

“The Silent Catastrophe”: Exclusionary Students’ Food Provision Fit for the Quality Assurance Era? University of ESwatini

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Abstract: This study examines the food provision arrangement at University of ESwatini in enhancing teaching. The Opportunity gap explanatory framework was used to unpack the institutional contexts. The descriptive survey design was employed. The targeted population were students who have been studying at the university for more than a year. Participants were sampled through purposive stratified sampling and random sampling. Data was collected through semi structured questionnaires. Content analysis was used to analyse the data. The study indicated that food provision led to unexpected social dynamics which work against effective teaching for all students. Dynamics include students’ vulnerability to unprofessional practices: prostitution, exclusion to equal opportunities to teaching. The findings indicated that new food provision arrangement was undermined by the country’s sustained economic decline, which cause the delay in students’ allowances’ distributions. It concluded that food provision programme threatened social, educational standards, students’ opportunities to learning and infringement of some students’ rights to food, particularly the poor, who attended classes without proper food. It concluded that institutional policies and other policies were overlooked by both government and University when abolishing the inclusive food provision programme.

Key words: Food provision, poor students, Quality teaching

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I. Introduction

In the post- colonial era, food provisions at all learning institutions including the UNESWA was perceived by the government of ESwatini as an educational reform that supports and welcomes diversity among all learners, including the poorest of the poor. The aim of the inclusive food programme in ESwatini and elsewhere was to eliminate social exclusion, which a consequence of peoples’ social circumstances, attitudes and responses to social class and peoples’ diversity (Cooper et al. 2007). In the 1970s’ the government of ESwatini had a belief that food provision as education at the University level was a basic human right, the foundation and springboard for the achievement of a more just and equitable education and society.

In the 1970 and late 1990s’ the aim of the inclusive food provision programme at the University level was the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building a future inclusive society and achieving education for all. The inclusive food provision programme at the University of ESwatini was considered as the appropriate lever that could move the education system in an inclusive direction. The food provision programme was the government’s attempt to overcome barriers to the participation learning for all students. It also an attempt to promote social learning processes with the feeding places (dining halls, refectories), providing areas for social interaction and informal peer to peer learning. The government and University effort on the food provision programme indicated the professional care, moral obligations and responsibilities for ensuring that those students who were at risk of being marginalised and excluded from their studies were carefully supported and monitored. Students, whose attentions are focused on finding their next meal, are likely to be less attentive in class, more disruptive and absent from classroom.

This paper examines the new arrangement of food provision at the UNESWA (University of Eswatini) in enhancing teaching and learning, through different pedagogical discourses. The new arrangement of food provision, where students are given the food allowances to buy food for themselves is unsustainable. The paper further examines how this new arrangement raises possible visible and invisible barriers to quality teaching and learning opportunities, paying attention on its detrimental effects on quality assurance processes, quality of teaching and learning provision and the quality of graduates. Hodsom and Thomas (2003) re-emphasised the fact that one of quality assurance’s goal is to promote public confidence that the quality of provision in teaching and learning is being safeguarded and enhanced.

II. Background

The matter of inclusive food provision programme at the UNESWA is an educational matter because the Kingdom has an established history of inclusive food provision programme for promoting effective teaching and learning (see Imbokodvo Manifesto Policy, 1972). It can be very difficult for students to focus on their academic work or experience effective teaching and learning if there are unsure of their next meal or shelter (Nelson, 2011).

The University inclusive food provision programme of the 1970s’ was anchored or based on the philosophy and objectives of Imbokodvo policy of 1972, which stated that education is an inalienable right of every citizen to receive education to the limit of his or her capabilities without any hindrance (Imbokodvo National Manifesto, 1972). This policy notes that the food programme has a potential of promoting students learning behaviours in higher institutions because students who eat healthier food are likely to pay more attention in their studies and have higher level of wellbeing. The needs which the food programme aims to achieve include the following:re: energising, rewarding, refuelling, relaxing, reconnecting, and building relationships among the University students. When the students feed themselves at the dining halls, they build relationships by socialising, establishing and nurturing friend ship, learning about others (Nelson, 2011).

The introduction of the inclusive food provision programme at the University was perceived and understood as the desirable because of its multiple benefits, which include building the culture of healthier eating habits, better learning and students’ achievement. Healthier eating habits at University or school level are likely to have wider impacts on students’ academic work, performance, eating habits outside the school and into adulthood, thus leading to a healthy nation (Nelson, 2011).

The inclusive food provision programme has some multiple benefits but it has also some complexities which compromise students’ chances for degree completion (Goldrick-Rab at al. 2013). Though, the inclusive food provision programme have multiple benefits but has some complex challenges which could be addressed through collaboration with no-educational institutions or organisations to help access to existing social-safety net resources (Nelson, 2011). University professionals could review and adopt policies which or procedures to better serve the students from low socio-economic background or income, while maintaining the integrity of their institutions. In addition, the Universities could further work with communities to create partnerships that support poor students and these initiatives need to be managed with great sensitivity to avoid stigmatisation or working against the spirit of the imbokodvomanaifesopolicy of 1972, which was more about equity of access to education. Accessibility, teaching and learning were intricately linked with funding and management mechanisms. Presence or lack of each may have huge implications for students’ access to meaningful teaching and learning experiences. For example, in South Africa, the 1996 funding related interventions reflected an expanded access to higher education but not access to meaningful teaching and learning by those previously and excluded communities (Wagenge-Oumag, 2012). This notes the importance of managing the link between access, food provision and teaching and learning. Managing the link is an aspect of quality assurance processes in educational institutions.

III. University of ESwatini abolishment of compulsory inclusive food provision programme

The abolishment of compulsory inclusive food provision programme in the late 1990s’ introduced new lines of inequality and institutional racism, particularly teaching and learning. It was meant to reduce the complexities of the refectory management practices, which were characterised by endless complains from students’ body. The abolishment of this programme raised questions, whether the university was sensitive to inclusive learning or whether it thoughtit will remain socially inclusive and continue to provide equal opportunity access to disadvantaged social groups or not, or how the quality assurances’ standards were to be maintained.

Higher Education Council and Quality assurance processes

In 2015, the government of ESwatini established the ESwatini Higher Education Council in order to register and accredit public and private Universities in the Kingdom. This is the statutory body charged with the responsibility of overseeing and controlling the quality of education in higher institutions and to ensure that the management teams of higher institutions adhere to the pre-determined university standards and safe guide the quality education provision. The emphasis on quality education is not a new phenomenon in the Kingdom because the first ever written policy of 1972 puts more emphasis on quality education (an education which focuses on the improvement of the individual citizen through access to quality teaching and learning experiences, to make her or him a better citizen of the country and the world). A better citizen defined as someone who is a participant citizen, participating in the continuous aggrandizement of the nation and the world. Thus, the policy lays stress on the content of education, management practices (inclusion and exclusion practices in education and society). These issues were stressed and scrutinised to determine whether what was

taught to students was for the best interest of the students and the nation. This was aiming at bringing out the best qualities in the individual student. These are quality assurance educational related matters. Fowler’s (2018) report noted that there were twelve standards set by ESwatini Higher Education Council, which also embraced the imbokodvo quality related matters. The twelve standards were expected to be implemented and respected by all higher institutions. These include the following: the vision and mission of the institution, institutional governance and management, internal quality assurance systems, programme design and review, facilities and infrastructure, staffing, student recruitment, selection and admission, teaching and learning and assessment, student progression and support, financial and administrative systems, research activities, management information systems, and community outreach services. This study focus on the quality assurance standard number eight: teaching and learning (Fowler, 2018), which relates to the focus of the study. The quality assurance educational agenda came at a critical part of the nation, where the state was struggling to meet the increasing costs of higher education and other important national priorities, or when the government was expected to turn around the economic crisis through higher institutions’ contributions.

In addition, the ESwatini government policy of increasing the number of higher institutions was another layer which put more pressure on government’s effort to meet the ever-increasing costs of higher education, which requires quality assurance procedures in place.

Quality assurance is an educational institution key matter concerned more about the processes which facilitate the quality educational outcomes. The provision of quality food to students form part of the quality assurance. Quality assurance depends on the University’s capability to managing institutional activities, which facilitate teaching and learning, professional practices and other key functions of the institutions at all levels. It is the responsibility of universities to assure the quality of the educational experience it offers to students, other factors such as the impact of government reduction subversions and the creation of graduates that will contribute to the country’s economy and sustainable development. The reduction of government subversion and food provision programme at universities could negatively influence the quality of students’ educational experiences.

Students’ quality educational experiences depend on institutional extra effort, where the professionals are expected to do more than servicing the students but also to change the culture of the University by reimagining the role of the professionals, administration and students services (Ishengoma and Mgaiwa, 2017). This involves making the University culture to be students-oriented and quality assurance-oriented or quality assurance sensitive, awareness on quality assurance processes (Ishengoma and Mgaiwa, 2017). Absence or lack of academic leadership to lead the quality assurance processes affect quality teaching and learning.

IV. The Methodology

Theoretical Framework

The Opportunity gap explanatory framework was used in this study. It helped in explaining the educational practices and processes that affect teaching and learning. It is helpful in examining the causes and disparities that exist between and among students and its societal implications. It pays more attention on inequality processes, structures, policies and professionals’ practices that can prevent some students from reaching their full capacity in learning (Milner, 2012).

The Opportunity gap explanation helps to examine the standardisation of policy-related to existing food provision programme, in which, in many ways are antithetical to diversity of students because they suggest that all students are from, live and operate in a homogeneous environments with equality and equity of opportunities to access of food afforded to them (Tate, 2008). Ladson-Billing’s (2006) study findings indicated that the standardized educational policies and others (on food provision programme) efforts advance a sameness agenda, when the playing field for many students, particularly those from poor backgrounds and marginalised groups is not fairly level. This notes the importance of holding professionals accountable for providing professional learning opportunities for all students, through different programmes, including the food provision programmes in institutions.

The Opportunity gap explanatory framework is relevant in this study because it may help to unpack any existing gap in opportunity in access to teaching and learning caused by the existing food provision arrangement at the University of ESwatini, Kwaluseni campus. It pays attention on the processes that influence and lead to the educational outcomes, such as education injury and “education debt”. The debt the education system owes to some students may include its failure to service the students or to provide effective learning opportunities. Unpacking this education debt is important because it has a potential of leading to or understanding other debts (moral debt, economic debt, political debt and societal sustainable development debt).

V. Research Design

Descriptive survey design

The study design was a descriptive survey, employing qualitative and quantitative approaches. These procedures help in examining how the new existing food provision programme influenced the quality of

University of ESwatini educational experiences or quality assurance standard number eight: teaching and learning and assessment. It is backward looking and retrospective, and forward looking and prospective, seeking continuous improvements. The food provision programme is important because in ensuring that the major goal of delivering quality education is maintained and achieved partly depends on well fed students. To achieve quality education also depends on the university’s knowledge of its operational processes, for example, how its food provision affects teaching and learning and students’ lives. A university or any educational establishment can not exist without students, who are well fed, housed and cared for. Thus, food programme is central to the existence of an institution and its key functions: teaching and learning.

In this design, data collection procedures involved semi structured questionnaires. The semi- structured questionnaires were sent to different students enrolled in different programmes (Bachelor of Education (BED) 3, BED 4, Postgraduate Certificate (PGCE’s), Bachelor of Commerce (BCOM) 4, and students from other subjects were randomly selected as shown in table 1).

VI. Targeted population

The targeted population of the study were students who have been studying at the university for more than a year. These were students who had enough experience of the University life, who had something to tell about of being a student at the University of ESwatini, under the “new” food provision programme. In the academic year 2017/2018 the University of ESwatini had 7223 students and the majority of them were pursuing their studies at the Kwaluseni main campus (Vice Chancellor Report, 2017/2018).

These were targeted because they experienced the University life for more than two years. Students are known as key educational stakeholders and have a stake in the success and failure of the university. Students are central in mainstreaming educational policies, programmes and practices such as such as teaching and learning. The mainstreaming teaching and learning perspective, which is a process of assessing the implications for all students’ socio-economic standing in any educational planned action, including the university’s policies and programmes is important for effective teaching and learning. This perspective relates to the study because it is strategy of making all students concerns an integral part of any educational design, programme, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, so that students could benefit equally and inequality through institutional racism are not perpetuated.

VII. Sampled students

The rationale for selecting these participants was to attain as much diversity views as possible (see table 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). The participants of the study were sampled through purposive stratified sampling procedure. These were the stratas’: Bachelor of Education (BED) 3, BED 4, Postgraduate Certificate (PGCE’s), Bachelor of Commerce (BCOM) 4, and students from other subjects were randomly selected.

Table 1, Sampled participants

Programmes	No: of Participants
BED 2	46
BED 3	60
BED 4	62
BCOM 4	17
PGCE	41
Multidisciplinary subjects	159
Total	385

Data collection

The semi- structured questionnaires were sent to different students enrolled in different programmes (Bachelor of Education (BED) 3, BED 4, Postgraduate Certificate (PGCE’s), Bachelor of Commerce (BCOM) 4, and students from other subjects were randomly selected from University of ESwatini Kwaluseni campus (see table 1).

VIII. Data analysis and presentation

According to Krippendorff (1989) content analysis is a research method that uses different procedures to make inferences from text. Content analysis remains an ideal data analysis procedure in this study, where the semi structured questionnaires scripts were interrogated, compared objectively and inferences drawn.

Content analysis was used to analyse the data. It was used to provide insights, facts and guide to actions (Krippendorff, 1989; and Holsti, 1969), on the issue of food provision programme at the University of ESwatini. This suggests that inferences drawn from the relevant documents, interview or semi questionnaires scripts can be used to develop insights on the role of the University of ESwatini in managing the food provision programme and the improvement of teaching and learning. This is important because University practices or any

public institution’s practices are not innocent or passive matters; they are embedded in peoples or institutions’ social dynamic and struggles (Ber and Vuolteehaho, 2009; Kolbe et al. 1991). These struggles usually involve defending the people’s practices while overlooking the implications of their practices.

The content analysis provided an empirical starting point for generating new research evidence about the nature of the University food provision programme (see table 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 below). It facilitated the observation of the symbolic nature of communications or messages embedded on the questionnaires.

Table 2 Students’ stance on reviving the inclusive food provision programme

Programme	Total number per programme	Yes %	No %
BED 2	46	29 (63)	17 (37%)
BED 3	60	36 (60%)	24 (40%)
BED 4	62	47 (76%)	15 (24%)
BCOM 4	17	7 (41%)	10 (59%)
PGCE	41	37 (90%)	4 (10)
Students from other subjects	159	123 (82%)	36 (18%)
Total	385	279	106

Table 3, BED 2 Participants voices

NO: of Participants	Participants’ voices which were favour of re-opening the inclusive feeding scheme	Number of : Participants	Comments not in favour of the re-opening of inclusive food programme
1	-yes, so that students can not worry about meals but fully concentrate or focus on their books only.	1	This may lead to great deduction of our allowances
2	-a lot of students suffer from hunger and then less concentration on their studies. Decrease the burden on parents	2	Poor food, canteen is inefficient
3	-to improve students’ academic capability performance through the provision of appropriate meals per day.	3	Students have to choose what they want to eat. The university is very inefficient, that generally the food is bad
4	We are hungry	4	There is no variety of food, food menu is limited,
5	Its hard for one to study on an empty stomach. But provided the re-opening does not affect our allowances	5	Long queues, will inconvenience students, since there is no space in the canteen, more time will be wasted.
6	Students are suffering financially. The burden of food propels students to do immoral things (prostitution). Learning without food works for nothing, because one can not be productive.	6	Not convenient for off-campus students
7	To minimize strikes that disrupt learning because of delayed personal allowances, minimize students’ complains about hunger.	7	Food not delicious
8	Help those who can not afford to buy food every day. Students have experienced hardship without food.	8	No comments
9	Our allowances are minimal to cover break fast, lunch and super. Most of us are not able to buy food for ourselves the prices are too high.	9	No comments
10	Strikes are initiated by hunger	10	No comments

Table 4, BED 3 Participants voices

NO: Participants	Comments on the re-opening of inclusive food programme	Number of : participants	Comments not in favour of the re-opening of inclusive food programme
1	Food will be always available for any hungry student	1	Food won't be nice, time table not the same, some may not make it
2	It could help the destitute those without financially-base.	2	People should have a choice of where they want to eat.
3	Allowance always delay, leaves us unable to buy food, yet we need food-allowance not enough to cover the whole semester	3	This would lead to reduction of our allowances
4	To enable students to access food on specific time, save time why is now closed, is no more essential or what?	4	Food will not be up to date, allowances will be reduced
5	Food is a basic need for students to survive; it will also reduce the rate of prostitution, no need to hunter for money.	5	It does not give the students liberty on how to use their money
6	Allowances delay, students attend classes on empty stomach for sometimes	6	Long queues some students are off-camp may miss their meals
7	Every student will have access to food –that means better school work	7	Canteen sell poor food do not have seven colours
8	We are always broke, we can not afford to buy food every day, not all of us can afford to buy food every day	8	May be difficulty to cater for all students, some do not consume some spices for health reasons.

Table 5, BCOM 4 Participants voices

Yes: participants	Participants’ voices which were favour of re-opening the inclusive feeding scheme	Number of : Participants	Comments not in favour of the re-opening of inclusive food programme
1	Students do not afford daily meals	1	Today we have too many students can not be accommodated in the dinning hall
2	Students are involved in prostitution in exchange of money to get food	2	Service is poor
3	The current trading prices would be deflated to a normal range	3	We wont eat whenever we want to, not predetermined time, if I feel like not eating, who will eat my share then?
4	Student don't afford to buy food because of small allowances	4	We are comfortable at its absence
5	Students don't afford the meal every day as expected	5	It might decrease our small allowance
6	Some students don't get support from parents, whilst the allowance do not cover the whole year	6	University price expensive, do not like the school cooked food
7	We get allowances very late		No comments

Table 6, PGCE Participants voices

Yes: participants	Participants’ voices which were favour of re-opening the inclusive feeding scheme	Number of: Participants	Comments not in favour of the re-opening of inclusive food programme
1	Most students can't afford meals and current allowance is small to serve the whole year	1	We need meal allowance not food canteen
2	Students won't worry about food, less stress as students will be sure of a meal, thus learning will be easier	2	We have different eating habits, schedules, we are too many, so we can not be able to stand in line for food we have paid for
3	Not enough allowance, hence we go days without food	3	Canteen too small to accommodate large number of students
4	Students are suffering due to	4	No time to make queues ,

	lack of food, allowance delay		difficulty to eat at the same time
5	Students can hardly organise food for themselves, even after receiving the allowance, it also delays	5	Disadvantages off-campus students
6	Allowance not enough other students have no financial backups from parents, when it delays		No comments
7	Meal given on time, health conscious, great wealth is health		No comments
8	Allowance not enough to sustain the students, thus tend to be tempted		No comments
9	No need to worry about food, since it will be provided		No comments
10	Learners from poor background will be helped, improved teaching and learning		No comments
11	Students eat unhealthy food thus undermine their health		No comments

Table 7, Students from other subjects voices

Yes: participants	Participants’ voices which were favour of re-opening the inclusive feeding scheme	Number of: Participants	Comments not in favour of the re-opening of inclusive food programme
1	It helps students to get food even after hours 6 o’clock		No comments
2	Students now survive on bread		No comments
3	Some students are less fortunate, lack the support they deserve. Some are orphans , without food they find it hard to concentrate on their studies		No comments
4	Some students are struggling financially, hence they embark on illicit relationships, which eventually destroying their lives. Food provision may close the gap m between the rich and the poor, and enriches their studies.		No comments
5	Allowances delay and causing stress and force some into prostitution		No comments
6	Students’ needs enough meals to concentrate on their studies		No comments
7	Students will be able to access nutritious food		No comments
8	Some of us do not get financial assistance from home and allowance comes very late sometimes, while we have no food to eat.		No comments
9	It helps students who fail to manage their money to buy food		No comments
10	Students can have equal opportunities, have access to food. Students are from different backgrounds. Allowances given by government needs some management skills, which some of us we do not have yet.		No comments
11	Allowances have been reduced because of current socio-economic status of the land		No comments
12	Students are hungry can not concentrate on their studies		No comments
13	Students come from all spheres of live, the majority of them are poor, their parents can not afford to give them money to		No comments

	buy food every day. On this basis some end up in engaging in prostitution		
14	Prostitution could be avoided or minimised		No comments

Table 8 Content –analysis dimensions or coded Issues

Programme : BED 2	Coded Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students Starvation and Performances; • Students vulnerability and prostitution; • Allowance reduction and delay; • Reduction of inequality and exclusion • Misuse of students allowances • Breaking cycle of poverty in institutions and society
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Table 9 Content –analysis dimensions or coded Issues

Programme : BED 3	Coded Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students starving and performance; • Reduction of allowance and delay; • Food availability for every students; • Students’ vulnerability and prostitution; • Reduction of inequality and exclusion; • Allowance-oriented strikes /riots; • Misuse of allowance.
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Table 10 Content –analysis dimensions or coded Issues

Programme : BED 4	Coded Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students starving and performance; • Students vulnerability and performance; • Reduction of allowances and delay; • Allowance oriented strikes\riots; • Meal and students health consciousness (great wealth is health); • Reduction worries and stress.
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Table 11 Content –analysis dimensions or coded Issues

Programme : PGCE	Coded Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowances unsustainability for whole year; • Allowance reduction and delay; • Students starving and performance; • Misuse of allowances; • Students vulnerability and prostitutions; • Meal and students health consciousness (great wealth is health); • Reduction of inequality and exclusions; • Allowances–oriented students’ riots.
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Table 12 Content –analysis dimensions or coded Issues

Programme : BECOM 4	Coded Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students starving and performance; • Students vulnerability and prostitution; • Allowance reduction and delay.
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Table 13 Content –analysis dimensions or coded Issues

Programme : Other disciplines	Coded Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meal and students health consciousness (great wealth is health); • Reduction of inequality and exclusions; • Misuse of allowances; • Students vulnerability and prostitution; • Students starving and performance; • Reduction of inequality and exclusions; • Food and accessibility; • Allowances–oriented students’ riots; • Students guaranteed food/meals; • Reduction allowances–oriented students’ riots; • Reduction of institutional racism.
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IX. Findings and discussions

The discussions of the research findings were guarded by the research objective/ question and theoretical framework.

Objective 1: examine how the new University students’ food provision arrangement (where students are given the food allowances to buy food for themselves) is possible a facilitator of visible and invisible barriers to quality teaching and learning opportunities, particularly its detrimental effects in terms of emotional and financial costs to individual students and the nation. This was achieved by paying more attention on the voices of the University students (see table 2-6).

The study indicated that the new arrangement of food provision at the University of ESwatini led to the unexpected social dynamics which work against the key mandate of the university, which is to promote effective teaching and learning for all students. These new unexpected dynamics and realities include students’ vulnerability to unprofessional practices such as prostitution, an increase of students’ inequality and exclusion to equal opportunities to teaching and learning, institutional racism, students’ unhealthy consciousness, mismanagement of financial resources and their health (see table 8-13).

X. Culture of Silence and Unassertiveness

These factors mediated at different levels of the students’ teaching and learning processes. Within, the classroom it created a culture of silence or unassertiveness among the students, which affects collaborative learning practices, sharing of ideas among and between lectures and students, which provides expanded avenues for shaping and reshaping institutional improvement and the conditions that directly or indirectly influence students teaching and learning. The culture of silence during classroom teaching and learning not only undermines the quality of learning, but also the potentials to inform the curriculum (what is taught how it is taught) and the increase of quality graduates. Lack of quality graduates limit the potential of the University of ESwatini to engage in national and international economic development activities for economic growth and sustainable development. One of the participants noted that: *our brothers and sisters are not participating fully in their studies because of*

hunger, after reducing their allowances, they are struggling. Students are hungry and cannot perform well in their studies (Participant, 1).

Poor students find it hard or difficult to buy food making their learning difficult, affecting their performance, leading to huge dropouts (Participant, 2).

The study that revealed that the new arrangement of food provision at the University of ESwatini needs to be revisited because of its impact on students teaching and learning and it has wider socio-economic implications. The 279 (72%) of the participants advocated for the re-opening of the inclusive food provision programme while 106 (28%) were against (see table 2 above). Some of the advocates of the re-opening of the inclusive food provision programme stated that:

this could be the best ways of addressing the problem of hunger among the students and unprofessional practices. Most students can then afford to have a healthy diet, as some do not afford a day to day balance meal in order to attend class session well fed, this has wider socio-economic implications (Participant, 25).

On the other hand one of 106 participants who were against the re-opening of the inclusive food programme also noted that: *we need*

meal allowance, not canteen food. We have different eating habits and requirements because of healthy related reasons. Again, the food is not delicious and we are now too many, so we cannot afford to queue for food we have paid for (Participant, 34).

XI. Breeding Prostitution in Institutions and Society

The study indicated that students’ vulnerability to unprofessional practices such as prostitution, increase of students’ inequality and exclusion to equal opportunities to teaching and learning are some of the dynamics which emerged after the abolishment of the “old” food provision system at the University, where all registered students were guaranteed of three meals per day, thus enhance their studies and the culture of professionalism. One of the participants stated that: *students are struggling financially, eventually engage into unlawful or illicit relationships, which eventually destroy their lives. Yet the inclusive food provision aimed at closing the gap between rich and poor students and eventually enriching students studies (Participant 10).*

The inclusive food provision programme helps to accommodate everyone from different backgrounds and have a chance (Participant, 48).

XII. Absence or Delayed Students’ Food Allowances

The study revealed that the circumstances which facilitated the abolishment of the inclusive food provision programme in the late 1990s’ now irrelevant and the current ones increase students’ inequality and exclusion to equal opportunities to teaching and learning, because those students from poor background, whose parents were not able to provide financial assistance in the absence of students allowances were indirectly excluded from their learning experiences. This situation was indirectly perpetuating in-equality in education and society. The lack of support for students made lecturers to face students who are hungry and denied opportunities to learn and change their situations. Hungry students act as a barrier in their educational effort to reach their potential or future educational goals. This could be perceived as a form of institutional racism that in more subtle ways denies the poor students an education and contradicts the University quality assurance standards. The failure to provide food support to students is one of the covert ways in which students from poor backgrounds are kept from acquiring a productive and meaningful learning opportunities and eventually meaningful education.

XIII. Non- Indigenous and Non-caring Culture

The study indicated that some students’ acceptance of the new arrangement of food provision at the University of ESwatini perpetuates a non-indigenous culture of non-supportive, non-caring and institutional racism without overtly acting in ways that considered racist by those students from poor backgrounds. One of the participants noted that:

changing the existing situation may reduce our allowances. I need no food, whether the food programme operates or not, it does not benefit me (Participants, 30).

XIV. Reduction of Inequality to Teaching and Learning Opportunities

The study revealed that revisiting the existing new arrangement of the food provision programme could reduce inequality and exclusion to teaching and learning and inculcate a culture where students appreciate one another. One of participants noted that:

the officials from the relevant ministry and University personals responsible for the welfare of students have distanced themselves from their moral obligations and responsibilities of ensuring that those students who were from disadvantaged backgrounds and at risk of being marginalised and excluded from their studies were carefully supported and monitored. An inclusive food provision programme, helps students to eat together, enjoy their meal together and appreciate one another and develop the culture of sharing and caring for one another (participant 39), the spirit of caring and sharing are key aspects of promoting effective teaching and learning (Participant, 56).

The study revealed that abolishment of the inclusive food provision programme unprofessional behaviour among the students, thus affect their teaching and learning. One of the participants noted: *most students fail to manage their food allowances, they spend*

it on alcohol and end up starving and thus their academic performance drops. Once the food allowances are misused some students resort to prostitution to have food. Abusing alcohol; and prostitution undermines the image of the institution and quality of the graduates (Participant, 50).

XV. Delayed allowance and Students’ dirt money Dependency syndrome

The study indicated that delayed allowance affects students teaching and learning in different ways. One of the participants stated that: *students are suffering due to lack of food*

and the allowances delay, and it is not enough to buy food for the whole semester. This has introduced the culture of depending on dirty money, practiced by both girls and boys. Today, we have terms like “blessers: old men and “blesses” young girls. Young girls are abused by old men for financial gains. The delayed of students allowances also contributed to the new form of students abuse, where young boys, are local referred to as “Ben tens”, they allow themselves to be abused by old women for financial gains (Participant, 61). This notes that the absence of the inclusive food programme has wider social societal implications. Thus the theory of the study was helpful in unpacking the related food provision arrangements and processes that affect teaching and learning, and wider societal implications.

XVI. Discussions of Findings

The findings of study revealed that the University and government attempt to improve the provision of food to University students in the late 1990s led to the current unexpected social dynamics which work against the key mandate of the university, which is to promote effective teaching and learning for all students and culture of professionalism. The University and government attempt to improve the management of the provision of food to students in the late 1990s, threatened the social and educational standards, students’ opportunities and infringement of some students rights to food, particularly those from poor backgrounds, who more often than not attended classes without proper food. Thus, 279 (72%) of the participants or students were now advocating for the re-opening of the old inclusive food provision programme arrangement while 106 (28%) of them were against. This finding concurs with Brown, (1990) study findings which revealed that state’s attempt to equalise opportunities may end up threatening social and educational standards and infringement of other students’ rights to education.

The findings of the study indicated that University and government attempt to improve the provision of food to University students in the late 1990s by abolishing the inclusive food provision programme created unequal system of educational opportunities and achievement among university students. Thus quality teaching and learning were undermined. Since, the crux of equality in education lies in equality of educational opportunities and quality provision. The true fact of the matter is that the University and government attempt led to institutional racism, referring to both University and government’s failure to provide the appropriate service to the students in terms of providing food to enhance effective teaching and learning. This finding concurs with Massey at al. (1975) study findings which indicated that institutional racism exists institutions in a more subtle ways which denies others a service or an education. In addition, Macpherson report, (1999) findings also revealed that there was institutional racism within the London Metropolitan police organisation because it failed to provide the appropriate service to certain section of the British communities in more subtle ways. The finding also concurs with Wilson, (2012) research findings which revealed that institutional racism is a significant factor in providing access either to education or financial resources necessary to reduce and eliminate legacies of discrimination and segregation in institutions and society. In addition, this study’s finding is in line with Graham and Robison, 2004 research findings which revealed that institutions such as Universities and schools play a major role in the production and reproduction of social inequality through their failure to provide the appropriate service to key clients or students.

The findings of the study revealed the complexities surrounding the introduction of new arrangement of food provision and its influences on teaching and learning. The university was caught in the dilemma between individual student freedom of choice on how to use their food allowances and authoritative constraint, where students stressed their own responsibility for their food. Where students claimed that there were entitled to self-determination, non-interference on the issue of food allowances, while overlooking quality assurance processes and discarding the authoritative constraint as something negative within the discourses of self-determination. This was a dilemma for the university because it was expected to be accountable for students teaching and learning and also faced with the problem of maintaining the quality of teaching and learning, students health status (nothing is affecting their learning processes including hunger) and to ensure that quality of graduates are produced in a non-authoritative manner. This finding concurs with Edwards, (1988) study’s finding which revealed that in education, there is the dilemma between individual’s freedom of action versus authoritative constraint which needs to be managed in a sustainable manner for quality of graduates. Graduates who are in command and equipped with relevant competencies and ready to deploy them in today’s demanding societies.

The findings of the study also revealed that the authority of the administration is restricted and cannot self-evidently enforced and maintained in authoritarian manner because of students; entitlement to self-determination, non-interference on the food allowance matter. This finding is in line with Verkuyten, (2002) research findings which also indicated that students’ entitlement to self-determination and non-interference could offer possibilities for students to question the administration’s practices or interferences on an educational matter. Her findings revealed that students could use the concept of personal freedom on the food matter for claiming an area of non-interference or defining boundaries or limits of authority of the administration.

The findings of the study indicated that University and government attempt to improve the provision of food to University students in the late 1990s by abolishing the inclusive food provision programme created a new culture of individualism, exclusion, uncaring, yet education is the key springboard or ingredient for the creation and sustaining the culture of inclusion, caring and sympathy in today’s and future societies (see table 4). This finding concurs with Gebel and Baranowska-Rataj, (2012) study findings which revealed that the privatisation and marketization of higher education programmes have its drawbacks such as inequalities in education attainment and creation the culture of inclusion and caring.

The findings of the study indicated that University and government attempt to improve the provision of food to University students in the late 1990s by abolishing the inclusive food programme had no essential moral

focus as expected and advocated by the Imbokodvo Manifesto policy of 1972 and was not future oriented in nature, thus it undermined the processes of teaching and learning (see table 3-7). This finding concurs with Brown, (1990) research findings which revealed that education in modern societies has an essential moral and ambitious objective, which focuses on ensuring that each student receives education to his or her limit ability.

The findings of the study indicated that the abolishing the inclusive food provision programme indirectly affected the university professional identity. A university identity characterised by its capability to facilitate the processes of teaching the students the necessary skills, knowledge and other competencies required in the professional work place and society, be humane, that is being really interested in students’ matters and their world. This finding of the study concurs with Verkuyten (2002) research findings which indicated that once the University professional identity is affected, the quality assurances are also threatened or there is higher possibility of being undermined.

The findings of the study indicated that University and government attempt to improve the provision of food to University students in the late 1990s by abolishing the inclusive food programme was undermined by the context of rising economic decline, which cause the delay in students allowances’ distributions. This finding is inline with Brown, (1990) study findings which also revealed that economic decline tend to affect government’s commitment to quality education or maintaining a programme which aims at improving teaching and learning.

XVII. Conclusion

This paper examines the new arrangement of food provision at the University of ESwatini in enhancing teaching and learning. Under the new arrangement, students are given food allowances to buy food for themselves. The aim of the study was to examine how this new arrangement is possible a facilitator of visible and invisible barriers to quality teaching and learning opportunities.

The study concluded that the institutional contexts (educational policies and other policies were overlooked by both government and the University when abolishing the old inclusive food provision programme at the University), thus the processes of teaching and learning were undermined. They both overlooked the fact training at a University level is stressful educational exercise which needs health mind, which depends on the provision of a balance meal for all students. They failed or overlooked the contextual factors such as the current and future economic trends of the local and national economies which help to determine the viability of a current and proposed educational programme.

The study concluded that the new arrangement food provision programme threatened the social and educational standards, students’ opportunities to learning and infringement of some students rights to food, particularly those from poor backgrounds, who more often than not attended classes without proper food. It opened new lines of institutional racism and roll back some of the educational achievements since the establishment of the University in the 1975, particularly the provision of an inclusive teaching and learning. The study concluded that the University find it hard to provide the appropriate service to the students in terms of monitoring and evaluation of the provision of food to students and its effects on teaching and learning. As noted that some students attend classes on empty stomachs or without food (see table 3-7).

The study concluded that the abolishment of the old inclusive food provision made student to be more vulnerable to unprofessional practices such as prostitution, increase of students’ inequality and exclusion to equal opportunities to teaching and learning, thus enhance the deterioration of the expected culture of professionalism among students and other university’s personnel.

The study concluded that the most of the participants were advocating for re-opening of the old inclusive food programme (see table 2-7).

The study also concluded that the existing food arrangement has detrimental effects in terms of emotional costs to individual students because students suffer emotional when they are thinking about how they will get their next meal, while also thinking about their academic work.

XVIII. Recommendations

- University administration and other related stakeholders may be urged to reflect on the implications of the current food programme arrangements, mainly in relation to teaching and learning and viability of the quality assurance programme;
- Relevant university structures may be used in debating and renegotiating the re-opening of the old inclusive food provision programme and aligned with quality assurance processes, teaching and learning;
- Food programme should not be viewed in a deficit frame work, where individuals think there is a problem with the students or the management team because that may force people to avoid the issues and lead to a failure of university administration and students body, Students Representative Council (SRC) and others to provide a positive learning environment or institutional racism which perpetuates inequality in educational provision and in society;
- Relevant educational and other policies may be used as a roadmap for the debate on the matter;

- Relevant professionals should be urged to embrace the wider implications of the food programme on quality assurance standards, particularly teaching and learning, and on the sustainability of the nation;
- The re-opening process may be guided by the principle that an inclusive food provision programme is one of the most effective means of combating discriminatory teaching, attitudes, building inclusive institutions, an inclusive society and achievement of education for all;
- The collaborative inquiry may be used to understand the contextual factors and other educational processes. This collaborative inquiry may be done in partnership with other key stakeholders; lecturers, policymakers, parents and students. This inquiry may provide a framework and proposition for analysing the contexts where the programme may be implemented effectively;
- The culture of stop and think over the inclusive food provision programme and the new arrangement and engaging with research evidence may be encouraged. This may create a space for rethinking about the programmes, thus interrupts the existing discourses, focus on the overlooked constraining factors and possible possibilities which could improve the programmes and students teaching and learning;
- Interruptions may help to make the familiar unfamiliar in ways that stimulate thinking, self-questioning, creativity and action for improving practice (Ainscow, 2005);

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