjust the curriculum. The University of Zambia Extension Studies may be aware of the stakeholders' views regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. A Concurrent mixed design was employed, the population of the study included students, graduates, part-time tutors and Resident Lecturer. A sample size of 256 respondents was used. The sample size was broken down as follows; 215 students, 30 graduates, 10 part-time tutors and 01 Resident Lecturer. The main respondents of the study were the students. While graduates, part-time tutors and Resident Lecturer were involved in the study for the purpose of triangulating the findings of the study. Expert sampling was used to sample Resident Lecturer and the part-time tutor and students. While simple random sampling and snowball sampling were used on graduates. Questionnaires and an

interview guide were used to collect data. Data was analysed thematically and descriptively. The study showed that the stakeholders were in support of the University of Zambia to upgrade University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. It was concluded that there are many reasons contributing to stakeholders demanding for the introduction of degree programmes. Some of the reasons were: Competition on the job market, keeping updated with the ever-changing world of technology, earning a good salary, promotion and personal stratification. The study also established that stakeholders preferred to maintain the evening classes. The study recommended that the University of Zambia should clearly show the progression patterns by diploma students from University Extension studies into the mainstream University by providing exemptions for the courses that were covered at certificate and diploma level in respective fields of study. It also recommended that the University of Zambia should also show the various alternatives one can use to progress from diploma to degree level: such as exemptions and/ or bridging courses between the diploma and degree content (if any). Draw supportive structures that will make Extension Studies a formidable avenue of delivering quality University Education to the community and expand the enrolment of the University of Zambia.

Keywords: Instructional Mode, Learning, Stakeholders

Introduction

The term Extension has its origin in the Latin word tension, meaning stretching and ex, meaning out. The literal meaning of Extension is teaching out. The common use of the term University Extension was first recorded in the 1840's. Around 1850, discussions began in two ancient Universities of Oxford and Cambridge about how they could serve the educational needs of the people, near to their homes of the rapidly growing population in the industrial and urban areas. It was not until 1867 when James Stuart, gave lectures to women's associations and working men's clubs in the north of England. James Stuart is often considered the "the father of University Extension" (Jones, 1994).

The concept of Extension Education

Extension education is seen as an informal out of school system of education designed to help rural people to satisfy their needs, interests and desires. It is a system of education which involves adult learners. Obibuaku (1983:10)^[13] posits that "Extension work is considered as an aspect of adult education which differs from formal or classroom education in that it prepares its clientele to tackle the problems of today and helps them to live here and now".

National Institute of Agriculture Extension Management of Nigeria (2007)^[12] states that Extension Education assists the farmers in effectively utilizing the resources available to them in solving their current farm and home problems. By offering farmers educational and material services, using effective Extension methods, the extension service stimulates them to make such changes in their farm operations as will result in more efficient in the use of the input, farm and the equipment.

Historically, Extension was meant education in Agriculture and in Home Economics for rural people. This education was practical, aimed at improving farm and home lives. Extension is that type of non-formal education that its purpose is to change attitudes and practices of the people with whom the work is done. Leagan (1961)^[9] conceptualized Extension Education as an applied science consisting of content derived from research, accumulated field experiences and relevant principles drawn from the behavioural sciences synthesized with useful technology into a body of philosophy, principles, content and methods focused on the problems of out-of-school education for adults and youth.

Brief history of University Extension Education in Britain

Britain was undergoing a period of industrialization. Therefore, she needed to train as many people as possible in order to work in the industries. There were also high levels of illiteracy among the poor, especially that the society in Britain was divided into the upper and lower classes. The lower classes could not access education in its entirety in comparison to those in the upper class. Britain also realised that crop production could be improved if farmers had appropriate agricultural education (Blackburn, 1989).

In 1878 a movement called 'Oxford Extension' began at the University of Oxford, an initiative that sprang from general educational reforms in the mid-Victorian era, and from a growing national sense of social awareness. But the story of how the University of Oxford came to lead the movement for Adult Education is not merely an account of social and political objectives in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Leagan, 1961)^[9].

Antagonism to education for the poor persisted into the nineteenth century. Davies Giddy, Member of Parliament in a British House of Commons debate in 1807, said:

Giving education to the labouring classes of the poor would be prejudicial to their morals and happiness, it would teach them to despise their masters in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture and other laborious employments. Instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them fractious and refractory, as evident in the manufacturing counties; it would enable them to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books and publications against Christianity. It would

render them insolent to their superiors and in a few years, the result would be that the legislature would find it necessary to direct the strong arm of power towards them and to furnish the executive magistrates with more vigorous power than are now in force. Besides, if this Bill were to pass into law, it would go to burden the country with a most enormous and incalculable expense. To load the industrious order with still heavier impost (Chitty, 2007:16)^[2].

Brief background of University Extension Education in Zambia

The Zambian University Extension is as old as the University of Zambia (Chakanika and Mtonga, 1995)^[3]. The University Extension Education in Zambia has its origin in the Department of Extra-Mural studies now the Department of Adult Education and Extension Studies. Although it has changed names over time from independence but its aims have not changed at all. At independence, Zambia found itself in a serious shortage of human resource required for national development. The human resource index was that there were about 500 school leavers and 100 graduates out of which only one was a Zambian (Kelly, 1999)^[8]. This implies that Kaunda's government faced human resource problems.

The government at independence lacked educated and skilled personnel. As a response to this challenge, government began to expand the educational system. Government started by extending existing structures such as primary schools, secondary schools and colleges. Secondly, they started building secondary schools in Districts where there was none. The government respond to the need for high level skilled human resource, government instituted a commission of inquiry, to find out possibilities of setting up a University. Thus, the Former Vice Chancellor of the University of London, Sir Lockwood, was appointed as chairperson. The Lockwood Commission recommended that an independent University be set up. In 1966, the University of Zambia was opened and the Department of Extra-Mural Studies was also established (Alexander, 1975).

The University Extension Education in Zambia which initially was called extra-mural studies was established primarily to maintain the University link with the community in general. This assertion was based on two premises; that the University had a contribution to make to society as a whole and not only to a small group of undergraduates and graduates on Campus (Alexander, 1975:31).

The objectives of the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies or Extension Education in Zambia included the provision of degree and diploma courses for students who were unable to attend, continuation of professional, and vocational training and retraining through short courses and seminars, provision of specialist advices and assistance to sections of communities which might need it (Alexander, 1975). Secondly, it was to disseminate and impart University knowledge and University ways of thought throughout the nation. These were emphasized because development in Zambia was only to be realized through informed citizens. Just like Britain was in need of qualified manpower in the industries, Zambia also, at independence, lacked qualified personnel so there was much need to train as many Zambians as possible to take up positions left by colonialists.

Adult Education and Extension Education in Zambia was initially meant to improve the quality of human resource at the time of Independence. This was meant for the purpose of filling in vacant positions left by the colonial masters in most Government Departments (Chakanika and Nduna, 2016) [4]. This education was intended to provide professional strengthening of mature people already working in jobs that involved the education of adults and not graduates who were looking for employment and promotions. The upgrading of the University of Zambia Extension programmes may entail that graduate of the Extension Education will have to go out and compete for employment in Government Departments and Non-Governmental Organizations. The section which follows reviewed relevant literature around the objectives of the study.

Moonga and Luchembe (2011) suggest that the Lockwood Report was the guiding document for the foundation of the University of Zambia and specifically strongly recommended that the University must have a Department of Extra Mural Studies. The present Department of Adult Education and Extension Studies started in 1966 as the Department of Extra- Mural Studies and the Department of Correspondence Education. This Extension Education was implemented with the view of catering for those people who needed knowledge and skills in certain areas like Agriculture.

The first Director of the Extra-Mural Department was Professor Lalage Bown. In July, 1966 the University Senate laid down two principles for the Department's policies and work. These were to maintain the University links with the Community, and recognize that the University has a contribution to make to the socio-economic advancement of the nation and to diffuse University Knowledge and University ways throughout the nation (Moonga and Luchembe, 2016:2) [10].

Moonga and Luchembe (2016:12) [10] further state that:

... aims of University Extension Education have not changed at all. The unit fulfils its programmes through evening class programmes, seminars and public lectures. Class programmes are designed to cater for a variety of subjects that learners might be interested in. The qualifications given through Extension Studies have changed over the years. Up until 2009 Extension Education at the University of Zambia was awarding attendance certificates in its Extension Education programmes at certificate and diploma levels.

Due to the popular demand about the need to have Credit programmes by the society and the clients who needed the Certificate for employment, promotion and advancement in studies compelled the University Senate to introduce Credit programmes and this was done in consultation with the Resident Lecturers and Deans of various schools at the main campus.

Moonga and Luchembe (2016:13) [10] argue that:

"... in response to the demand by the clients and going by the principle of adult education to run demand driven courses the Senate introduced diploma courses in fifteen areas. These were subjected to Senate scrutiny and approval and therefore, are credit

courses like any others in the University. The demand at a time was viewed as a response to the diploma disease in the country...."

Chakanika and Mtonga (2016) [3] argue that the Department of Extension Studies and Conference conducts non-credit courses, which are not only designed for and attended by persons participating in Adult Education activities, but are also meant to impart skills to help people cope with the ever-changing demands of life at work, and changes taking place in the social and political spheres. Courses offered reflect a variety of target groups, ranging from those that deal with issues of the youths to those that concern the youth themselves. In offering these courses the Department utilises all available local high-level human resources. The majority of part-time tutors are taken from government offices and other institutions. These are usually University graduates or professionally qualified persons.

The qualification given to participants in Extension Studies have changed over the years. Up until 2009 Extension Education at the University of Zambia was awarding attendance certificates in its Extension Education programmes at certificate and diploma levels. In 2009 the Senate of the University of Zambia, approved the provision of credit courses at diploma level by the Extension Studies Unit. This was intended to assist people acquire utilitarian knowledge which can be applied in various situations of their operations; employment or advancement in studies. The current demand for credit University qualifications led to the introduction of credit diploma courses. These were developed by the Resident Lecturers in consultation with the specialist colleagues from concerned schools (Moonga and Luchembe, 2016) [10].

However, it must be stated that not all the clients want credit qualifications. Most of the people come to Extension courses to enrich their Curriculum Vitae (CVs) and also to share knowledge with their society. Therefore, credit and non-credit courses are run side by side in the Unit.

Objectives of the study

This study was guided by the following one objective:

To explore the views of the stakeholders regarding the idea of upgrading of the University Extension programmes from diploma to degree at the University of Zambia;

Research design

This research used a concurrent mixed method design. This type of research uses both qualitative (descriptive) and quantitative (numerical). In this design, qualitative and quantitative data are collected concurrently in one phase. The data was analysed separately and then compared or combined (Creswell, 2013) [5]. An example would be if a researcher collected survey data and interview data at the same time and compare the results. This method is used to overcome a weakness found in the use of one approach. In addition, it is used to confirm, cross validate or corroborate findings.

Target population

The population of this study included all: Students and the graduates in University Extension programmes in Lusaka; part-time tutors involved in teaching courses in University Extension in Lusaka; and the Resident Lecture in charge of University Extension Lusaka province. According to the

information obtained from the office of the Resident Lecturer's in the accounts and audit office, the population of the students were 550 students that were enrolled in the years 2016 and 2017. The Department conducts enrolment twice a year in January and August. The number was subdivided as follows; January intake 2016 the enrolment was 117 and August 2016 it was 159 students. The total enrolment for students in 2016 academic year was 276. In 2017 the enrolment for January was 153 and August 2017 intake was 121 respectively. The total enrolment for 2017 was 273. The total enrolments for both 2016 and 2017 academic years was 550. The main respondents for this study were students. Nevertheless, the researcher included, graduates, Part – time tutors and the Resident Lecturer for the purpose of triangulating the information.

Sample size and sampling procedure

a) Sample size

This research used a sample size of 256 respondents to provide feedback for a good and reliable analysis. Broken down as follows 215 students who were the main respondent of the study. However, the researcher included the 30 graduates, the names of the graduates were provided by one part-time tutor at one of the centers. 10 part-time tutors and 1 Resident Lecturer for Lusaka Province for the purpose of triangulating the findings of the study.

The table below shows the subdivision of the 256-sample size of the students, part-time tutors, graduates and the Resident Lecturer who participated in the study.

Table 1: Shows the Centers and Participants' Sample Size Sample

University Extension Centres	Number of Students	Number of Part-time tutors	Number of Graduates	Number of the Resident Lecturer
UNZA	38	2	-	-
Ridgeway	54	2	-	01
Munali	28	1	-	-
Mumuni	21	1	-	-
Burma	17	1	-	-
Lusaka South End	22	1	30	-
Chilenje	35	2	-	-
Sub Total	215	10	30	01
Grand Total	256			

b) Sampling procedure

In order to select the sample from the population, purposive random sampling, chain or snowball sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used. The Part-time Tutors and Resident Lecturer were selected using purposive sampling. While the students were selected using the simple random sampling.

The graduates were selected using the snowball sampling. The use of snowball sampling allowed each of the respondents in small sample to propose other persons in the community who have similar (specific) characteristics and therefore qualifying for sampling for the survey and they can also be interviewed (Mulwa, 2008) ^[11]. The other advantage of using snowball as a sampling technique are that the researcher had to access or reach population that were difficult to sample when using other sampling methods.

The students were selected using simple random technique. Random sampling is a part of the sampling technique in which each sample has an equal probability of being chosen. Given the large number of students who were selected in this study simple random sampling helped the researcher to form the sampling group. This technique also allowed or

helped the research findings to be generalised due to representativeness of the sampling technique and the little relevance of biasness (Gravettters and Forzano, 2011) ^[6]. In simple random sampling, all the students had an equal chance of being included in the sampling frame. The researcher began with identifying the total population which was about 550 of the students. The sample size of the student was 286. The researcher prepared the numbers of respondents from 1 to 286. When a person is picked randomly the research used to tick the numbers. The researcher distributed more questionnaires to the students but only managed to collect 215 at was above 75% of the required sample size.

Data collection procedure

To collect data for this study, questionnaires, both structured and non –structured were used in order to obtain greater conformity of responses from the students, graduates. It was a self-administered questionnaire. For the Resident Lecturer and part-time tutors, the researcher used the interview guide which allowed the researcher to probe deeper with additional questions. The interview guide was administered through one to one.

Table 2: Details concerning the interviews conducted

No of interview	Date of interview	Type of interview	Interviewee/s	No of interviewee	Duration
1.	11.12.17	Semi-structured Individual	Part-time tutor	1	55 minutes
2.	12.12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	40 minutes
3.	13.12.17	Semi –structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	30 minutes
4.	14.12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	20 minutes
5.	14.12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	50 minutes
6.	17. 12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	30 minutes
7.	17.12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	45 minutes
8.	18.12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	25 minutes
9.	19.12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	30 minutes
10.	20.12.17	Semi-structured individual	Part-time tutor	1	40 minutes

Research instruments

Mulwa (2008) ^[11] suggests that a questionnaire is a set of written or printed questions organised in a systematic way for the purpose of eliciting information from respondents. The questionnaire was used because it upholds confidentiality and saves time. Thus, to collect data for this study, questionnaires, both structured and non –structured were used in order to obtain greater conformity of responses from the students, graduates. It was a self-administered questionnaire.

This research also used an interview guide in data collection. An interview guide is a written list of questions or topics that need to be covered by the interviewer. Creswell (2013) ^[5] asserts that an interview guide is a method used to get people to express their views broadly on a certain issue and this consists of asking people to comment on widely defined issues. For the Resident Lecturer and part-time tutors, the researcher used the interview guide which allowed the researcher to probe deeper with additional questions. The interview guide was administered through one to one.

Data analysis

There were two types of data, these were qualitative and quantitative data. In this study each of them was analyzed differently in relation to the study objectives. Data collected on all tape recorders from the interviews was transcribed. The structured questions from the semi structured schedule were used to generate quantitative data. In addition, the researcher went through each respondent's questionnaires in turn, adding in the codes. The data was entered into a spreadsheet. Statistical procedures were used to analyze quantitative data which was later summarized and presented using the pie chart.

Non-structured responses which were generated from qualitative data were analyzed using categories of themes.

Result presentation

The following University Extension centers in Lusaka were used in data collection: The University of Zambia main campus, Lusaka South End School, Ridgeway, Munali Boys and Mumuni Primary School. These centers have been offering University Extension programmes in different courses such as Adult Education, Social work, Business Administration, Purchase and supply, Information Technology, Accounting and Finance, Early Childhood Education, Clearing and Forwarding, Economics, Social work, Public Administration, Journalism, Public Relations, Records Management, Sports Studies, Project Planning and Management, Horticulture and many more (Banda, 2016) ^[1].

Views of stakeholders regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level

The respondents were asked on their views regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level.

Responses from students

There were 215 respondents that participated in this study. About 94% of the students were in agreement and welcomed the process regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level.

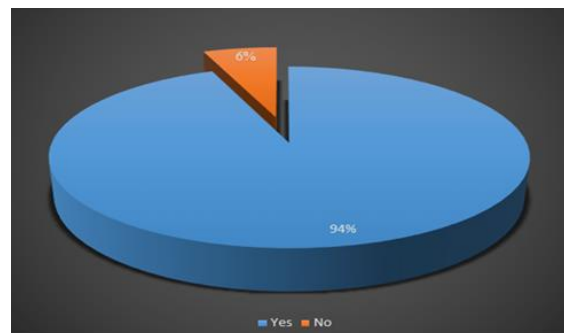


Fig 1: A pie chart showing stakeholder's views on upgrading University Extension Education

From the figure above, it is indicated that 215 respondents participated in this study. The closed ended question was used to collect the quantitative data from the respondent. About 202 (94%) per cent of the students were in agreement and welcomed the process of upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. There were 13 (6%) of the respondents said no regarding the process of upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. From the data above can say that the majority of participants were in support of the University to upgrading the Extension programmes from diploma to degree level.

For qualitative data the researcher used the open-ended questions to solicit for the participants views regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. The researcher requested for the personal views of the respondent regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. This data was collected using questionnaires from students and graduates while for the Part-time Tutors and the Resident Lecturer the researcher used individual interview guide.

One of the responses that came out from the students was as quoted: *'the process of upgrading the diploma to degree level is long overdue and it is really a good idea as most students doing diploma programmes really want to progress to degree level with the University of Zambia'* (Respondent 12).

Another student argued that, *'I think it is an ideal for the University to introduce degree studies to give an extended opportunity to the students and the Zambian population at large to reach the higher level of their career programmes using this mode of learning.'*

In addition, to the responses given above another student said, *'this is a progressive idea as this has the potential to give access to education to many citizens which will translate to development'* (respondent 03).

Some students who opposed the process regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree. One of them argued:

The University of Zambia under the Department of Adult Education and Extension Studies should first improve on the standard of education offered under University Extension before embarking on this process. Especially when it comes to giving the continues assessments, some Part- time tutors have a tendency of giving students same assignments every year and most

students have access to these past assignments. Secondly, most Tutors do not regularly attend to students for lectures and it seems like the University through the Resident Lecturers are not supervising the Part-time tutors to see if what there are teaching. Some Part-time tutors lack researching and reading extensively before coming to class and that make their teaching not to up to the standard and not well argued. (Respondent 74)

Respondent (202) argued that:

It is not necessary for the University to upgrade University Extension programmes from diploma to degree, because at one time the University of Zambia wrote to different government Ministries and Department informing them not to employ and promote individuals that hold the diploma from University Extension because it is not recognized. This meant if the University upgrades the programmes from diploma to degree level, the individuals that will be trained under University Extension will be just wasting their resources both in time and monetary. We hear there was a circular which was issued in the year 2013 and from that year both the government and the University have not given a position on this issue. Some of the people who previously studied with the University under Extension Studies were recalled to do some additional courses. But the question that begs answers is what about the thousands of the people who have not done the additions courses what is their fate?

4.2.2 Response from graduates

An Opportunity for Students to Upgrade from Diploma to Degree Level

There were 30 graduates who participated in this research. The qualitative data was collected using the questionnaires and they were sampled using snowball sampling. They felt like it would be a real opportunity for them to go back to school to pursue the degree programmes under Extension Studies. One of the responses that came out from the graduates were quoted as follows: *'I'm in agreement of the developmental idea of upgrading the University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level and through developing some extra blocks for learning and introduces the higher level as soon as possible'* (Respondent 6).

'it will/would help the student upgrade with the same university, allowing the University to recognize students and be given exemptions like it is with the students who graduated in Adult Education and Counselling and guidance are allowed to continue to third year of their studies without starting from the first year' (Respondent 18).

4.2.3 Responses from Part-time tutors

Motivate both Part-time tutors and Students

The number of Part-time tutors who took part in the study was 10. The data was collected using interview guide. 9 out of 10 Part-time tutors were in agreement with the idea regarding upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. The respondent argued that:

It is really a good idea as most students doing diploma programmes really want to progress to degree with the University of Zambia. This will also give the University an opportunity to provide equal pay and other condition of services to the Part – time tutors as it is to our counter parts teaching full time courses at the main campus (interviewee 6).

Another (interviewee 4) said that:

It will be better if the programmes can be upgraded to a degree level and we are looking forward to it as it will as well motivate not only the students but also the tutors. It will offer us a chance to further our studies so that we will have an opportunity to be employed by the University on a full-time basis and enjoy services and privileges that the full time Lecturers have.

But (interviewee 3) argued against this by starting that:

There is no need for the University of Zambia to upgrade the programmes from diploma to degree as there is already a degree programmes offered by the Directorate of Distance Learning. The Department of Adult Education and Extension Studies and the Directorate of Distance Learning are all under the University of Zambia. If the Department of Adult Education and Extension introduces the degree programmes it will be like competing with the Directorate of Distance Learning. At one time the Senate through the School of Law refused the offering of a diploma in law under Extension Education. If that will be the case, the University will be required to employee individuals with higher education to teach these programmes and the University will be compiled to create similar working conditions like to those who are teaching the full-time students.

Response from the Resident Lecturer

Create competition

One Resident Lecturer participated in the study. She was in agreement with the idea of upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to the degree level. She argued that:

The process of upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level is long overdue. This will help the Department to compete with other upcoming Universities and Colleges. There are many Universities that are coming up almost every day and there is high competition for the same students. Long are days where the University of Zambia was the only institution in the country offering higher education. Each and every corner of Lusaka has one or more Universities offering the same programmes as the ones offered by the University Extension Education at diploma level. Most people would rather do a degree program rather than a diploma. Some of the Universities that are offering University Extension services are Zambia Open University, ST Eugen, Lusangu and Lusaka University. Some Universities such as the Zambia Open University has offices in all the ten (10) Provinces of Zambia as the University of Zambia.

Discussion

The study sought to explore the views of stakeholders regarding upgrading University Extension Education programmes from diploma to degree level. The finding of the study established that the participants were in support of the University of Zambia to upgrading Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. It was in line with the government policy on developing human resource (Parliamentary Report, 2017) ^[14].

Furthermore, by upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level may help the University to strengthen the financial base. University Extension Unity brings a lot of income into the University. This may help in sustaining the University to remain viable and relevant to stakeholders.

Conclusions

The objective aimed at exploring the views of stakeholders regarding upgrading University Extension Education from diploma to degree level. The findings of the study revealed that different stakeholders that included students, graduates, part-time tutors and the Resident Lecturer were all in support of the idea of upgrading University Extension programmes from diploma to degree level. Stakeholder were in support with the government's policy on developing human resources.

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