

**EXPLORING SOCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY'S ROLE IN ALLEVIATING
POVERTY IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA.**

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PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

I, Tshidi Kgokong Ramushu declare that “*Exploring social assistance policy’s role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa*” is my own work and all the sources I have used and cited in this thesis have been stated and acknowledged by means of comprehensive references. Again, this work has not been submitted for any degree or examination purposes at any institution of higher learning. I have used the APA convention for citation and referencing.

Tshidi Kgokong Ramushu

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Date: 14 November 2022

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Rennie Rebotile Ramushu; Theme Boas Ramushu and my son Kealeboga Ramushu.

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I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed and supported me throughout the process of this thesis. To Almighty God, for strength, health, wisdom and being with me until I completed this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

Social assistance policy is an anti-poverty approach used by the South African government to tackle socio-economic challenges. This study analysed the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. Applying Sen's capability approach, the study explored the role played by the social assistance grants in alleviating poverty. Literature reviewed for the study revealed that social assistance as an anti-poverty measure has contributed significantly towards the reduction of poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. The results of this qualitative study show that the social assistance policy continues to play a critical role in significantly reducing the severity of poverty in Khayelitsha and Soweto, particularly in female-headed households. Grants reduce the economic and social vulnerability of poor households. The primary data was analysed using the thematic content analysis approach with the themes informed by both, interviews, and literature findings. Interviews with the participants who were accessed through purposive sampling revealed the provision of social grants play a significant role in relieving and uplifting many households from vulnerability, destitution, and poverty. Key indicators of this include: improved access to good nutrition, education, attainment of minimum standard of living, and access to the labour market.

Keywords: Social Policy, Social assistance, Social security, Poverty, Vulnerable groups, Post-apartheid South Africa, Social Welfare.

ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
CT	Cash Transfer
CSG	Child Support Grant
OAG	Old Age Grant
DG	Disability Grant
DSD	Department of Social Development
FCG	Foster Care Grant
CDG	Care Dependency Grant
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NDP	National Development Plan
NFSP	No-Fee School Policy
NPDF	National Policy Development Framework
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RAF	Road Accident Fund
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SRD	Social Relief of Distress
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN	United Nations
WB	World Bank

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CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

South Africa continues to experience socio-economic challenges characterised by poverty, inequality, and unemployment almost three decades since the advent of democracy in 1994. Regardless of the developments attained by the South African democratic government in addressing and amending the injustices inherited from the apartheid period, poverty remains a significant challenge (World Bank, 2021). This chapter provides the introduction to the study, statement of the problem, problem context, significance of the study, research objectives and ethical considerations. This study explored the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

Social assistance can be defined as, “the various government programs that provide a minimum level of income support to individuals and households living in poverty” (Shahidi, Ramraj & Siddiqi, 2019:40). From 1948 to 1994 the National Party (NP) governed South Africa on the principle of apartheid which promoted segregation on the grounds of race (Seekings, 2021). Non-white populations, especially black communities, experienced widespread poverty, as they were not awarded similar economic privileges to the white populace (Seekings, 2021). Social assistance policy as an anti-poverty measure was improved post-apartheid by the democratic government, as an attempt to address poverty and ensure better living conditions for vulnerable individuals (Burger & Armstrong, 2017). However, poverty, unemployment and inequality continue to be amongst the developmental challenges impeding South Africa from attaining socio-economic development (Chagunda, 2014). This inspired researcher's interest to investigate the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

South African government improved and developed the social security system as an anti-poverty approach in post-apartheid South Africa. The government enhanced the social security system as a strategy to address socio-economic inequalities through the provision of social assistance grants (Ekkanath, 2019). The social assistance grants in South Africa targets the most marginalised individuals living in poverty. The primary aim of this social policy is to decrease the severity of poverty amongst vulnerable groups, namely, the elderly, people living with disabilities and children (Chibba & Moodley, 2019). In most developing countries, social assistance programmes are implemented by governments with support from larger international NGOs (UNDP, 2018). Over the decades, social assistance emerged as a new approach in the

fight against socio-economic challenges in many developing countries. These countries include: Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya, Namibia, Lesotho, and Mozambique (UNDP, 2018).

By 2021, 61% of the population received some form of social grant (Lukhoff, 2021). Those who don't afford to buy basic needs required to keep a household going, access social grants so that they do not fall below South Africa's poverty level (Lukhoff, 2021). These basic needs include: food, electricity, water, shelter, and other household's needs. Chagunda (2014) argues that most South Africans do not practice subsistence farming since they do not own land as such, they need income to buy items that should keep them alive. It is because of this that those people without any source of income especially the vulnerable groups such as children, disabled people and the elderly need social assistance.

Social assistance in the form of social grants can help households to mitigate risks and vulnerabilities (World Bank, 2021). "The social assistance grants assist in the provision of food, payments of school fees, transport, rent and water, purchase of uniforms, books, and electricity" (Tanga & Gutura, 2013: 627). According to Statistics South Africa (2021), despite the implementation of social assistance policy, millions of South Africans still suffer from various social ills thus making socio-economic challenges to continue. Therefore, the researcher has been motivated to investigate the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Over the past decades, South African government improved and implemented the social assistance policy to alleviate poverty. Social grants were put in place with the purpose of discovering new ways to target marginalised groups. According to the Department of Social Development (2019) social assistance policy is one of the crucial social policies put in place to relieve many families from poverty. Many scholars and research findings argue that, even with the provision of social grants, poverty remain one significant socio-economic challenge in South Africa (Chagunda, 2019; Statistics South Africa, 2020; Statistics South Africa, 2021; National Youth Policy, 2020).

The social security system in South Africa was established during the apartheid period. However, it was not inclusive as it mainly assisted white people and excluded other racial groups (Van der Berg, 1997). In 1994 South African government had an opportunity to improve and develop the existing system by introducing new objectives which primarily focused on

enhancing the lives of the previously disadvantaged vulnerable groups through an inclusive system of social grants. The main aim was to address social ills such as poverty and inequality which were inherited from the apartheid period.

Many South Africans are still exposed to extreme conditions of poverty almost three decades into democracy. It continues to be one of the most unequal countries in the world with a Gini coefficient of 63 (World Bank, 2021). The South African government introduced various social and economic policies in attempting to redress and address socio-economic challenges such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment amongst others. The social assistance policy is one of the social policies that were improved post-apartheid South Africa as an approach to address poverty in South Africa (Hall & Sambu, 2018). Section 27(1)(c) of the Constitution of South Africa 1996 recognises the socio-economic rights of the citizens, and this includes the right to social security (Brockhoff, 2013).

This study sought to explore the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. This is because the triple scourge of poverty, unemployment and inequality continues to affect overall socio-economic development in South Africa. Therefore, it is very important to investigate the social assistance policy's role in reducing the significant challenge of poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. Poverty continues to affect many individuals in post-apartheid South Africa, even with the improvement of social grants (Statistics South Africa, 2020). Poverty levels are high in tribal areas (semi-urban and rural areas) and at the same time people in informal settlements and rural areas holds the highest percentage of social grant beneficiaries (Statistics South Africa, 2021). According to Statistics South Africa, by 2021, 63.6% of households in informal settlements and rural areas received social grants (ibid). Therefore, it is important to explore the social assistance policy's role in improving the livelihood of people in urban settlements such as Soweto and Khayelitsha. These are two of the biggest urban settlements in South Africa, and most people affected by poverty reside in these areas.

A study within these urban settlements would assist the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of whether the social grants play a significant role in alleviating poverty in South Africa. Therefore, the researcher saw a need to conduct this study in the Western Cape (Khayelitsha) and Gauteng (Soweto). Khayelitsha has an estimated populace of 2.4 million with cultural makeup of roughly "90.5% Black African, 8.5% coloured and 0.5% white" (Statistics South Africa, 2021:56). Many people living in South African urban settlements and

rural areas continue to be vulnerable to many deprivations that were inherited from the apartheid era (Mtshali, 2018). They live under extreme conditions of poverty even though there are social grants put in place to improve such conditions. Access to clean water, electricity, quality primary healthcare, education and housing are amongst some of the deprivations that many South Africans are exposed to (World Bank, 2021).

1.3. Rationale/Significance of the study

According to Statistics South Africa (2020), South Africa has a large percentage of unemployed population and majority depend on social grants. Approximately 18 million people affected by poverty receive social grants in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2020). This study was motivated by the fact that a lot of people in this country access social grants as an anti-poverty approach, but poverty levels continue to rise. It was therefore important to explore the social assistance policy's role when it comes to alleviating poverty post-apartheid South Africa. South Africans are still subjected to deprivations as they live under poor conditions, high unemployment rates, and poor access to primary healthcare and education (National Youth Policy, 2020-2030). The poverty levels keep on rising particularly in urban settlements and rural areas (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

The researcher hopes that the findings will assist in understanding the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in South African urban settlements. Exploring the role of this policy in alleviating poverty and recommendations will assist the government in future policy formulations regarding social assistance grants. Furthermore, the findings contribute to existing knowledge, thus readers would learn more about the social assistance policy, its role, and contributions towards the alleviation of poverty post-apartheid. According to Sen (1981:44), "applying multidimensional measurements is important in developing countries as compared to monetary measurements when looking into poverty". Focus was mostly on multidimensional poverty when exploring the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.4. Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to explore the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.5. Objectives of the study

1. To investigate how the social assistance policy contributes to alleviating multidimensional poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.
2. To examine whether social grants adequately alleviate poverty to the extent that it can assist South Africa in reaching Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 3.

1.6. Research questions

1. Is social assistance in the form of social grants doing enough in alleviating multidimensional poverty in post-apartheid South Africa?
2. Are social grants adequately alleviating poverty to the extent it is assisting South Africa in reaching Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 3?

1.7. Limitations of the study

Carrying out qualitative research during a pandemic is challenging because of the movement restrictions and social distancing. The limitations that emerged in this study include a sample of seventeen participants. Therefore, this meant that the individual circumstances that data is collected from was not to be generalised. Language is another limitation that emerged as most people in Khayelitsha speak Xhosa, however the researcher managed to use a language that everyone understood (English). For instance, in some households some members speak more than one language: English, Sotho and IsiZulu. Therefore, in all the households, the researcher used English to conduct the interviews as the participants understood it. The COVID-19 restrictions also delayed the research deadlines.

1.8. Clarification of concepts

Social Policy- This refers to a principle of action proposed by governments with the aim of creating better societies (Platt, 2019). In the context of this study, this is the social assistance policy.

Social assistance- refers “to the government programs that provide a minimum level of income to individuals and households living in poverty” (Brockerhoff, 2013:13). In this study these are the major social grants: “Old Age grant (OAG), Child Support grant (CSG), Disability grant (DG), Foster care grant (FCG) and the Care dependency grant (CDG)” (SASSA, 2021).

Poverty alleviation- Poverty refers to lacking necessary means to meet basic needs such as water, food, shelter, and clothing (World Bank, 2020). In this study, poverty alleviation refers

to efforts put in place by South African government such as the provision of social assistance grants to better the living conditions of the poor.

Apartheid – This is a period from 1948 until early 1990s in South Africa characterised by a policy of discrimination on grounds of race.

Post-apartheid- This is a period after apartheid era in South Africa (i.e., after 1994).

Vulnerable groups- Vulnerable groups refer to individuals affected by adverse effects of poverty in South African townships and rural areas. According to Statistics South Africa (2019:35), this is “South African population that experiences a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion than the general population”. For instance, the elderly, children, and people living with disabilities.

Social security- “An initiative in which the government provide cash transfers to individuals who are unable to work because they are old, disabled, unemployed or children” (World Bank, 2021: 24). According to Hall and Midgley (2004), social security denotes all income provision and maintenance programmes such as social assistance for households vulnerable to poverty. In the context of this study, social security refers to cash paid out to poor individuals through social grants.

1.9. Chapter layout of the study.

Chapter 1: Background and introduction to the study

This chapter presents the background and rationale for carrying out the study; it further outlines statement of the problem, the aim of the study, the objectives of the study, research questions, research limitations and clarify important terms.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter presents the literature reviewed for the study. The chapter discusses in detail apartheid and social policy, poverty during apartheid, poverty post-apartheid, social security and social protection in south Africa, inequality in South Africa, unemployment in South Africa; outlines the pillars of social security in South Africa focusing on social assistance and social insurance arrangements.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework guiding this study. It further outlines the policy and legislations guiding the social assistance policy in South Africa.

Chapter 4: Methodology and research design of the study

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology selected for the study; introduce the data collection instruments applied to accomplish the study; and the data analysis techniques used to analyse the findings of the study. The chapter further give an overview of methods used to verify and ensure reflexivity on the findings of the study.

Chapter 5: Research findings, data analysis and interpretation of results.

This chapter presents and interprets the research findings of the study. In this chapter, the findings analysed for the study are discussed and displayed through tables, and pie charts.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations of the study.

This chapter presents the recommendations and conclusions made regarding the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will review literature on the origin and issues of social security system in South Africa. The discussion in this chapter is based on the following topics: Apartheid and social policy, social policy framework, social security and social protection in South Africa, social assistance, social insurance arrangements, poverty in the world, poverty in Southern Africa, Poverty in Pre- and post-apartheid South Africa, inequality in South Africa, impacts of social grants on poverty alleviation in South Africa and key economic policies in post-apartheid South Africa. The review examines South African studies, but where appropriate, findings from elsewhere are discussed.

2.2. Apartheid and Social policy

In South Africa, the period between 1910 and early 1990s was characterised by socio-political chaos (Seekings, 2021). South African societies were defined mainly by white privilege. Social policies of apartheid government were characterised by racial segregations as they ensured that most of the non-white population remained poor (Gumede, 2019). The policies affected the majority of South Africans negatively as they were separated by race. As a result, black populations remained poor and possessed high unemployment rates and illiteracy (World Bank, 2018). Furthermore, the social policies of apartheid government restricted what work African people could do and where they lived. Welfare services were provided on a racial basis as black vulnerable individuals were mainly destitute and received poor services.

Social policy is associated with the traditions that societies use to meet human needs such as protection, education, health, and wellbeing (Platt, 2019). Social policy further addresses how the government and societies respond to social problems around the world and locally (Noyoo, 2018). Platt (2019) states that these social problems vary from social, demographic, economic challenges and as well as poverty. The differences concerning how social policy is defined arise from periodic conditions. For example, how social policy was defined during the apartheid period might differ from how it is defined during post-apartheid period. Social policy during the apartheid period made sure that majority of the black population do not escape the poverty cycle (Gumede, 2019). However, social policies post-apartheid sought to alleviate poverty among the most marginalised groups. Social policies and welfare regimes in South Africa are linked to the results of the colonial and post-colonial periods (Conradie, 2018).

Social policies in post-apartheid South Africa are designed in a more inclusive manner as they attempt to address the injustices caused by the apartheid regime.

Albrecht (2017:54) explains social policy as “all measures and institutions that are taken to protect the part of society which is in need of economic protection and to ensure social security and peace”. What is important about this definition is that it highlights the fact that people’s needs must be taken care of through social policies. Furthermore, social policy not only address challenges of vulnerable groups but also those of other sectors of society (ibid). According to Noyoo (2018), in most developing countries, social policies are linked to the settler period. In post-apartheid South Africa, the main goal of the government was poverty reduction through various social and economic policies (Patel, 2015). For example, different presidents in South Africa introduced different social policies and economic policies to reduce poverty and many other social ills inherited from the apartheid period.

Governments need to design policies in a way that ensures equal access to resources. Social policies are guided by social developments which means that they change based on the needs of the people at any given time. Therefore, the government establish new regulations based on arising needs. However, factors that affect and regulate social policies are more than just the needs of the people and society but also the philosophical events, crime, unemployment, and violence etc. (Mtshali, 2018). In post-apartheid South Africa governments support social development through various policies that are aimed at enhancing the well-being of the people.

2.3 Social Policy Framework

2.3.1 Social Security and Social Protection in South Africa

The apartheid period was characterised by high levels of inequality which prolonged various socio-economic challenges, predominantly among black South Africans (Franklin, 2018). The South African democratic government inherited a society in which most of its citizens are subjected to poor living conditions almost three decades into democracy (Statistics South Africa, 2019). During the apartheid period, vulnerable populations did not get much support from the state when it came to social security, and they were deprived of many opportunities and access to resources (Pauw & Mncube, 2007). Pauw and Mncube (2007) investigated social security system in South Africa. Their findings revealed that, “in 1944 the grant was extended to other racial groups; however, the amount received differed from one racial group to the

other” (ibid). In 1970s, the apartheid government started to include other racial groups into the system as governing rules were relaxed (Reddy & Sokomani, 2008).

In 1994 the South African government understood that strategies are needed to redress the injustices of the past. For this reason, the new ruling government restructured the social security system to be inclusive as a strategy to redress challenges associated with inequality, poverty, unemployment, and other social problems impeding South Africa from attaining socio-economic development (Ngwenya, 2016). This included expanding and improving the social assistance policy as an approach to reduce societal problems in South Africa. Significantly, the end of apartheid was characterised by improved rights and legislation, which in return meant increased distribution of social security to the people of South Africa (Patel, 2015).

Social security through social assistance grants in South Africa is an important anti-poverty approach from a human right viewpoint (ibid). This is because social assistance lends support to disadvantaged individuals who are unable to support themselves and their families. For example, social assistance grants in South Africa are used to provide for people who are vulnerable to poverty, elderly, disabled and children. According to White Paper for social welfare (1997:44), “social security in South Africa consists of two pillars made up of state revenue funded social assistance and contributory social insurance” which will be discussed below.

2.3.2 Social assistance

Social assistance is the first pillar of social security system in South Africa. The Constitution stipulates that every person has the right to have access to social security including proper social assistance (Ngwenya, 2016). Social assistance can be defined as a strategy that is implemented to eliminate the challenges of severe poverty and vulnerability in developing countries (Brockhoff, 2013). According to Brockhoff (2013:25), “studies exploring the impact of social grants have shown significant benefits at household level, frequently including redistribution among people in the household”. Access to social grants makes life easier for other household members and not just the beneficiaries (Gumede, 2019).

The main aim of social assistance grants in South Africa is to alleviate poverty and promote socio-economic development in the country (Brockhoff, 2013). One can state that social development and economic development are at the heart of every country’s development. Moreover, social assistance grants in South Africa play a critical role in reducing poverty and

promoting socio-economic development (Gumede, 2019). According to Brockerhoff (2013), Social assistance is one of the aspects of social security measures which was put in place to address the social ills such as poverty and inequality in South Africa. The different types of social assistance grants provided by government are: Child Support Grant (CSG), Foster Care Grant (FCG), Old Age Grant (OAG), Care Dependency Grant (CDG), War Veterans Grant (WVG) and Grant-in Aid. These social assistance grants are aimed at vulnerable individuals in need of state support (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21).

2.3.2.1 Old Age Grant

The old age grant is provided to the elderly people from the age of 60 and above (SASSA, 2021). According to the SASSA Act No.9 of 2004, they should not be receiving any other social grant or not be cared for in a state institute, to receive the grant (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21). Examining the subjective impact of Old Age Grant, Kollamparambil and Etinzock (2019) stated how shared social grants like the old age grant improve the well-being of all household members. They also noted how such effects are not visible in households that do not share Old Age Grant incomes (Kollamparambil & Etinzock, 2019). Reported sharing of the old age grant income in many vulnerable households is considerably associated with improvements in grandchildren's well-being and general health (Lund, 2002). Further, examining health and old age grant, Case (2001: 29) states that "in over 90% of cases where Old Age Grant is shared, it plays an important role in improving the health of all household members, particularly children". This shows how OAG contributes to the alleviation of poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. Beneficiaries of Old Age Grant receive an amount of R1890.00 monthly (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

2.3.2.2 Care Dependency Grant

The care dependency grant (CDG) is one of the major social assistance grants provided by the South African government. For the Care dependency grant (CDG), the applicant must meet the means test and "should submit a medical assessment report confirming the child's permanent severe disability" (SASSA, 2020:12). The beneficiary should also not be cared for in a state facility (SASSA, 2021). The care dependency grant is provided to the caregivers of children who are severely disabled to the extent that they need full time care (Vorster, 2000). Children who are eligible for the care dependency grant must be between the ages of 1 and 18 (SASSA, 2021). Furthermore, "medical assessment proving that the child is permanently disabled and requires full time attention should be provided when applying for this grant" (SASSA Annual

Report, 2020/21:3). The care dependency grant relieves many children living with disabilities from hunger and enable them to access better healthcare services. Care Dependency Grant beneficiaries receive an amount of R1890.00 monthly (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

2.3.2.3 War Veterans Grant

War Veterans Grant (WVG) is a monthly income support for former soldiers who fought in the First World War (1904-1918), Second World War (1939-1945), the Zulu uprising (1906) or the Korean War (1950-1953) (Department of Social Development, 2020). This grant is intended to provide remuneration to beneficiaries who cannot look after themselves and need full-time care from the government (ibid). According to Social Assistance Act (2004), a person is eligible for a War Veteran Grant if he or she has reached 60 years and unable to provide for themselves and their dependants due to physical or mental disability.

2.3.2.4 Child Support Grant (CSG)

Child support grant is one of the major social assistance grants that supports millions of children in South Africa. CSG reach over 10 million South African children (Statistics South Africa, 2021). According to the SASSA Act No.9 of 2004, the primary caregiver should be a South African citizen or a permanent resident, and both the caregiver and the child should reside in South Africa to access the child support grant. “The caregiver should provide a 13-digit barcoded identity document accompanying the child’s birth certificate during the application of the grant” (Department of Social Development, 2021:5). It is also a requirement that a school going child should provide a school report as a school attendance certificate (Department of Social Development, 2021). According to the Department of Social Development (2020), child support grant contributes significantly to the alleviation of child poverty in South Africa even though the amount is little compared to other social assistance grants. Child Support Grant beneficiaries receive an amount of R460.00 monthly (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

2.3.2.5 Foster Care Grant

With the foster care grant (FCG), “the caregiver should provide a court order indicating foster care status and the child should remain in the care of the foster parent” (SASSA Annual Report, 2021:3). The foster care grant was introduced to assist caregivers of children who had been placed in foster care (Van der Berg et al, 2010). Foster Care Grant has a higher value than the Child Support Grant as beneficiaries receive an amount of R1050 per month (Statistics South

Africa, 2021). The Foster Care Grant is terminated when the child turns eighteen, however, if the child is still in school, the caregiver can apply to continue receiving the grant until the child turns twenty-one (SASSA, 2021). There are various reasons for children to be placed in foster care. These reasons include: abuse, exploitation, neglect, death of parents, and abandonment. And for these reasons, foster parents are screened and approved by social workers from the Department of Social Development. However, the number of Foster Care Grant beneficiaries is quite little compared to Child Support Grant in South Africa. these two major social assistance grants operate differently even though they aid caregivers caring for children (SASSA Annual Report, 2021).

2.3.2.6 Disability Grant

The Disability Grant is provided to adults from eighteen to sixty years old, who due to disability or illness are unable to work. This social assistance grant is non-contributory and subjected to a means test. The primary aim of Disability grant is to assist individuals for loss of income because of a disability or illness (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21). Furthermore, Disability Grant benefits are provided on both a temporary and permanent basis (SASSA, 2021). The beneficiaries receive an amount of R1890.00 monthly from the government (Statistics South Africa, 2021). The permanent assistance is intended to carry recipients into eligibility age for the Old Age Grant, while temporary assistance is designed for individuals that have a disability that prevents them from working from six months to a year (SASSA, 2021). Significantly, eligibility for the grant is based on a submission of a medical report that confirms the disability and the applicant's inability to enter labour market (Tseeke, 2015).

2.3.2.7 Grant-in-Aid

Grant-in-Aid is a monthly income support for adults who need regular attendance by another person due to their disability (SASSA, 2020). According to Social Assistance Act No.13 of 2004 a person can apply for grant-in-aid if he or she has a physical or mental condition that requires regular attendance by another person. The Grant-in-Aid is intended to provide for the basic needs of adults who are unable to care for themselves. The Grant in Aid is not paid out on its own. It is an extra grant for people receiving disability, older persons, or war veterans grants whom because of their mental or physical disabilities are unable to take care of themselves and need to pay a full-time caregiver (Kelly, 2017).

2.3.3 Social Insurance Arrangements

This is the second pillar of the social security, composed of various social insurance funds. South Africa do not have a legislative retirement fund and insurance plan in place (SASSA, 2019). However, it has a collection of social insurance funds that offer support under certain circumstances (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

2.3.3.1 Unemployment Insurance Fund

The Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) reimburses subsidies to those who contributed to the fund or their children in cases of predicaments or emergencies. These include: unemployment, illness, maternity leave, adoption of a child or death (Statistics South Africa, 2021). “It is funded by contributions equivalent to two per cent of a worker’s wages, half of which is met by the employer and half by the employee” (SASSA, 2019:13). The UIF is guided by the Unemployment Insurance Act 63 of 2001 (Seekings, 2020). This is to guarantee successful and cost-effective administration of the UIF. Workers who are retrenched can claim a benefit from the UIF based on their income at the time of retrenchment. Significantly, the Unemployment Insurance Fund also offer work seekers with access to training schemes and other Active Labour Market Policies (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

2.3.3.2 Road Accident Fund

Road Accident Fund (RAF) provides “reimbursement for losses incurred due to injuries caused by the wrongful or negligent driving of another vehicle” (SASSA, 2019:70). “It provides compensation for loss of earnings, along with general damages, medical and funeral costs, to victims of road accidents caused by the negligent or wrongful driving of another vehicle” (SASSA, 2019: 13). Even though they were not responsible for the accident, victims receive an income and medical benefits in a sensible way, and they are guaranteed access to appropriate health care, rehabilitation, and lifelong care where this is necessary (Government Gazette, 2021). RAF is guided by the Road Accident Act 56 of 1996. The Act intends “to provide for the establishment of the Road Accident Fund; and to provide for matters connected therewith” (Government Gazette, 2021:6).

2.4 South African Social Security Agency (SASSA).

The South African government has implemented a system of unconditional social grants as a strategy to address poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2021). South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) was founded in terms of the South African Social Security Agency Act No.

9 of 2004 (SASSA Annual Report 2020/21). The main purpose of SASSA is to manage social security in South Africa. The agency further administers social assistance grants applications. The Vision of SASSA is “to be a leader in the delivery of social security services in South Africa” (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21:2). The mission of SASSA is “to administer quality customer-centric social security services to eligible and potential beneficiaries” (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21).

The South African government encountered administrative challenges regarding the management of social assistance grants. This led to the establishment of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) and the South African Social Security Agency Act 13 of 2004 (SASSA, 2020). The primary purpose of the agency is “the administration, management and payment of social grants to the beneficiaries in the country” (SASSA, 2014:39). Additionally, SASSA is ordered by the cabinet to address difficult matters by protecting functioning delivery of services in terms of the management and administration of social grants (Samson, 2007). Furthermore, SASSA emphasises the development and application of strategies for provision of social grants. For SASSA to evaluate progress, it monitors the quality-of-service delivery rendered in communities (SASSA, 2021). It monitors the processes by ensuring that the social grants are given out to the needy.

The social grants provided by the government are: “child support grant, foster care grant, care dependency grant, old age grant and war veterans” (SASSA, 2021:3). In Addition, the agency administers social relief of distress (SRD). SRD “is an intervention meant to target families which experiences temporary distress by providing temporary relief” (SASSA Annual Report, 2014/15”40). Further, “the SRD is given to people in a form of vouchers, food parcels or money for a three-month period”. The agency administered the special COVID-19 social relief of distress with an amount of R350 per month in 2020. For one to apply, “they need to be South African Citizens, permanent residents or refugees currently living in South Africa” (SASSA, 2021:3). In many aspects it is shown that social assistance policy has a positive impact in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

2.5 No-Fee School Policy (NSFP)

During the apartheid era, many vulnerable individuals were disadvantaged as they could not access schools due to poverty. The South African government then introduced social policies such as the No-fee School Policy (NFSP) as a strategy to correct the inequalities that were caused by the apartheid system (Hall & Monson, 2006). The No-Fee school Policy can be

defined as a purposive action to follow as to ensure that quality primary education is accessible to the most disadvantaged vulnerable groups in the society by cancelling school fees (Setoaba, 2011). It was first implemented in the country's nine provinces (Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Northern Cape, Gauteng, Northwest, Limpopo, KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Free State) in 2007. This is the policy that the South African government was able to implement successfully in bettering the well-being of the people through education. One can state that this policy positively impacted societies in post-apartheid South Africa as vulnerable children can freely and fairly access education. This social policy enables access to primary education in vulnerable communities.

The No-Fee School Policy contributed a lot to the government's strategies of making education accessible as many children are now able to attend schools. Fee cancellation brings education to the most vulnerable children and lessens the number of out-of-school children as a lot of children previously were out of school because of poverty (Brown, 2006). This further improves the human development of the people of South Africa and the socio-economic development of the country. This is because it promotes the level of literacy within South Africa as many can access basic education especially in poor communities (Setoaba, 2011). More importantly, one can state that, the No-Fee School Policy brings South Africa and the world closer to achieving the sustainable development goal (SDGs) of universal primary education by 2030 as adopted by the United Nations in 2015 after MDGs. According to the capability approach, NSFP removes sources of unfreedoms such as lack of access to education.

2.6 Poverty in the World.

Poverty is one developmental challenge that is not only affecting South Africa but the entire African continent and the world at large. Millions of people around the world are negatively affected by extreme levels of poverty (World Bank, 2021). Poverty is a multifaceted phenomenon as people comprehend its meaning differently, it differs from nation to nation. Poverty can be explained as being absolute, relative or both (World Bank, 2021). "Absolute poverty is when an individual does not have the minimum amount of money required to meet basic human needs. These are, food, shelter, clean water, sanitation, health care and schooling" (United Nations, 2020:87). Relative poverty is determined by society's standards and norms (Statistics South Africa, 2020). According to the World Bank (ibid), nearly one out ten people in the world lives below the international poverty line.

Globally poverty is measured using the World Bank's international poverty line (UNDP, 2018). The World Bank states that international poverty line is the universal standard for measuring poverty around the world (World Bank, 2021). This is important as it helps measure the number of people living in poverty and further assist in comparing poverty levels between countries. Globalisation is one of the factors that affect poverty rates around the world. Mrak (2015) define globalisation as the integration of economies and societies around the world. The connectedness that comes with globalisation helps drive economic growth in some countries (Mrak, 2015). However, this is one process that also exposes and exacerbates developmental challenges such as poverty in many countries around the world. For example, from a health perspective as one of the poverty indicators, globalisation can play a huge role in spreading infectious diseases such as Ebola and Covid_19 (World Bank, 2021). This impact developing countries negatively as most are not resourceful to tackle such challenges.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are some of the comprehensive poverty reduction strategies the world adopted in addressing poverty (World Bank, 2021). Ending poverty is the first of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. According to the United Nations Development Programme (2018) in 2015 members of the united Nations adopted the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. This was to create a fairer and more equitable world ensuring that everyone is included in the development process. The Sustainable Development Goals expanded the scope of the world's community's previous efforts to end poverty around the world (World Bank, 2021). This is one important poverty eradication plan as it eradicates the burden extreme poverty places on various countries. There has been progress in eradicating extreme poverty around the world, however, the escalating poverty levels remains a huge developmental challenge in least developed countries (United Nations, 2020).

2.7 Poverty in Southern Africa

The Southern African region is characterised by extreme levels of socio-economic challenges. Poverty continues to affect millions of people in this region, particularly in countries such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland (World Bank, 2021). According to the United Nations (2020) Southern Africa is the southernmost region of the African continent which comprises of South Africa, Malawi, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Swaziland, and Mozambique. Some of these countries are the most resourceful in the world. For example, countries such as South Africa and Namibia are rich in resources, but poverty continue to rise.

Also, Malawi through its agricultural economies it appears to be failing in significantly reducing poverty levels, unemployment, and inequality (United Nations, 2020).

Most countries in the Southern African region managed to expand and improve their social services after independence (World Bank, 2021). This was a great achievement in this region as provision of services neglected the majority under the colonial rule. Nevertheless, there was no systematic transformation of economic structures such as land thus exacerbating the poverty levels in this region. According to the World Bank (ibid) more than 60 percent of the population in the Southern African region lack access to safe, clean water, and unemployment and prevail. Poverty in Southern African countries have not only worsened, but it has also become more visible in urban areas (United Nations, 2020). According to the United Nations (2020) income inequality in this region is the highest in the world as the distribution of resources is twisted. For example, in South Africa, Statistics South Africa (2021) states that the white people constitute around 7.7 percent of the population but own over 80 percent of the land.

Taking into consideration the ever-increasing poverty rates in the Southern African region, strategies were established in attempt to eradicate poverty. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a regional economic community with an aim of promoting sustainable economic growth and socio-economic development in the southern African region (United Nations, 2020). SADC's mission is centred around efficient, productive systems, good governance and strong peace and security. Significantly, through a successful implementation of SADC's strategies, the Southern African region can play an effective role in the world economy (United Nations, 2020). Communities such as SADC are important in ensuring that Southern Africa countries reach a more sustainable socio-economic development.

2.8 Poverty Pre- and Post-Apartheid South Africa

Throughout apartheid, South African societies were characterised by high levels of poverty and inequality (Seekings, 2021). It was during this period that the income poverty was highly visible in South Africa mainly because it correlated with race (Gumede, 2019). Income poverty worsened income inequality as many African people faced restricted opportunities for employment (Seekings, 2021). Moreover, many African people were deprived their land and had limited access to low-quality education (ibid). Therefore, they remained vulnerable and poor as the system excluded them from many opportunities and services. Apartheid legislations ensured that most of the black population remained poor. During apartheid social security policies were provided based on racial grounds and this disadvantaged African people

(Gumede, 2019). This is because social policies targeting black people were designed in an exclusionary manner. The non-white populations had different access to opportunities and services.

Almost three decades into democracy, poverty statistics in South Africa show that, poverty continues to be a major prevalent developmental challenge that is inhibiting South Africa from attaining socio-economic development (Statistics South Africa, 2021). This study looks at poverty from a multidimensional perspective. Multidimensional poverty is comprised of various deprivations experienced by poor vulnerable people. These deprivations include: lack of education, poor health, inadequate food, poor living standards, and lack of decent job opportunities (UNDP, 2020). Despite significant attempts to reduce extreme poverty, poverty levels remain constantly high in South Africa. Young people are deprived access to decent job opportunities and as a result remain poor.

There is more to poverty than just knowing where your next meal will come from. Poverty can also be regarded as having various deprivations which are beyond income. For example, the exclusion of people from social life, helplessness, voicelessness, and hopelessness are all interrelated to the concept of poverty (Sen, 1999; World Bank, 2000). Since the meaning of poverty is expressed in various ways, one can thus state that poverty is multidimensional as it is not only about income. It is also as about the quality of life, power, and access to resources (Xaba, 2016). Many South Africans continue to experience severe conditions of poverty as inequality continue to rise. For example, in 1994 there were roughly 8.1 million poor households in South Africa and currently over 50% of the population is affected by poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Chagunda (2006) stated that, if nothing is done to alleviate poverty, it will be difficult for citizens to enjoy the fruits of democracy.

2.9 Measurements of poverty

The most basic measures of poverty in South Africa are the minimum living level (MLL) and the household subsistence level (HSL) (World Bank, 2022). These two basically measure the amount of money necessary to promote a household of six people with the elementary necessities to stay alive (ibid). The necessities include food, shelter, fuel, electricity/lighting, clothing, rent, washing and transport. Moreover, there are also poverty lines which are used to measure the severity of poverty in poor households. The government introduced three poverty lines in 2012: ‘the food poverty line (FPL), lower bound poverty line (LBPL) and upper-bound poverty line (UBPL)’ as measures of poverty in South Africa (Mtshali, 2018). Poverty lines

are important as they help differentiate between poor and non-poor households (World Bank, 2022).

Food Poverty Line (FPL) also known as the extreme poverty line refers to “the threshold representing a minimum cost of living based solely on the energy intake of local foodstuffs” (Mtshali, 2018:46). According to Statistics South Africa (2020), the Food Poverty Line is set at R585. **Lower Bound Poverty Line (LBPL)** refers “to the amount derived from non-food items for households spending at Food poverty line” (Statistics South Africa, 2020:40). This poverty line is set to R840 (Statistics South Africa, 2020). **Upper-Bound Poverty Line (UBPL)** refers “to the food poverty line plus the average amount derived from non-food items of households and set to R1268 per person” (Statistics South Africa, 2020:40).

2.9.1 Four dimensions of South African multidimensional poverty indicators

1. **Health**- “This indicates poverty in terms of child mortality, the death of children under the age of five” (Statistics South Africa, 2021:13).

2. **Education**- “Multidimensional poverty in this context is indicated by the years of schooling and extend in which children attend school” (Statistics South Africa, 2021:13).

3. **Living standards**- “This indicates poverty in terms of the access to electricity for lighting, heating, cooking, access to water, sanitation and assets” (ibid).

4. **Economic activity**- “This indicates poverty in terms of unemployment, adults who are unable to access job opportunities (Statistics South Africa, 2021:13)”.

Multidimensional poverty is composed of the above-mentioned dimensions. This basically means that people are multidimensionally poor if they are deprived in at least one of the indicators. Multidimensional poverty index (MPI) is used to reflect various deprivations that people experience in their lives (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Comparatively, similar indicators are used to determine the severity of multidimensional poverty in rural and urban areas. Even though multidimensional poverty affects both informal urban and rural areas, people in urban areas have better chances of escaping poverty. This is because of the structural and infrastructural barriers in rural and informal urban areas (Gumede, 2019).

2.10 Inequality in South Africa

South Africa has become a more unequal society rather than a more equal one almost three decades into democracy (Centre for Social Development in Africa, 2019). The Gini coefficient which is the measure of inequality ranks South Africa as one of the world's most unequal countries (World Bank, 2019). The latest data from 2019 asserts that the Gini Coefficient in South Africa is 63 points (Statistics South Africa, 2021). When South Africa transitioned into democracy, young people were hopeful for a better life with improved access to opportunities. However, even in democracy, their lives continue to be shaped by class, racial and gender related inequalities (Mzangwa, 2016). Additionally, access to tertiary education, decent job opportunities and school attendance is highly unequal amongst young people (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

South Africa is characterised by extreme levels of wage inequality as the number of workers with highly skilled jobs is low compared to low skilled jobs (Stats SA, 2017). Further, slow job creation and inactive economic growth led to the increase in unemployment to 27.6% in the first quarter of 2019 and to 32.60% in the first quarter of 2021 (Stats SA, 2021). In addition, the second quarter (Q2) report puts unemployment at 34% (ibid). Regardless of the many interventions put in place by the government, there are still considerable high levels of inequality, accompanied by skewed access to decent job opportunities, quality education, water, and sanitation (World Bank, 2018).

Inequality is a concern as it results in extremely rooted social and economic exclusions that impede sustainable human development and self-actualisation (World Bank, 2020). The combination of inequality, youth unemployment, slow economic growth and poverty perpetuates challenges throughout society, from political leadership to communities (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005). A more unequal society means more protests, more political conflicts, and political instability. According to the World Bank (2021), South Africa remains to be the most unequal society in the world. This is because of the increasing levels of poverty, unemployment, and unequal access to resources.

2.11. Impacts of social grants on alleviation of poverty in South Africa.

Even though many people are still deprived access to resources and opportunities in South Africa, there has been indication that social grants do make an impact in many vulnerable individuals' lives. Chagunda (2014), investigated "South Africa's social assistance intervention as a building block of a developmental state". The findings showed that there is

an increase in socio-economic status amongst children living in households that receive various social assistance grants. Furthermore, children who receive social grants tend to be more involved and active in schools (Hall & Sambu, 2018). Families that receive one or more of the major social grants tend to experience improvements in health, nutrition, food security and education outcomes for children (Chagunda, 2014). Social assistance in the form of social grants impacts many vulnerable communities positively in reducing the severity of poverty (Franklin, 2018). Chagunda (2019), analysed the South African social grant system and found out that social grant system has a positive effect on poverty alleviation and unforeseen socio-cultural consequences.

Further, Van der Berg et al (2010), also explored the impact of various social grants on poverty in South Africa. The study used 'R3000 annual incomes' as the poverty commencement (Van der Berg et al, 2010). The findings revealed that "social grants decreased the levels of poverty amongst individual households from 5.4 % to 47.1% percent in 2008" (Van der Berg et al, 2010:65). Furthermore, Armstrong, and Burger (2009), "investigated the impacts that social grants have on poverty in South Africa using different poverty lines". In their study they analysed poverty using 'R2, 532, R3, 864 and R7, 116' as poverty lines. Their findings revealed that there is "a decrease of 13.9 % in poverty levels after the implementation of social grants in South Africa" (Armstrong & Burger, 2009:46). According to Chiba and Moodley (2019), children from families accessing social assistance grants and those who are on social grants attend school early and this impacts their childhood development in a positive way. Satumba, Bayat and Mohamed (2017) investigated the impact of social grants on poverty reduction in South Africa. The findings revealed that social assistance grants assist poor households to access the labour market in post-apartheid South Africa (Satumba et al., 2017). This is because household members use social grants for transport to neighbouring towns to search for job opportunities. Furthermore, they also start small businesses and increase their household incomes (ibid).

The World Bank (2021) conducted a study in South Africa to assess the impact of social assistance policies in poor households. The results showed that social assistance grants keep children in school. According to economic theory, social assistance grants enhance access to education in vulnerable households (Sinyolo, 2016). This is because social grants reduce financial barriers to school attendance through enabling household members to purchase school uniform, stationary, food and pay school transport. Previously, poverty had a negative impact

on enrolment in schools (World Bank, 2021). However, with improved access to social assistance grants, enrolment in schools has increased. This highlights the significant role social assistance grants play in many vulnerable households.

Waidler and Devereux (2019) investigated social grants and food security in South Africa. The results revealed that the number of households subjected to food shortage dropped significantly because of improved provision of social assistance grants in post-apartheid South Africa. Significantly, food security and income security have improved owing to the provision of social grants. In the study conducted by Van der Berg et al (2010) results revealed that many children access adequate food because of social grants. International data indicates that immediate costs of schooling necessities such as fees, uniforms, and transport are normally the second major spending after food in many vulnerable households (World Bank, 2019). Social Assistance grants promote socio-economic development in post-apartheid South Africa (Kajiita & Kangethe, 2021). Dubihlela and Dubihlela (2014) explored social grants impact on poverty among the female-headed households in South Africa. The results revealed that social assistance grants alleviate the severity of poverty in vulnerable, female-headed households in post-apartheid South Africa (ibid). The above studies show some positive impacts of social grants on people's well-being. However, millions of South Africans remain vulnerable to poverty. Because of this, the current study explored the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

2.12 Key economic policies in post-apartheid South Africa

2.12.1 National Development Plan 2030 (NDP)

The National Development Plan vision 2030 (NDP) was launched in August 2012 (African National Congress, 2013). This is one of many other policies that were put in place to fight poverty, inequality, unemployment, and many other injustices in South Africa. The National Development Plan has a distinctive emphasis on socio-economic challenges such as inequality and poverty (Patel, 2015). It focuses on these two as a way of enhancing the lives of vulnerable individuals and the socio-economic development of the country. The NDP groups its aims amongst others, as: the alleviation of inequality, unemployment, and eradication of poverty by the year 2030. One of its objectives is to “provide a shared long-term strategic framework within which more detailed planning can take place to advance the long-term goals set out in the National Development Programme” (African National Congress, 2013:65).

2.12.2 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

The democratic government further implemented economic policies that aimed at improving economic growth. The Reconstruction and Development Programme was one of the policies which were aimed at achieving high and sustainable economic growth for the South African economy (Heymans, 1995). “The RDP is a South African socio-economic policy framework adopted by the administration of President Nelson Mandela in 1994” (Heymans, 1995:43). The aim of the RDP policy was to create more equal societies and improve democracy for the people of South Africa, thus improving economic development and realising social development. The Reconstruction and Development Programme was effective in initiatives such as social assistance; through it, the democratic government established an extensive welfare system (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

The welfare system targeted the aged, children, people living with disabilities, foster parents and others who are unable to support themselves and their families (Heymans, 1995). The RDP was a success as when it was introduced, unrestricted health care programmes were realised particularly for children and pregnant women. The programme also included provision of free meals in schools. One can state that social development was indeed realised through the successful implementation of the RDP policy in South Africa. Even though the RDP was a success in many areas, it did not achieve all its objective especially when it comes to economic growth. Because of the many challenges, the government then introduced the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) framework in trying to better economic growth and development.

2.12.3 Growth, Employment, and Redistribution Framework (GEAR)

The RDP gave rise to Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) framework in 1996. The Growth, Employment and Redistribution framework “is a macroeconomic strategy by the South African government which emphasizes the importance of redistribution in government’s expenditure priorities and the role of sectoral policies in meeting basic needs and improving services to previously disadvantaged people” (Marais, 2001:17). The aim of GEAR was to achieve economic development through encouraging greater public investment in infrastructure (ibid). Through the successful effective implementation of this policy, the democratic government was able to achieve economic development in some areas. These areas include: investment in infrastructure, health, welfare services, employment, and wages.

GEAR was introduced as a strategy to fuel faster economic growth and in return improve the economic development of South Africa post-apartheid. This policy “encompassed most of the social objectives of the RDP but also aimed at maintaining exchange rate stability, lowering inflation, and as well as decreasing barriers to trade” (Marais, 2001:57). The GEAR policy was a success in some areas and not in others. For example, the management in terms of the public finances improved gladly under this policy (Marais, 2001).

The negative economic growth rate caused by the apartheid system was reversed (Marais, 2001). Just like the RDP, GEAR was not that successful in other area such as improving employment. The economic growth was not improving; thus, it could not contribute to eradicating social ills such as unemployment, poverty, and inequality. The Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) was substituted by the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) in the year 2005 (African National Congress, 2005). This policy recognised the challenges of poverty perpetuated by many socio-economic challenges in the country.

Significantly, ASGISA introduced policies, programmes and interventions that aimed at growing the South African economy (African National Congress, 2005). The main objective was to reduce poverty and unemployment between 2004 and 2014 (African National Congress, 2009). However, unemployment and poverty continued after the implementation of ASGISA. ASGISA gave rise to New Growth Path (NGP) when Thabo Mbeki’s presidency came to an end in 2008 (African National Congress, 2012). With all the above South African socio-economic interventions, millions of South Africans remain vulnerable to poverty and other social ills. The implication of these economic policies on social security is that they don’t contribute much to social development as they directly focus more on economic development.

2.13 Conclusion

The literature reviewed shows that the social assistance policy has impacted many vulnerable households in a positive way. The social assistance policy plays a huge role in fighting the ever-rising levels of poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. This chapter has revealed that social assistance through the provision of social grants in South Africa prevented many social grants beneficiaries from becoming destitute and food insecure. The foregoing chapter outlined the literature review, and the following chapter will look at the theoretical framework, policy and legislations guiding this study.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three explores the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa, the theoretical framework that underpins the study is presented. The capability approach offers the theoretical framework of analysis in this study. The researcher chose this approach as it holistically and humanistically assist in analysing people's living conditions (Sen, 1999).

3.2 Capability approach

The capability approach was developed by Amartya Sen. It was developed to contest the limited ideas that were leading in the field of economics (Suppa, 2016). Sen's capability approach emphasises the view that social provisions should be assessed in terms of the degree of freedom individuals have to achieve and realise their worth (Sen, 1999). This study adopted the capability approach when analysing multidimensional poverty and unfreedoms that people in Soweto and Khayelitsha experience. This is mainly because this approach explains poverty from a multidimensional perspective as it defines it as 'deprivations of capabilities' (Suppa, 2016). Furthermore, the capability approach emphasises on the notion to see poverty and inequality in terms of the incomes households have access to and their possessions (Sen, 1999).

According to Sen (1999), the capability approach contains three main concepts which are: Functioning, Capabilities and Agency. "Functioning refers to the valuable actions and circumstances that become an individual's well-being such as a healthy body, being safe etc" (Sen 1999: 76). In this context, 'freedom is the ability to shape one's own purpose as an individual as well as part of several societies, while agency on the other hand is the individual's ability to act on what they value and have reason to value' (ibid). This approach has assisted throughout the current study when it came to understanding poverty and people's capabilities of accessing opportunities and resources in post-apartheid South Africa.

This framework assists in capturing all aspects of human wellbeing and development (ibid). Capability approach provides insights and constitutes interventions for researchers, government, and social development practitioners to enable vulnerable individuals to live functional lives (Sen, 2000). Sen (1999) notes challenges such as poverty, lack of education, lack of decent work opportunities, poor health, crime, and violence should be removed from societies so that they easily develop and enjoy life as they ought to. This framework assists in conceptualising the socio-economic challenges such as those experienced by vulnerable

individuals in Soweto and Khayelitsha. The framework helps to discover the insights on how social assistance policy assist in mitigating the impact of the prevailing social ills in these two townships. Significantly, it is a matter of urgency that the elimination of poverty, unemployment, inequality, and other social ills must take place as it is key to people's improved standard of living in post-apartheid South Africa (Midgley, 2016). Capability approach is a tool to get deeper understanding of how social grants can be instrumental in building people's capabilities of accessing opportunities and resources in post-apartheid South Africa.

3.3 Policy and legislation

3.3.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) is the overarching legislation guiding social assistance policy. According to Kaseke (2010), the uniqueness of the South African social security system is that it is derived from its constitution. Chapter 2, section 27 (1) (c) of the Constitution, containing the Bill of Rights, states that “everyone has the right to have access to social security, including, if they are unable to provide themselves and their dependents appropriate social assistance” (Constitution of South Africa, 1996:13). This entails that it is the government's responsibility to put in place rational legislative measures, within its available resources, to achieve the realisation of these rights (Section 27 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996).

3.3.2 1997 White Paper for Social Welfare

The developmental aspects of social security were evoked in the 1997 White Paper for social welfare (Reddy & Sokoman, 2008). The White Paper remains the most important policy discussion paper which paved the way for legislative reorganisations governing the delivery of social assistance in South Africa (ibid). The white paper on social welfare defines social welfare as “an integrated and comprehensive system of social services, programmes and social security with the aim of promoting social development and social functioning of the people” (White Paper For Social Welfare, 1997:37). It emphasises the importance of basic needs and includes the rights to social security, the right to shelter, health, nutrition, housing, and access to decent employment opportunities and quality education (Mtshali, 2018).

The objectives of the social welfare include preventative, protective and developmental programmes such as social assistance and rehabilitation programmes (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997). Furthermore, social welfare focuses on vulnerable groups in marginalised

communities such as the elderly, children, the disabled, youth, women and those that are unable to work due to illnesses (Reddy & Sokoman, 2008). According to Midgley (2004), as part of the United Nations Development Programme's approach, legislative social welfare is encouraged to ensure that social policies contribute to development. This was to make sure that it is not just about the transference of resources from the productive economy to social welfare services (ibid).

3.3.3 South African social security agency Act (No.9.of 2004)

SASSA Act No.9 of 2004 "is a provision for the establishment of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) as a schedule 3A public entity according to the to the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) that is responsible for the administration of grants" (Department of Social Development, 2020:78). The aim of SASSA is "to provide for the administration of social assistance and payment of social grants, make provision for social assistance and to determine the qualification requirements in respect thereof; ensure that minimum norms and standards are prescribed for the delivery of social assistance, and to provide for the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance" (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21). The agencies objectives are to: "1. Act, eventually, as the sole agent that will ensure the efficient and effective management, administration, and payment of social assistance. 2. Serve as an agent for the prospective administration and payment of social security and Render services relating to such payment" (ibid).

3.3.4 Social assistance Act (No.13 of 2004)

The Social Assistance Act No.13 of 2004 was promulgated "to provide for social assistance, to provide for the mechanism for the rendering of such assistance, to provide for the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance and to provide for matters connected therewith" (SASSA, 2020: 43). The objectives of the Act are to:

(a) "Provide for the administration of social assistance and payment of social grants" (SASSA, 2020:43).

(b) "Make provision for social assistance and to determine the qualification requirements in respect thereof" (SASSA, 2020:43).

(c) "Ensure that minimum norms and standards are prescribed for the delivery of social assistance" (SASSA, 2020:43). and

(d) “Provide for the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance” (SASSA, 2020:43).

The government as a result has an obligation to provide for social security for its citizens and to continuously expand the coverage until everyone can enjoy their right to social security (Lombard, 2009). As a result, social grants were implemented in making sure that the citizens of South Africa have access to this right. “The convention on the rights of children was signed in South Africa in 1993 which highlighted on the importance of taking care of children from birth and throughout childhood” (World Bank, 2021). The South African government acknowledged this through the provision of social assistance grants for vulnerable, eligible individuals in post-apartheid South Africa (Lombard, 2009).

The Bill of Rights section of the South African Constitution emphasises on the Right of citizens to social security thus this legislation is applicable to this study as one of the objectives was to explore the different types of social grants provided by the democratic government and their roles in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa (Lombard, 2009). Children have a constitutional right to social security and the democratic government has done well in making sure that vulnerable children get access to this right through the provision of social grants that target children (Mobius, 2017). The Social Assistance Act No.13 of 2004 was amongst the legislations that were linked and guided this research study.

3.4 Conclusion

The foregoing chapter outlined the theoretical framework, policy and legislations guiding this study. It presented the capability approach as the framework of analysis for this study, the Constitution of South Africa 1996, 1997 White paper for social welfare, SASSA Act No. 9 of 2004 and Social Assistance Act No13 of 2004. The following chapter will look at the methodology that was applied to the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the research methodology that was applied to the research study. Research methodology has proven to be a significant part of academic research. In this section the researcher outlines the research design, populations and sampling, data collection, data analysis and data verification. This section will further discuss data recording and why it is important, reflexivity and ethical considerations. The capability approach offers a theoretically clear framework for exploring social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

4.2 Research design

This study adopted a qualitative research design method. "Qualitative studies are envisioned to describe the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems and people" (Hammarberg et al., 2016: 23). "The approach provides the means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices or innovations" (Hammarberg et al., 2016: 24). It is underpinned by an interpretive paradigm which aims "to gain a deeper and more empathetic understanding of aspects of social life and human behaviour" (Plooy-Cellier, 2018:65). The use of a qualitative design in this study was appropriate as it investigated the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, to meet the objectives and aims of this study, the qualitative method was applied as it is non-manipulative and open to anything that can emerge during the research (Collis & Hussey, 2003). The capability approach relates to the qualitative research design because participants expressed their capabilities and unfreedoms during the interviews. The methodology assisted the researcher in understanding the participants' capabilities better.

4.3 Population and Sampling

The study used a non-probability sampling method. A non-probability method is used when the researcher has no way of predicting that each component of the population will be represented in a sample (Freedman et al, 2007). The targeted population for this study included both men and women from households in marginalised South African urban settlements, who depends on social grants. This study used the method of purposive sampling to develop the sample for the research. According to this method, which belongs to the "category of non-probability sampling techniques, sample participants are selected based on their knowledge, relationships, and capability regarding a research subject" (Freedman et al., 2007:34). The

findings of this study are based on a purposive sample of seventeen (17) participants: eight (8) households in Khayelitsha (Western Cape) and nine (9) households in Soweto (Gauteng). The researcher chose these two urban settlements as they are the biggest in South Africa and most vulnerable individuals affected by poverty resides in these areas. Household members in these communities are exposed to deprivations such as poor health, lack of education and areas that are environmentally hazardous as they mostly reside in informal dwellings. The sample consisted of six (6) males and eleven (11) females, coloured and black, aged between 35 and 55. The researcher randomly targeted households that social assistance grants provided by the government, and most of these households were headed by females. The 0.5% of the white population in Khayelitsha wasn't reached by purposive sampling.

4.4 Data Collection

In the context of this research, one-on-one in-depth structured interviews were used to collect primary data from participants. Hammarberg et al (2016), assert that interviews are valuable tools for collecting data in qualitative research. Secondary data was also collected from SASSA reports, Social development reports, and review reports on social assistance in South Africa. Further, a structured interview guide was used as the instrument throughout the process of data collection. The data was collected using the language understood by the participants. In households where there was a language barrier, the researcher's friend assisted in interpreting the IsiXhosa words. In terms of data recording, the interviews were recorded using a smart phone with the consent of the participants. This assisted the researcher when transcribing, verifying, and analysing the data collected.

4.5 Data Analysis

The data collected in this research study was analysed, interpreted, and processed using the thematic content analysis using manual coding according to the themes. "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying and analysing patterns in qualitative data" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:37). According to Haradhan (2018:23), "qualitative content analysis is used to explore and identify obvious and hidden themes". Coding assisted in organizing the data and thus helped the researcher to collect data associated with thematic ideas. According to Maree (2007), coding is the process of developing categories based on the properties and dimensions of the concept. This study used the verbatim transcription. Verbatim transcription entails converting speech to text exactly as it sounds (Haradhan, 2018). The researcher used English when conducting the interviews throughout the process of the study.

4.6 Data verification

Data verification entails a process of checking, confirming, making sure, and being certain in qualitative research (Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger, 2020). According to Martin-Rogers, Shelton, and Evans (2018), data verification comprises mechanisms to increase the reliability and validity of qualitative research. In this context, data was verified through methodological coherence, using an appropriate sample for the study, collecting, and analysing data concurrently (Martin-Rogers et al., 2018). In addition, the researcher constantly checked the ideas generated from the secondary data and confirmed them with the primary data. Significantly, “qualitative researchers must always develop a theory by moving deliberately between a micro perspective of the data and a macro theoretical understanding” (Haradhan, 2018:36).

4.7 Reflexivity

“Reflexivity acknowledges the role of the researcher as a participant in the process of knowledge construction and not merely an outsider-observer of a phenomenon” (Martin-Rogers et al., 2018:10). In this context, the researcher used a research journal throughout the process of the research to reflect on every stage of the research. This assisted in covering new ideas and making the research process clearer. It involves “a process of reflecting upon the ways in which researchers carry out empirical research projects and explaining to participants how researchers move through research manufacturing processes to certain conclusions” (Busetto et al., 2020: 40).

The purpose of the study was well explained to the participants. This further helped in terms of recording and reflecting on challenges encountered throughout the research process. Significantly, "A researcher's background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions" (Malterud, 2001, 483-484). The researcher did not impose her values on the participants during interviews.

4.8. Ethical considerations

Ethics are a significant part of any research study, particularly when human subjects are concerned. Universities put measures in place to guard the self-esteem and safety of research participants (Silverman, 2009). As a result, the faculty of Humanities at the University of Cape

Town established a Research Ethics Committee whose aim is to ensure that ethical obligations are observed throughout the research process. This study considered various ethical issues to make sure that the research was conducted in an appropriate manner (Silverman, 2009). The faculty and department granted the researcher ethical clearance to conduct interviews for the study.

According to Bless et al. (2006), researchers should ensure that their participants are treated humanely, sensitively, and that their right to privacy is protected. Again, the participants must be protected from psychological and physical harm (Bless et al, 2006). This study took into consideration a variety of ethical issues.

Informed Consent- Obtaining consent from participants is more than just signing a consent form (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Participants were provided with a clear, full explanation of the tasks that were expected of them. This was to ensure that they made a knowledgeable choice to willingly partake in this study.

Respondents disclosed their acceptance concerning their involvement in this study, with a complete signed form and a letter giving information about the research details. “The aim of both letters was to reassure participants that their participation in this research study was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from it at any point, and for any reason” (Silverman, 2009:67). More importantly, the researcher explained in detail the aims and objectives of this study. The researcher reassured the participants that their answers will be protected.

Avoidance of harm- The researcher did not harm or abuse the participants, either physically or emotionally, during this study (ibid). The researcher created and sustained an environment of ease for the participants throughout this study.

Privacy- As this research involved human subjects, the participants were offered privacy throughout the research study. Their right to privacy was protected as the interviews were held in a secluded room, in the comfort of their homes. The researcher kept the information private in a locker to ensure it remained in the hands of the researcher alone (ibid).

Anonymity- In the context of this study, the researcher kept participants anonymous. The researcher ensured that the information the participants provide was not linked in any way to their names by replacing their names with participant numbers (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). For instance, the researcher used the label ‘participant 1’ instead of using their real name.

Confidentiality- The primary data provided by the participants was protected and kept confidential in a locker. The researcher is the only one who has access to the information.

Debriefing participants-The researcher did not harm the participants in any way throughout the study. Therefore, no referrals were made for debriefing purposes.

Publication of findings- The researcher will maintain the anonymity of the participants when publishing the research results (Silverman, 2009). The results will be made available for the participants in way that will be easily comprehensible.

4.9. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research methodology that was applied throughout the process of this study. Furthermore, the data collection instrument used, data analysis approach, limitations of the study, reflexivity and data verification was also discussed in this chapter. By adopting the aforementioned methodology, the researcher would be able to establish whether some households had realised alleviation of poverty due to receipt of social grants. The researcher applied the capability approach when identifying vulnerable households in the communities of Soweto and Khayelitsha.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS

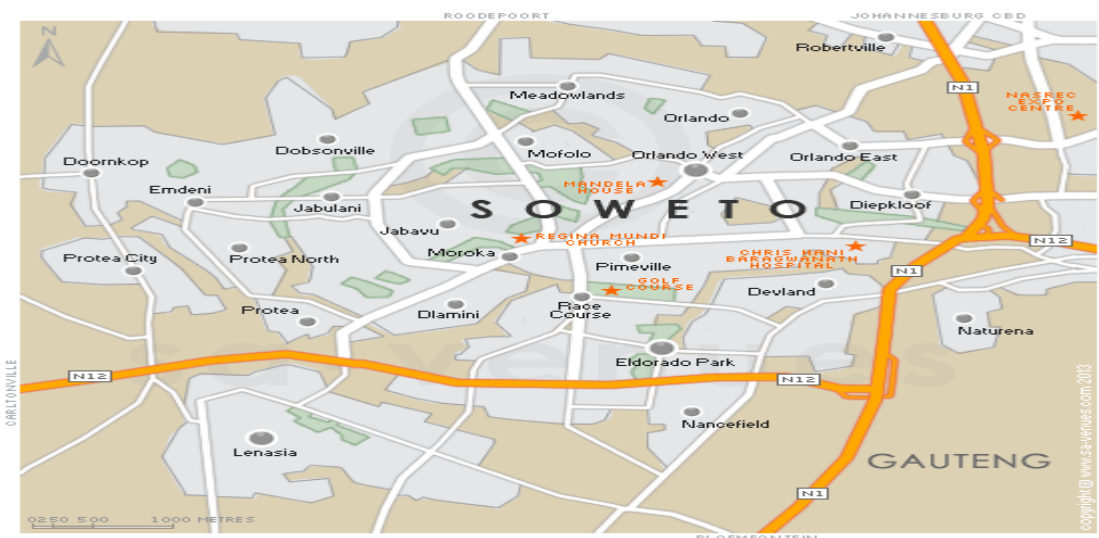
5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the findings of the research project based on interviews conducted in the South African urban settlements of Khayelitsha (Western Cape) and Soweto (Gauteng). It presents findings from in-depth interviews conducted with seventeen (17) participants. This chapter discusses the profile of Soweto, profile of Khayelitsha, framework for discussion of findings, five main social grants received by respondents, the role of social assistance grants on poverty alleviation, social assistance as the only strategy for poverty alleviation. It further looks at the challenges associated with social assistance grants and how social assistance grants promote social development in South Africa. This chapter begins with a profile of the two South African urban settlements in question.

5.1.1 Profile of Soweto

The name Soweto originated from the name South-Western Township. “The name was chosen following a competition introduced by the former Non-European Affairs Department of the Johannesburg City Council” (Farrow, 1999:4). As the name indicates, Soweto lies in the southwest of the city of Johannesburg, and it is the largest urban settlement in South Africa (Farrow, 1999). Soweto consists of 34 suburbs, and its mostly black people who reside in these areas hence the researcher chose this community. This shows how the Group Areas Act of 1950 affected and shaped many communities in South Africa.

Figure 1: Map of Soweto



Source: AfriGIS (2020).

5.1.2 Profile of Khayelitsha

Khayelitsha is located 35 kilometres east from Central Cape Town in the Western Cape Province. Khayelitsha is a Xhosa word referring to 'new home', and it consists of various racial groups. Khayelitsha is one of the biggest urban settlements in South Africa after Soweto in Johannesburg. There are two types of residential areas in Khayelitsha and Soweto, formal and informal settlements. The most vulnerable individuals in this community resides in squatter camps. Majority of the households are affected by poverty and are deprived adequate access to basic services such as water, electricity, and education. Young people in these settlements are hugely affected by unemployment and as a result resort to substance abuse and crime. The researcher chose this township as it is Cape Town's largest urban settlement with over 39% of Africans living in Khayelitsha (Stats SA, 2021). According to Statistics South Africa (2021), approximately over 60% of social grant beneficiaries reside in informal settlements and rural areas. This shows how most beneficiaries of social assistance grants stay in less developed communities; therefore, it was easy for the researcher to put together a sample in this community.

Figure 2: Map of Khayelitsha



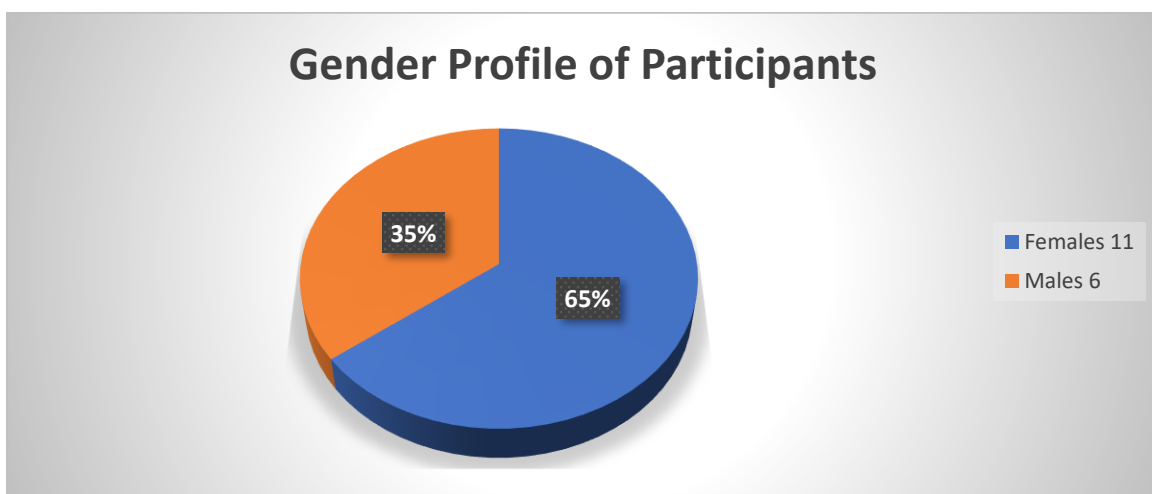
Source: AfriGIS (2020).

5.2 Table 1 Biographical information of participants.

Table 1 shows the biographical information of the participants comprised of gender, age, race, education, and occupation. (Source: Respondents, 2021).

Respondent	Gender	Age	Race	Education	Occupation
Participant 1	Female	35	Black	Matric	Cashier
Participant 2	Female	40	Black	Diploma	Unemployed
Participant 3	Male	36	Black	Grade 10	Unemployed
Participant 4	Female	43	Black	Matric	Cleaner
Participant 5	Male	38	Black	Diploma	Mechanic
Participant 6	Female	35	Black	N3-N6	Unemployed
Participant 7	Female	44	Black	Diploma	Unemployed
Participant 8	Female	43	Coloured	Matric	Unemployed
Participant 9	Male	39	Black	Grade 12	Cleaner
Participant 10	Male	41	Black	Grade 12	Unemployed
Participant 11	Female	52	Coloured	Diploma	Cashier
Participant 12	Female	49	Black	Diploma	Cleaner
Participant 13	Female	37	Black	Degree	Unemployed
Participant 14	Female	55	Black	Grade 12	Unemployed
Participant 15	Male	50	Coloured	Grade 9	Unemployed
Participant 16	Female	38	Coloured	Degree	Unemployed
Participant 17	Male	47	Black	N3-N6	Unemployed

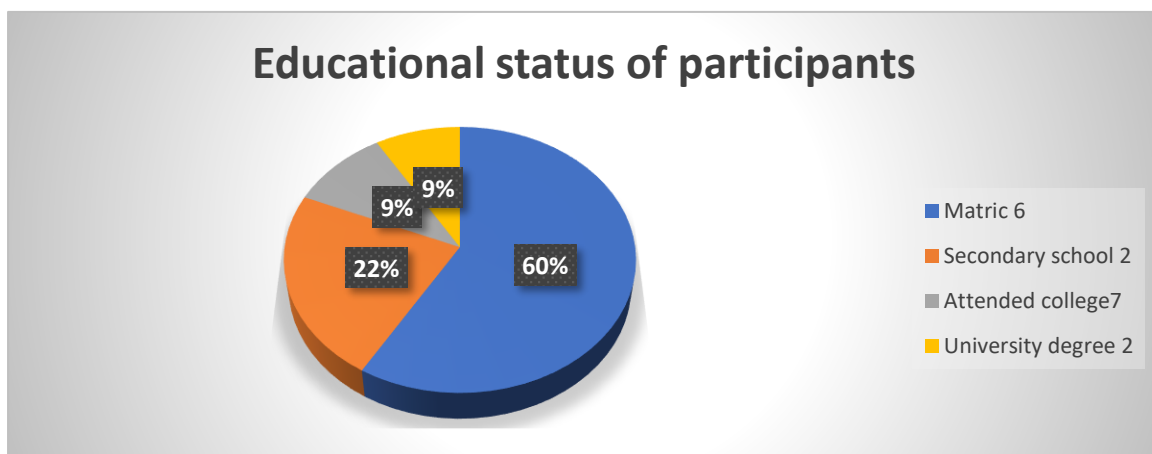
Figure 3.



Source: Field Research (2021).

Figure 3 shows the gender profile of the participants. This study had large percentage of female respondents and only few male respondents. As shown above, out of a sample of 17 participants only six were males. This shows how more women than men continue to be affected by poverty in the country. According to the Department of Social Development (2020), female headed households in South Africa are at about 40.2%. This reveals how poverty has a significant gender characteristic that must not be overlooked. Overall, the above biographical information indicate that women endure the effects of poverty more than men. In addition, most of the participants were black, with only four being coloured participants. This is because it is mostly black people who reside in Khayelitsha and Soweto. Most of the female participants are single parents taking care of their children with the help of social grants. The levels of education of the participants included: secondary, matric, and college education. The majority (11) were unemployed and dependent on government assistance for survival.

Figure 4

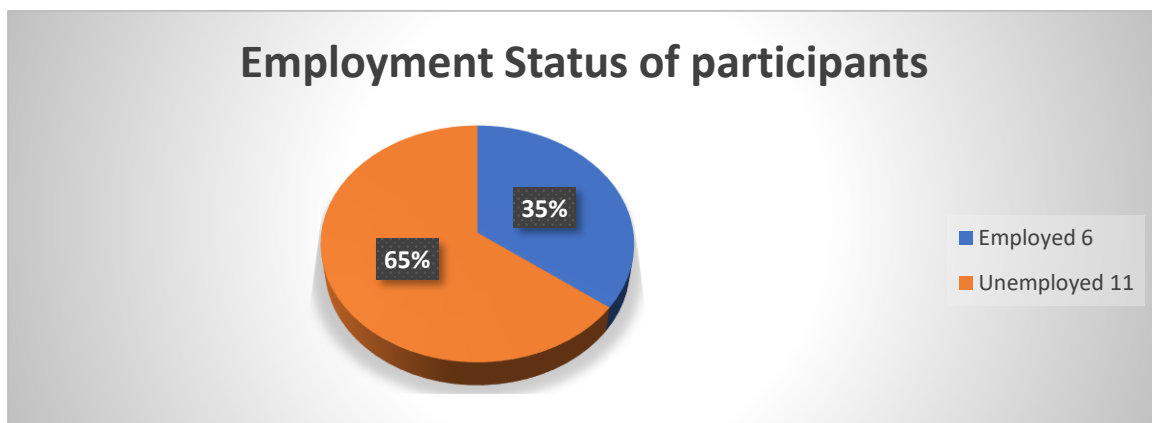


Source: Field Research (2021).

Figure 4 shows the educational status of the participants. The findings in this study indicate that most participants (60%) completed matric. Amongst the participants, only 18% went on to further their studies and mostly (9%) in college. Majority of the participants did not further their studies due to financial constraints and the various poverty-related effects that affect most vulnerable households negatively so. This shows how poverty affect access to education in South Africa. The results in this study show that majority of participants are in possession of a matric certificate and attended college. However, they remained unemployed. They remain unemployed because of the escalating developmental challenge of unemployment in South Africa. This shows how majority of people in less developed communities don't have the necessary skills to participate in the job market. This is one of the factors that make many vulnerable individuals to depend on government grants for survival and a way to change their

lives. A matric certificate is important as it opens a door of opportunities for many. However, presently, in South Africa a matric certificate alone is not enough to secure employment. Significantly, this supports findings by the Department of Social Development (2021) that caregivers and mothers who did not go far in school are more likely to depend on social assistance grants as they do not have qualifications to participate in the job market. Therefore, this shows how educational level can play a critical role in bettering one's household situation and access to better job opportunities.

Figure 5

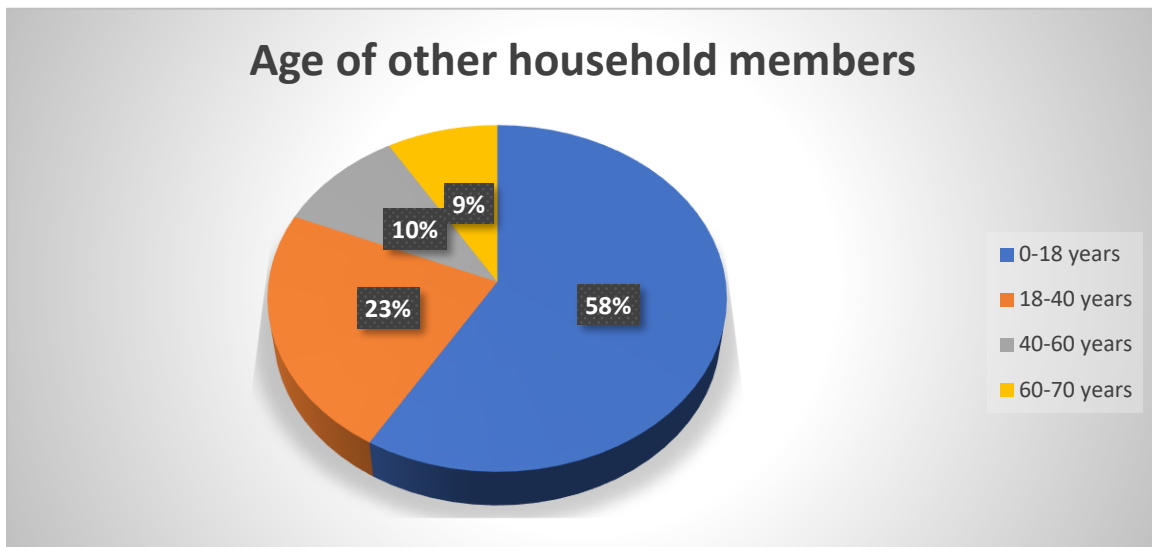


Source: Field Research (2021).

Figure 5 shows the employment status of the participants. The findings indicate that 65% of participants were unemployed and dependent on social assistance grants. 35% of the participants were employed. However, their jobs did not give them enough income to sustain them for the entire month. As a result, they receive child support grants and foster care grants. Mabugu and Chitig-Mabugu (2021) found that lack of access to job opportunities increases the dependency on government grants. The findings show that more people in Soweto and Khayelitsha depend on the various major social assistance grants as they are doubly affected by socio-economic challenges such as poverty and unemployment. More people do not have access to job opportunities, and they continue to depend on government social assistance grants for survival. South Africa is currently characterised by high levels of youth unemployment as majority do not have necessary skills to participate in the job market (Statistics South Africa, 2021). One can state that, social assistance alone is not enough to end the poverty circle in post-apartheid South Africa. Soweto and Khayelitsha are some of the urban settlements with low rates in employment. Majority of residents in these settlements are multidimensionally poor as they are deprived decent standard of living, quality education and adequate access to health care service (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Unemployment is not perpetuated by the failure of social assistance policy as it aims to eradicate poverty and not create employment. Also, the

economic policies somehow failed to create job opportunities as unemployment is getting worse.

Figure 6



Source: Field Research (2021).

Figure 6 shows the ages of other household members where there was a social grant beneficiary. Most household members were children between 0 and 18 years who benefitted from the Child Support Grant (CSG). It can be noted that, the social grants supported other household members who were not targeted by any of the major social grants. For instance, household members over the age of 18 and under 60 years. This basically means that 33% of the household members benefitted from one or more of the major social assistance grants. The findings of this research appear to agree with the findings by Chiba and Moodley (2019) that social grants support other household members with no source of income. The results shows that only 9% of the household members benefitted from the Old Age Grant (OAG). Most of the participants received child support grant for their children.

5.3. Framework for discussion of findings.

In the context of this research study, the capability approach was used as a framework for analysing the data. Capability approach is suitable for this study as it assisted in analysing multidimensional poverty and unfreedoms that people in Khayelitsha and Soweto experience.

Table 2: Framework of analysis

THEMES	CATEGORIES	SUBCATEGORIES
Perceived role of social grants on poverty by respondents.	Social grants assist households cope better with poverty.	Reduce household hunger. Improves household security. Increases food security.
Perceived difference that social grants make in poor households by respondents.	Social grants support households to attain minimum standard of living.	Improve welfare of beneficiaries and households. Enables beneficiaries to start small businesses. Improve nutrition.
Perceived use and impact of social grants by respondents.	Social grants allow beneficiaries to access resources.	School transport Healthcare Food Societies
Perception of government using social grants to address poverty by respondents.	Social grants brought many households out of poverty.	Improved access to labour market. High school enrolment. Less school dropout rates.
Perceived role of social grants on local economic development.	Social grants improve access to labour market and local economy.	Informal trading Declines in severity of poverty. Allows vulnerable individuals to access job market.

Source: Hammarberg et al., (2016).

5.4 Capability approach and analysis of findings.

Table 3 presents various deprivations that the participants experience in their communities. According to the capability approach, these deprivations trap vulnerable people in poverty. The table demonstrates various interventions implemented by the government and the experiences by respondents. Sen (1999) argues that sources of these deprivations should be removed to enable people to function effectively in their societies. The deprivations above correlates with the determinants of multidimensional poverty. This shows that most of the participants are multidimensionally poor as they are deprived access to opportunities and resources.

Table 3: Capability approach and findings.

Deprivations	Government Intervention	Respondents' Experiences
Income poverty	Provision of social grants to children (Child Support Grant), disabled (Disability Grant), elderly (Old Age Grant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance income security. • Enhance school enrolment. • Improves food security.
Lack of education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills training canters. • Adult Basic Education • Improved educational social policies. i.e., No-Fee School Policy (NSFP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance literacy levels. • Equipped with marketable skills. • Improve access to education.
Lack of employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public works programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source of income security.
Poor healthcare services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More clinics • More hospitals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced access to better healthcare services. • Transport to travel to clinics and hospitals.

Source: Sen (1999).

5.5 Discussion of Findings

As seen in Table 2, several themes emerged from the analysis of the findings of this study. The themes ranged from various roles social grants play in alleviating poverty in South Africa. The findings also reveal that the social assistance grants play a significant role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. The roles include: decreasing the severity of poverty in many households particularly in female-headed households, improving the welfare of beneficiaries and the household, improving food security amongst households, supporting households to attain minimum standard of living, and allowing members of the households to enter the labour market among others.

5.5.1 Characteristics of vulnerable households found in Soweto and Khayelitsha

South African vulnerable households in Soweto and Khayelitsha are primarily characterised by informal dwellings (shacks) and RDPs. According to Statistics South Africa (2018) the characteristics of the dwellings in which households live provide an important indication of the well-being of household members. Majority of the households have low accessibility to opportunities and resources. For instance, in Khayelitsha, some sections have poor transportation facilities, and this deprive community members from actively accessing the labour market. The characteristics of vulnerable households in Soweto and Khayelitsha differ from one area to another. This is basically because some households live in formal dwellings but are affected by the socio-economic challenge of poverty and depend on government grants for survival.

5.5.2 Five main social grants received by participants

South Africa's Social Security system is an arrangement of social assistance grants directed at vulnerable individuals. There are five major social assistance grants in South Africa: "Old Age Grant (OAG) which provide support to women and men above 60 years, Disability Grant (DG) provides support to adults with disabilities, Child Support Grant (CSG) provides support to children, Foster Care Grant (FCG) provides support to families with children below the age of eighteen in foster care and Care Dependency Grant (CDG) which provides support with children below the age of eighteen with disabilities" (SASSA, 2021:7). All these social grants are subjected to a means test.

Table 4: Types of grants and value

Grant	Amount
Old age grant	R1890
Child Support grant	R460
Foster care grant	R1050
Disability grant	R1890
Care dependency grant	R1890

Source: South African Social Security Agency (2021).

The South African government provides the above-mentioned social grants to vulnerable individuals who needs state support. The respondents stated that they get access to different types of social grants with different amounts. The findings are based on the five major social assistance grants. Eligibility for these social grants depends on an income-based means test which varies according to the type of grant. Adding to the social grants, the democratic government provides social relief of distress (SRD). “This is an intervention meant to target families which experiences temporary distress by providing temporary relief” (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21). Further, “the SRD is given to people in a form of vouchers, food parcels or money for a three-month period” (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/2021:30). As part of the application process, an applicant needs to be South African Citizen, permanent resident or refugee currently living in South Africa (Brockerhoff, 2013).

The findings show that the Child support grant (CSG) holds a large percentage of beneficiaries of social assistance grants in Soweto and Khayelitsha as some of the respondents stated that:

Participant 3: “I receive child support grant for three kids, two are my younger sister’s kids and one is mine”

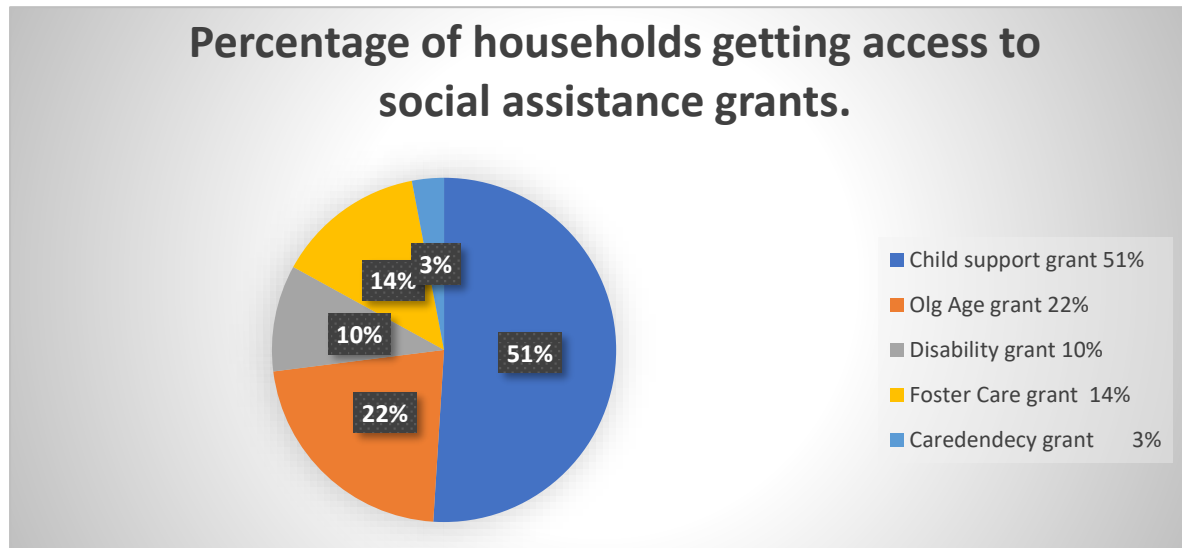
Participant 6: “I get child support grant for my two children and foster care grant for my niece”

Participant 8: “I receive two child support grants for two kids”

According to Statistics South Africa (2021), Child Support Grant (CSG) support over 60% of vulnerable children in South Africa. This reveals how child support grants continue to play a significant role in relieving many households from hunger. The value of the Child Support Grant is low compared to all the social assistance grants provided by the government. However, most of the respondents revealed how it enables them to improve their livelihoods. In addition,

it was also revealed that the Old age grant holds a larger percentage of beneficiaries in Soweto and Khayelitsha. The value of the Old age grant enables most elders to take care of their households and better their situations. The Old age grant reduces the severity of poverty amongst the elderly and their dependants (Brockerhoff, 2013).

Figure 6



Source: Field Research (2021).

Figure 6 shows the percentages of households that get access to different major social assistance grants provided by the South African democratic government in this study. The findings from this study revealed that social assistance grants play an important role in assisting many households in Soweto and Khayelitsha, to have at least one household income. According to Statistics South Africa (2021), approximately over 18 million South Africans who are affected by poverty receive social assistance grants. This shows how most of the population in South Africa is still subjected to deprivations and needs government support/social assistance.

5.5.3 Role of social assistance grants on poverty alleviation in Khayelitsha and Soweto

5.5.3.1. Reduction of severity of household poverty

All respondents acknowledge that social assistance grants play an important role in relieving their households from poverty. They described how the different types of social grants allow them to take care of households needs as the following respondents state:

Participant 4: "We were living in poverty before getting the grant, it was bad as some days we would go to bed with no food but now things are better as we are able to buy food for the kids, clothes for Christmas and winter. The situation is better now, the

government is helping us a lot with the grant. My kids used to suffer lot but now with the grant things are okay now”.

Participant 9: “With the help of the old age grant I can buy food my family and other things we need in the house. The situation is better now as we go to bed full”.

These needs include: food, electricity, water, rent, school fees, among others. Majority of the participants stated that the social grants give them an opportunity to improve the situation in their household. They spoke about how they used to struggle to meet basic needs before accessing the social assistance grants. Access to social assistance grants makes life better for many households in Khayelitsha and Soweto. Social assistance grants minimise the impact of poverty in these marginalised communities.

The findings in this study show how the social assistance grants play a critical role in alleviating the severity of poverty in many households in South African urban settlements. It is evident that the social grants are making a huge difference in many people’s lives regardless of what type of grant they get from the government. The respondents revealed how the grant is making a positive impact in their households. The main purpose of social assistance through the provision of social grants in South Africa is to reduce poverty and improve socio-economic development in the country (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/2021). From the research findings, one can state that social assistance policy plays a significant in poverty reduction in many households. Post-apartheid, a lot of households in South Africa experienced household security when they started getting access to different social assistance grants provided by the democratic government (Hall & Sambu, 2018). The grants impact many households positively when they reach the most vulnerable marginalised individuals in South Africa. Therefore, it is evident that social assistance grants in South Africa promote social development. These support findings by Hall and Sambu (2018) that social grants promote poverty reduction, improved food security, well-being and schooling for grant beneficiaries, their children and other household members.

Leibbrandt et. al. (2010), analysed “the impact of child support grant on poverty reduction using R515 per capita poverty line in different households”. And revealed that “the number of households belonging in the poor quintile who received the child support grant increased from 16 % to 69 % between 1997 and 2006” (Leibbrandt et al, 2010:28). This study also reveals that many households get access to the Child Support Grant as it is one of the major social assistance grants provided by the government. This shows there’s an increase in the number of households

which receive Child Support Grant in South African townships. According to the Statistics South Africa (2021), over 13 million beneficiaries of social grants are children. The child support grant relieves many households from poverty as it does not only benefit the children but in most instances the entire household. “The child support grant I receive from the government help all my children and not only those who receive it. I also pay stokvels with some of it so in December we can have grocery” (Participant 9, 2021). The CSG contribute immensely to reducing child hunger in many households in South African townships.

5.5.3.2. Support household members attain minimum standard of living.

The researcher found that many households attained minimum standard of living through the provision of social assistance grants as it can be seen from the following respondents:

Participant 11: “Social grants I receive from SASSA help me secure food in my house. I am now able to buy electricity, pay rent and always have enough food for the kids”.

Participant 17: “The child support grant I get for my three children help me buy food and pay water. We always have food in the house because of the grant”.

Participant 13: “SASSA grant allows me to buy food, buy clothes for my kids, electricity and water in the house as I did not have means to before”.

Minimum standard of living in the context of this study entails adequate food, clothing, housing, electricity, and water. The respondents in this study stated how they struggled to meet basic needs before accessing one or more of the major social grants provided by the South African government. For example, participant 14 stated that “we used to beg on the streets so that we can have money to buy food and electricity” This shows how the social assistance is crucial in relieving many poor households from severe poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, through the provision of social assistance grants, many vulnerable individuals can get an opportunity to improve and manage their home situations better.

Through social assistance grants, members in households that receive one or more grants can benefit from the grant. This shows how the provision of social assistance grants is significant in improving the welfare of beneficiaries and the entire household. The findings in this study revealed that the grants help in getting the household situation better. The respondents also mentioned how for instance, even if they get access to child support grants, they use it for other things in the household. For example, buying things like bread instead of just buy necessities for the children. Necessities for children include: baby milk, clothes, and baby food. This can

be negative as it inconveniences the needs of the child. However, it can also be positive as it improves the well-being of both the beneficiary and other household members.

5.5.3.3. Social assistance grants Improves access to education for poor households.

The findings in this study reveal that social assistance grants play a vital role in improving access to education for poor households. The respondents stated that the different grants help them in buying stationary, lunch boxes, paying school transport and buying school uniform for their children as the following respondents state:

Participant 16: “uhm...I can pay school transport for my two children. This helps them be in school every day”.

Participant 7: “The child support grant assists me take my children to school. I pay school fees, buy food, and pay for their school transport with the grant. I also use it to buy school uniform and stationery in January...it’s really helping”.

According to Hall and Sambu (2018), children in households that get access to social assistance grants can stay in school and complete their grades. According to economic theory, social grants play several roles in education for households experiencing poverty. Firstly, a lot of poor households face challenges which affect school attendance due to financial constraints. However, with the provision of social assistance grants many poor households can meet and afford the costs of attending school. For example, buying school uniform, stationary, paying for transportation to school and giving children a little change for snacks.

Findings in this study indicated that access to social assistance grants increases school attendance among children in poor households particularly in Soweto and Khayelitsha. The respondents in this study revealed how their children used to resist going to school because of not having uniform before accessing the social grants and how things got better with the access to the social assistance grants provided by the South African government. Additionally, international data indicates that immediate costs of schooling necessities such as fees, uniforms, and transport are normally the second major spending after food in many vulnerable households (World Bank, 2019).

Some of the respondents stated how their children are now able to stay in school because of social grants. Therefore, this reveals one significant role that is played by the social assistance policy-that of decreasing school dropout rates in households accessing either one or more of

the major social grants provided by the government. A study conducted by Chibba and Moodley (2019) revealed that social assistance grants play a significant role in reducing child poverty and inequality. This is because social grants enable poor households to spend money on food and school related expenses. This increases chances of children staying in school like other children from well-off households.

Some beneficiaries of both child support and old age grants indicated that the provision of social grants assisted them a lot in taking their children and grandchildren to school. They further described how they used to struggle to take their children to school before accessing the social grants provided by the government. This shows how social grants play a significant role in improving access to education amongst poor households. According to Hall and Sambu (2018), efficient and effective provision of social grants improves access to quality education in townships and rural areas.

With access to social grants, many households in marginalised communities can access better education for their children in urban areas. This in return improves the rates of school attendance among children and teenagers from poor households in post-apartheid South Africa. The findings in this section shows how the social assistance policy through the provision on social grants play an important role in improving access to education for households in vulnerable communities. This indicates how social assistance grants improved the lives of children by providing them with an opportunity to attend school and crèche for smaller children. The respondents in this study revealed how social grants play a remarkable role in bettering the well-being of the beneficiaries and the entire household.

Social assistance grants impact poor households positively when it comes to education as it gives them more opportunities to be able to afford and finance school needs. The social assistance grant's impact on education is greater, and more visible in vulnerable communities as more beneficiaries and disadvantaged individuals resides in these areas. One participant stated how her children dropped out of school because of not having necessary means to attend school. Participant 3 noted that:

Participant3: "the social grant is helping my children a lot as they go to school every day and they pass. My older son dropped out of school because he used to not have food to eat before going to school and when he come back still no food for him them, he stopped going to school".

This shows how poverty and its effects negatively affected poor households before accessing social grants. The poverty challenge blocked many school going children and teenagers from attending school and in return impeding them from enjoying their right to education as stated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. This further exacerbates the cycle of severe poverty in many disadvantaged households in South Africa. However, with better access to social assistance grants, many households can better their household situation.

According to Chiba and Moodley (2019), children from households receiving social grants and those who are on social grants attend school early and this impact their childhood development in a positive way. The importance of education is emphasised by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2: “Achieve universal primary education”. This shows how the democratic government’s anti-poverty strategy to reduce poverty through the provision of social grants will help the country to achieve the SDGs and better the well-being of the people of South Africa. Therefore, social assistance grants play one important role in helping South African government address and redress the injustices of the apartheid regime. The South African government has emphasised the significance of early access to education for all children and through social grants particularly the child support grant, over 13 million children in South Africa are able to access education (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

5.5.3.4. Improved access to labour market

Findings in this study show that there’s a good relationship between social assistance grants and access to the job market. This is because with access to social assistance grants, household members get resources (money) to travel to offices to submit curriculum vitae and even start small businesses in their communities. Some participants noted the following:

Participant 14: “I was able to start a small business with the old age grant that my mother receives from the government. I saved R200 from it for 6 months and then I bought snacks, sweets, ice pops, and I sell at schools during breaks. Now we get a little commission that also support the house with buying food and electricity. Before starting my small business, I used to the grant to pay for transport when I was searching for jobs”.

Participant 2: “My older daughter uses the grant to go look for jobs in town”.

Participant 15: "...my husband sometimes takes part of the grant money and use it to print out CV when looking for employment. He even bought a grass cutting machine and now he makes money cutting grass in people's yards".

Individuals in households that access one or more type of social grant have better chances of accessing the job market than those who are not receiving any social grant. Social grants give beneficiaries and other household members an opportunity to travel to urban areas to seek jobs, access internet cafes to type curriculum vitae, make photocopies and other necessities they need to apply for different job opportunities. This reveals how social grants play various important roles in many disadvantaged households in Soweto and Khayelitsha. Additionally, this study found out that social assistance grants enable household members to seek better employment opportunities and this in turn increases sources of income in the household. This was also supported by a study by Samson et al (2020) which revealed that social assistance grants provide household members with better access to, and participation in the labour market. According to the capability approach this gives household members a sense of agency to participate in the job market.

This shows how access to social grants gives household members better chances of improving their household income and enhance job market participation for vulnerable households. Increased participation in the job market in disadvantaged households reduces the severity of poverty as household members have other sources of income and this add to the social grants. Importantly, this improves household security in many households in South African townships and rural areas. Informal trading is one of the ways in which many households in townships can improve their standard of living with the provision of social assistance grants. In this way, social grants address the socio-economic challenges of poverty and unemployment.

South Africa's socio-economic challenges are characterised by the triple scourge of unemployment, inequality, and poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2021). The social assistance grants have been successful in relieving many vulnerable households from poverty. In both townships, Soweto and Khayelitsha, majority of participants (61%) indicated that access to social assistance grants inspire them to search for employment opportunities to improve their standard of living and increase the number/amount of the household income. There are various ways through which social assistance grants, particularly the Child Support Grant, lead to improved labour market outcomes. Additionally, in South Africa the Child Support Grant plays an important role in contributing towards the increase of the labour market participation of

parents/caregivers. This is crucial as it enables mothers and caregivers to seek better employment opportunities (Social Research Centre, 2019). Social assistance grants also assist mothers and other household members who have part-time jobs by funding their trips to and from the workplace.

5.5.3.5. Social assistance grants Improve Food Security in poor households

The findings from this study revealed how the social assistance grants were able to improve food security and nutritional outcomes in some households. Children in households that receive social grants tend to be healthier and don't seek medical attention often as the following participants indicated that:

Participant 15: "My children used to get sick before I was getting the child support grant and whenever I go to the clinic, they will say they don't eat enough and lack vitamins. Things are much better now, and I don't visit the clinic like I used to. They eat enough as the grant help us to get enough food"

Participant 4: "Because of the child support grant my kids don't get sick like before".

Participant 8: "Ever since we started receiving both foster care and child support grants the children are always active and they don't get sick...".

Food security is understood as having access to sufficient food for a healthy life (Waidler & Devereux, 2019). This is a basic need and the right to food is enriched in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Waidler & Devereux, 2019). "Nutrition is basically a status, notably undernutrition, is an objective measure of food insecurity and hunger" (Waidler & Devereux, 2019: 3). The respondents mentioned how social assistance grants enable them to afford to buy healthy, enough food for their households.

It is evident that the various major categories of social assistance grants increase access to food in many disadvantaged households. By increasing access to food, it reduces food insecurity. This is another significant role that social assistance policy is playing in alleviating severe poverty in many households in South African. The child support grant is one of the major grants that is impacting many households as it holds a larger percentage of beneficiaries. It is South Africa's most successful poverty alleviation intervention as most households rely on it. In a study conducted by Chibba and Moodley (2019), it was revealed that children in households receiving South Africa's child support grant are less likely to be overweight or suffer obesity.

This shows how access to sufficient food with the provision of social grants play an important role in children's health in many households.

The developments in nutritional status linked to social assistance grants are a substantial developmental milestone for many vulnerable households. Insufficient food, predominantly in young children, leads to poorer levels of early childhood and cognitive development. These supports the findings by Mackett (2020) that persistently malnourished children demonstrate advanced levels of sickness, infirmity, and poorer levels of education. Findings in this study also show that children in households that have access to social grants and on social grants starts pre-school early and this impacts their childhood development positively. Good nutrition is one of the key factors in children's development as it enables them to be active healthy children (Chibba & Moodley, 2019).

This reveals how various households benefit from the provision of the social assistance grants. Better access to food and good nutrition are significant to a child's development as this allows them to grow in healthy environments and grow up to be better members of the society. Social assistance grants enable many children from disadvantaged households to be equal with other children in the street. It gives them an opportunity to participate in children's activities and freely play at home and school. This support Brockerhoff's (2013) statement that children in households receiving one or more grants grow up to be better, responsible citizens in society.

In this section the findings of the study show that indeed social assistance policy through the provision of social grants contribute significantly to alleviating poverty in South African urban settlements, particularly in post-apartheid era. The apartheid era left many people with social and economic inequalities and through social assistance grants the government addresses these injustices by assisting many households to cope better with the challenge of poverty. Although the value of the child support grant is much lower compared to other grants, its role on poverty alleviation in many households is much greater. This is because even in households that only survive on CSG, the grant is used for more than just the needs of children.

5.5.3.6 Role of Social assistance grants on income security and welfare

The findings in this study shows that social assistance policy play a significant role in contributing to income security in many vulnerable households as the following participants said:

Participant 2: “the grants are helping us because every month we know that there’s money coming”

Participant 13: “SASSA grants give me a sense of security.... I have an income that comes in every month”.

Participant 17: “every month I know I have an income even though it’s not much, but it helps my house a lot”.

Income security is central in households and society, and crucial for economic development (Hall & Sambu, 2018). This study revealed that, through the provision of social grants many people can have access to secure incomes which enables them to cope better with poverty. This is vital as it inhibits many households from remaining in poverty. It enables them to break the poverty cycle. This study further found out that the social assistance grants contribute to household income security in many households in South Africa, based on interviews with participants from Soweto and Khayelitsha. It is evident that the provision of social assistance grants relieves many households from income poverty.

The findings show that income poverty is one of the challenges that were affecting many households before they got access to various major social assistance grants provided by the South Africa government as stated by some participants:

Participant 11: “...we used to have no income before accessing child support grant”.

Participant 5: “I had no means of income but after having access to foster care grant things got better”.

As indicated by Hall & Sambu (2018), income poverty is associated with severe poverty levels in vulnerable households, mostly characterised by poor access to health and education and nutrition. With the provision of social assistance grants many households can have a sense of income and household security. Further, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa recognises the link between income security and the realisation of basic human rights. This is emphasised through acknowledging that vulnerable individuals including children have the right to social assistance grants when they are struggling to meet basic household needs.

Improvements in welfare are significant in enhancing societies to attain social development (Midgley, 2016). Findings in this study reveal that there's a relationship between social assistance grants and improved welfare as some of the respondents said:

Participant 11: "receiving the SASSA grant give us happiness and relief as we know that our families are taken care of every month".

Participant 4: "everyone is happy in this house, and I thank the government as they give us social grants to look after our families".

This is basically because this policy plays an important role in enabling vulnerable individuals and their households to escape poverty. Moreover, participants in this study mentioned how provision of social assistance grants enable them to improve and extend their houses. Participant 9 stated that *"with the old age grant I managed to save and extended my two roomed house"*. It enables them to participate in agricultural activities which in return increases their food security and improve their welfare. It was also noted that grants had a more positive impact on female-headed households than male-headed households. Therefore, it can be stated that enhancements in levels of welfare linked to access of social assistance grants are not consistently experienced in every household that receive a social grant. This support findings by Statistics South Africa (2020: 17) that "there are factors such as the extent to which income is shared within the household, along with the gender of the grant recipient". Evidence from this research study suggests that the degree to which the social grant is shared in the household is greatly linked to enhancements in welfare of beneficiaries and other household members.

5.5.4 Usage of Social assistance grants by respondents

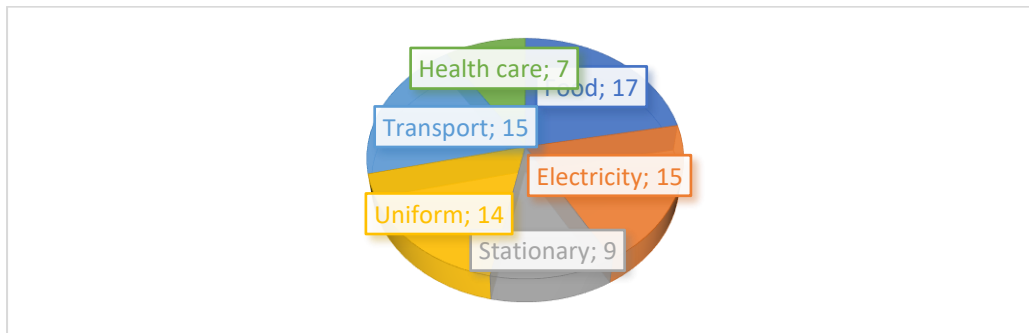
Findings in this study reveal that households in South African urban settlements such as Soweto and Khayelitsha use the different major grants for several purposes. Many social grant recipients utilise the social grants in a good way, no matter the amount received. For example, some mentioned that they use the money for things like food, electricity, rent, to access clinics, for school transport and stationery, pay stokvels and buying household necessities. This support Brockerhoff's (2013)'s findings that social assistance grants enable many vulnerable households to access food and improve their well-being.

Participants revealed how they shared the social grants among other household members and necessities. This supports findings by Delany et al (2008) who reported that 51% of CSG beneficiaries share the grants they receive from the government. Caregivers share these grants

with the knowledge that the grant is intended for recipient, particularly the Child support grant. However, because of income insecurity and effects of poverty on many vulnerable households, social grants are diverted to other household needs. Further, the researcher noted that sharing of different social assistance grants is usually linked to the gender of the grant beneficiary. For example, Old Aged Grant received by a female is strongly linked to enhancements in health, nutrition, and school enrolment among children in disadvantaged households. This supports the strong international data that social assistance grants received by women is linked with improving the well-being of children (Brockerhoff, 2013).

This study also revealed that many households in vulnerable communities are headed by women. Poverty levels are high in townships and rural areas and mostly in female headed households (Statistics South Africa, 2021). From what most participants mentioned, there are gendered differences when it comes to access and use of social assistance grants since most of the recipients are women. This is mostly because most of the household are headed by women, who are often the ones taking care of children. Additionally, most foster children are taken care of by women. This supports the SASSA 2020/21 report's claim that a higher percentage of the recipients of most of the major social grants are women. When it comes to social grants that cater for children, women dominate as it is believed that most homes are headed by women and some by both a man and woman, but it will be the woman applying for the grants (SASSA Annual Report, 2020/21). Further, these gender disparities when it comes to accessing social assistance grants suggest how beneficiaries allocate resources in the household and how the different grants are utilised. This is vital as it plays a big role in empowering beneficiaries who are traditionally accountable for caring for children. Female participants in this study revealed how they are always involved in financial decision-making in their households, as they believe they make better financial decisions than their brothers or husbands. This brings great interest to investigate challenges of poverty and gender disparities in future research. Participants in this study mentioned how they use social assistance grants for different necessities in their households, as illustrated in figure 7 below.

Figure 7: How participants use social assistance grants



Source: Field Research (2021).

Figure 7 shows how households in this study make use of the various major social assistance grants provided by the South African government. Findings in this study reveal how many vulnerable households can afford basic needs owing to the provision of social grants. This again shows the significant role played by the social assistance policy in relieving many poor households from the severity of poverty, particularly in tribal areas and informal urban areas. Social assistance grants enable many households to afford and maintain the standard of living. Households that receive more than one type of grant can better manage their household situations than those who just get access to only one grant. For example, in some households a caregiver receives two child support grants and a foster care. This caregiver has more opportunities in raising these kids better by being able to access sufficient food and improved food security for the children.

Moreover, findings in this study show how social assistance grants in post-apartheid South Africa play a critical role in reducing poverty and promoting social development among vulnerable households (Midgley, 2016). The social assistance through the provision of social grants in South Africa has improved the social development of many households in Khayelitsha in the Western Cape and Soweto in the Gauteng Province. It is through the provision of social assistance grants that many households can access better education, buy school uniform, food, stationery, pay for transport and this is evident as enrolment in schools has improved since the provision of social grants. The positive impact is evidenced by improved enrolment in schools since the provision of social grants began. Social assistance grants are strongly linked to enhancements in the capacity and value of food consumption, which improves nutritional status and lowers documented levels of morbidity and stunting (Gertler & Boyce, 2001; Devereux, 2001). These effects are evident in relation to all the five major social grants. Food is naturally the major category of spending for the vulnerable individuals.

Many participants mentioned how their children can stay in school with the access to social grants as before some of the children would stay out of school and look for jobs to help in the households. This supports Brockerhoff's (2013) findings that social assistance has contributed to the reduction of poverty as through the social grants the levels of child labour in the country have decreased. Further, the child support grant has positively impacted many as it is presented in most households as the most important financial resource that contributed to the relief of severe poverty in many households. Responsible caregivers are crucial as they make use of the social grant money wisely and take care of the household needs. Particularly in households where social grants are the only source of income.

5.5.5 Social assistance grants as the only strategy for poverty alleviation

Evidence from this study reveals that even though social assistance grants play a critical role in relieving many township households from poverty, they are not enough. When asked about their perceptions on whether social assistance grants alone are enough in changing their home situations, majority (12) of the participants indicated social grants are not enough to completely help them escape the poverty circle.

Participant 15: "The child support grant is helping but it does not help us to completely get out of poverty".

Participant 3: "We are grateful for the grant we get from the government, but the amount is not enough to change our situation for good".

This is because the value of the social grants is not enough to sustain some households for the whole month. Some beneficiaries receive only one type of grant to support a household of five members. This is an indication that the government must establish other strategies to reduce poverty. Most people are grateful for the provision of the social assistance grants in their lives. However, they feel like they are not enough to help them escape poverty. Most of the participants are struggling to make ends meet with just one grant as the cost of living is too high.

Participant 5: "We receive only the child support grant, and it is not enough as we are a family of 6".

Participant 11: "The old age grant is really helping in the house, but it is not enough as sometimes we run out of food before month end".

This finding supports Midgley's (2016) statement that social assistance grants reduce poverty in many households but however does not take the households completely out of poverty. This is because with no other means of income, households depend on social grants for basic survival. This further demonstrates that social assistance grants, particularly the Child Support Grant (CSG) can't be the only measure put in place to help reduce poverty in the most vulnerable communities. One can therefore argue that the government must come up with other strategies to add to existing ones to reduce poverty. Increased access to employment opportunities would ensure that the provision of social assistance is sustainable in the long run. Though they state that it is not much, they do mention that it is helping them a lot in making their household's situations better than before. This shows how social assistance grants continue to play a critical role in relieving millions of households from severe poverty in post-apartheid South Africa.

5.5.6 Challenges associated with Social Assistance grants as Reported by participants

Even though this government initiative impacts many households in South African townships in a good way, findings in this study demonstrate that many beneficiaries experience one or more challenges when it comes to social assistance grants. Again, many vulnerable individuals are still excluded from accessing and enjoying their right to social security. Most of the participants complain about the nature of service delivery by the South African Security Agency. Some of the challenges will be discussed below:

5.5.6.1 Long application process

The respondents indicated how during the application process to access social grants they would run out of relevant documents at the SASSA offices, or they were sent from pillar to post for other documentation such as affidavits.

Participant 3: 'One time they sent me back saying there are no forms, and I should come the following day, and that following day they sent me to police station for affidavits I even asked them why they did not tell me yesterday that I must bring an affidavit'.

Participant 7: "The grant application process is long as you sometimes go to SASSA offices more than twice".

They described the process to accessing the various social assistance grants as difficult and draining, particularly for women who represent the larger percentage of beneficiaries. Participants expressed how the application process is long for them and its effects to their

financial well-being. This is because most of them travel long distances just to access SASSA offices.

The participants in this study illustrated how they experienced a few challenges just to access the social assistance grants. Participant 13 stated that “Even though the grants is helping my house a lot, it was not easy to access it as the offices are far and I sometimes did not have money for taxi”. These findings tell us that the government need to do more in making sure that the most vulnerable individuals smoothly access and enjoy their right to social assistance as stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Though the democratic government introduced the social assistance policy to redress the injustices caused by the apartheid government, from the findings of this study, one can realise that many people in the townships, particularly women, are still subjected to deprivations when it comes to access of resources, especially social assistance grants. These findings further reveal how SASSA need to improve service delivery in townships as people in these areas are the ones in need of social assistance from the government. These findings support the statement by the Department of Social Development (2020) that many vulnerable households still come across various challenges when it comes to social assistance grants.

5.5.6.2 Unavailability of necessary documentation at SASSA offices

Proper documentation is central to the effective and efficient delivery of social assistance grants provided by the South African democratic government. Findings in this study revealed how poor service delivery in townships by the South African Social Security Agency is affecting mostly the poor. Further, SASSA should educate people about the different documents required to apply for each social assistance grant.

Participant 16: “At times I didn’t have money for taxi to go to SASSA and it took maybe 3 months for the money to come in. One time they sent me back saying there are no forms, and I should come the following day, and that following day they sent me to police station for affidavits I even asked them why they did not tell me yesterday that I must bring an affidavit”.

Participant 4: “When I applied for the grant, I did not have correct information about what documents to take with me to SASSA offices. This affected me negatively as I had to go back to the offices more than twice and I did not have enough money...”.

This is because some participants stated that they only hear about the required documents from other community members as SASSA officials do not come to educate them. Participant 16 stated that “we don’t see any SASSA officials in our communities giving us information about relevant documents, we only hear from other community members”. Taking information to the townships will enable disadvantaged individuals to provide correct documents during application process. This supports the statement by the Department of Social Development Annual Report 2020/21 that there are different types of documents required for one to apply for social grants and it’s SASSA responsibility to ensure that people are aware of the type of documents required. Furthermore, vulnerable communities can access this information through community outreach programmes aimed at raising awareness regarding social assistance grants. Kgaphole (2013) asserts that there is inadequate monitoring and evaluation in SASSA offices, and this hinders the effective and efficient implementation of the social assistance policy. Therefore, one can state that the government needs to monitor how SASSA delivers service, particularly in townships and rural areas. “Monitoring is the continuous and systematic collection, recording and reporting of information to track progress towards the achievement of the objectives of an intervention, and identify the need for corrective action” (Kgaphole, 2013:37). Monitoring entails checking whether a service has been delivered effectively and efficiently.

5.5.7 Social grants relieve households from multidimensional poverty and enhance quality of life and social development

Findings in this study indicate that social assistance grants relieve many households from the severity of multidimensional poverty in Soweto and Khayelitsha as some respondents said:

Participant 1: “the level of literacy in my house has increased as my children are able to perform better in school”.

Participant 3: “With the social grant I receive from the government I managed to save a little and start a small business. The little money I make from selling atchaar and snacks I’m able to pay stokvels and contribute to community development”.

Social assistance policy plays a crucial role in improving social development in post-apartheid South Africa. The apartheid system policy for development created so many socio-economic challenges. Poverty, Unemployment, and high levels of inequality arose because of the injustices of the apartheid policy system. The improved food security means that

multidimensional poverty declined in these households. Social grants enable households to cope with various social ills they experience. According to capability approach, through the provision of social grants, vulnerable people can realise their capabilities to access opportunities and resources.

Social development includes the objectives of the provision of economic opportunities for all and the reduction of poverty (United Nations Department for Economic and Social affairs (UNDESA), 2002). According to Midgley & Hall (2004:46), “the perspective of integrated social and economic development and the creation of economic opportunities for the poor includes the provision of the basic social services in health care, education, family planning, nutrition, and primary education”. This further includes the social welfare services like provision of social grants which are vital to human and social development. The provision of social assistance grants contributes immensely to social development in South Africa. This is because with access to social grants most vulnerable households can better their well-being.

Significantly, social development and economic development are related as one affects the other. In South Africa many people are beneficiaries of the major social grants, and this means more people benefit from the social assistance policy and its role in enabling vulnerable individuals to achieve human development and reduce the severity of poverty in their households. However, socio-economic challenges such as inequality, poverty and unemployment are widening in South Africa, and this is affecting both social and economic development. Social grants enhance the quality of life among household members as they enable them to improve their household situations. With access to social grants various multidimensional poverty indicators such as health, education, access to social services and standard of living improve.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided an analysis of the findings of this study by outlining participants’ profile, the framework for discussion of findings and discussing the findings. Findings in this study indeed assert that, the social assistance policy remains a critical tool for improving the well-being and human development of many vulnerable and marginalised individuals in South Africa. Access to social assistance grants give household members an opportunity to realise their capabilities and function in their communities as asserted by Sen 1999. The social assistance policy plays various roles in many households. For instance, it is evident that social assistance grants reduce severity of household poverty, and malnutrition by Improving

nutrition outcomes. The grants also improve school attendance, improve household income, and most importantly empower women in making decisions regarding household finances. However, social assistance grants still don't promote efficient labour markets as millions are affected by unemployment in post-apartheid South Africa.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of this study and the reviewed literature. The study explored the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa using Khayelitsha and Soweto as sites of reference. Further, the study examined whether social assistance grants are enough as an adequate main anti-poverty alleviation strategy. This study explained poverty and the social assistance policy's role from a household perspective, to gain a deeper understanding of the role of social assistance policy. This final chapter starts by presenting the conclusion drawn from the findings of this study.

6.2 Conclusion

This dissertation has provided results on the social assistance policy role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. The result of this qualitative study show that social assistance grants relieve many households from poverty. This was revealed during interviews with participants in the South African townships of Khayelitsha and Soweto. The households realised a decrease in the severity of poverty because of the provision of the social assistance grants provided by the government. The results also revealed that social assistance grants have successfully eased the impact of poverty in black communities. Through Sen's capability approach, it is understood that social assistance grants enable household members to live healthy, access the job market and participate in events around their communities. Furthermore, evidence from this study also shows that female-headed households host a larger percentage of social grants beneficiaries, particularly when it comes to the child support grant (CSG). Empirical evidence from this study again indicates that the social assistance policy plays a crucial role in targeting and allocating social assistance grants to the most vulnerable individuals in post-apartheid South Africa. In addition, the findings also indicate that social assistance grants are not enough as a sole government strategy to alleviate poverty. Although the social assistance grants play a critical role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa, poverty, unemployment, and inequality continue to affect socio-economic and human development in this country.

6.3 Recommendations

The primary aim of this study was to explore the social assistance policy's role in alleviating poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. With the findings, the researcher came up with several recommendations. There's a strong relationship between poverty and unemployment and this affects government's ability to provide social assistance efficiently. Therefore, it is recommended that the government in post-apartheid South Africa should implement more policies that focus on tackling the socio-economic challenge of unemployment. This will assist in improving the efficiency of the provision of social assistance grants. For instance, if more people are employed, less people will depend on social grants for survival. As a result, social grants will benefit the intended beneficiary without sharing with the entire household. This will in turn improve the value of the major social assistance grants such as the child support grant. The employment opportunities may be created through an improvement of the existing expanded public works programme (EPWP).

This programme provides income transfers to poor households in the short to medium-term. Due to the dependency on social grants, this study also recommend that the government encourages entrepreneurial jobs to help improve job creation amongst unqualified labourers. In addition, social policies like the social assistance policy should be monitored and evaluated often as to ensure that the social grants target the most vulnerable individuals and that the impact of poverty is mitigated in poor vulnerable households. Government should improve monitoring procedures regarding social assistance policy. There's a need to pursue an alternative approach to development, a more sustainable strategy to enhance socio-economic development in post-apartheid South Africa.

Furthermore, the government should consider establishing and implementing other mechanisms in addition to social grants as poverty alleviation strategies. This is because even with the provision of social grants, poverty levels continue to increase in South Africa, particularly in vulnerable communities. More social policies should be implemented to alleviate social ills such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality. There's a need for more sustainable strategies to tackle socio-economic challenges in post-apartheid South Africa.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Topic: Exploring the social assistance policy role in alleviating poverty in the post-apartheid South Africa.

PARTICIPANT'S DETAILS

Name: _____

Gender: Male _____ Female _____ Educational level: _____

Age: _____ Marital Status: _____ Employment Status: _____

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

1. How many people do you live with in your household?
2. What is your role in the household?
3. What are your responsibilities in the household?
What kind of support do you give the people in your household?
4. How many people work in the household?
5. How many people in the household depend on you financially?
What other ways do they depend on you on apart from finance?

The role of social assistance policy in alleviating poverty

1. Does anyone in the household get social grant from the government?
If yes, what type of social grant? (Child support grant, foster care grant, care dependency grant, old age grant).
2. When did you start getting the grant?
3. What role does the grant play in the household?
4. How many children under the age of 18 and adults live in your household?
5. What other means of income are there in the household?
How many rely on other forms of grants? (E.g., old age grant)
6. Are the household's needs fully met by the grant (s)?
7. How do use the social grant (s)?
8. Has the grant been helpful in making the household's situation better?
9. Do you think social grants help in decreasing poverty?
10. Do you think grants are enough in decreasing poverty?

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

I hereby consent to participate in the research project. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer particular items or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO-TAPING OF THE INTERVIEW

I hereby consent to tape-recording of the interview. I understand that my confidentiality will be always maintained and that the tapes will be destroyed after any publication arising from the study.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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31 December 2021

Student: Tshidi Kgekong Ramushu (RMSTSH013)

Outcome: ACCEPTED

I am pleased to inform you that ethical clearance was given by an Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Humanities for your study, ***Exploring the Social Assistance Policy Role in Alleviating Poverty in the Post-Apartheid South Africa***. The reference number is SWK-REC-2021-SR027.

I wish you all the best for your study.

Yours sincerely
Dr Khosi Kubeka
Senior Lecturer
Chair: Ethics Review Committee