AN EXPLORATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROCESSES IN ALLEVIATING POVERTY THROUGH CHILD SUPPORT GRANTS: THE CASE OF MTHONJANENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.

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DECLARATION

I, Jennifer Zanele Nxumalo, declare that:

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  II.   This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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ABSTRACT

Poverty remains one of the key challenges for most South Africans and government continues to devise interventions, such as the Child Support Grant, that can address poverty at household level. This study sought to evaluate the effectiveness of public administration processes in alleviating household poverty through the CSG intervention in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. Three public administration theories and principles including POSDCORB, New Public Management and the *Batho Pele* principles were applied simultaneously in this study.

The findings derived from in-depth interviews, a focus group discussion and observations reveal that SASSA has devised a new strategy to improve the administration process of the social security grants, the Improved Grant Application Programme. The findings show that the new strategy has increased productivity by decreasing the time taken to process each application, and all processes are coordinated and well-controlled. The findings also reveal that there are several challenges faced by the South African Social Security Agency in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality including inadequate infrastructure, uninformed clients, and the failure of administrators to implement the *Batho Pele* principles, thus undermining the quality of service delivery as well as the effectiveness of the Improved Grant Application Programme. The findings also reveal that the administration processes only focus on the short term development of children, disregarding the long term development for the children whose grants lapse after the age of 18 years. Therefore, the current public administration processes are effective in alleviating household poverty only while the child is in the system, because more deserving children have access to the CSG. However, much needs to be done to improve the current processes and to also focus on what happens to the children after the grant lapses. The study thus recommends that SASSA administrators receive more training on how to uphold the *Batho Pele* principles. In addition, outreach programmes should be conducted in order to inform the community about the requirements for and benefits from the Child Support Grant. The study also recommends that SASSA together with the Department of Social development must devise developmental programmes for children while they are still in the system, to ensure that when the grant lapses when they turn 18 that they have received the necessary support and skills to escape poverty.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CASE – Community Agency for Social Enquiry

CCT – Conditional Cash Transfer

CSG – Child Support Grant

DSD – Department of Social Development

DPSA – Department of Public Service and Administration

IGAP – Improved Grants Administration Programme

NPM – New Public Management

RSA Constitution – Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

SASSA – South African Social Security Agency

SCOPEN – Social Pension System

UKZN – University of KwaZulu-Natal

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

WPTPSD – White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery

ZAR – South African Rands

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is in the nature of a child to be dependent on others; children face or escape poverty as a result of their family's economic circumstances (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997). Children cannot change their family's condition by themselves, therefore in South Africa government programmes such as the Child Support Grant (CSG) have been implemented to tackle issues of childhood poverty directly and in this way address the human right to social welfare implicit in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) Section 28(1) (c). Previous research has highlighted several problems with the child support policy and has questioned the policy's objectives, its impact as well as its sustainability. This research adopts a different perspective to previous studies and explores the administrative processes in the distribution of the CSG, specifically within the rural setting of Mthonjaneni Municipality. This chapter begins by presenting the background to the study and clarifies the research objectives and questions. The theoretical framework underpinning the study is then outlined. Following on from this, the research methodology employed to guide the study, the instruments used to gather data as well as the method of data analysis used to interpret the findings of the study are expounded. The chapter concludes with an outline of the chapters to follow in the rest of the dissertation.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In 1996 a new constitution was developed and implemented to facilitate South Africa's transition from the repressive apartheid system to a democratic system of governance where everyone is considered equal in the eyes of the law and has equal access to services. Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) (1996) contains the Bill of Rights which is considered as the cornerstone of democracy and enshrines the democratic value of equality. The Constitution of RSA (1996: 3) Section 27(1) states that "everyone has the right to health care services, sufficient food and water, and social security". Section 28(1) (c) states further that "every child has the right to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care and social services" (Constitution of RSA, 1996: 13). In order for this right to social

security to be realised, the government of South Africa had to reform the social security systems that existed during the apartheid era to fit the ideologies of democracy. Thus the Child Support Grant (CSG) programme was developed to address the issue of childhood poverty which is a result of household poverty.

Hall and Chennells (2011) explain the link between household poverty and childhood poverty. They state that children are not expected to work, which means they are not required to earn income; instead they are dependent on the earnings of adults in the household in which they live. If the primary caregiver is living in poverty, ultimately the child will struggle with issues resulting from poverty, for example, food insecurity. The CSG programme therefore aims to address this problem. However, to operationalise this programme, sound administration processes are required to ensure effective roll-out, delivery and outcomes. Baker, Miller and Bratton (2015) define the measure of effectiveness in public administration as whether or not the set public programmes produce the changes to society hoped for during the initial development of the public policy, which in the case of the CSG is to alleviate childhood poverty.

The administration of social security grants was initially a responsibility ascribed to the Department of Social Development (DSD) however the department proved incapable of delivering on the set objectives (Koma, 2005). This was evidenced in studies conducted by several researchers including Brynard (2006) who identified problems that constrained the roll-out of the CSG, which included mis-targeting of the CSG. This refers to cases where assumptions were made that funds from the CSG did indeed reach the eligible recipient but in reality this proved not to be the situation. Another study was conducted by Koma (2005) which also identified problems with social assistance, including inadequate dissemination of information to communities about social grants and the conditions of eligibility, and lack of adequate infrastructure particularly in rural areas. Consequently, the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), Act 9 of 2004 was passed, which mandated the establishment of a constitutional agency that would oversee the administration of social security in South Africa.

1.3   RESEARCH PROBLEM

Most children in South Africa are born into poverty. Approximately 60% of children live in households with large numbers resulting in what little income that may be received being

shared among many people, and in a number of cases each household must survive on R575 or less per month (Hall, 2013). The primary cause of childhood poverty is the high rate of national adult unemployment, which currently is estimated at 24.3%, as well as low earnings for those that can find work (Statistics South Africa.gov.za, 2011). According to Statistics South Africa.gov.za (2011), Mthonjaneni Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal has a population of 47 818 with an unemployment rate of 28.5%, which means that unemployed people in this municipality must find alternative means of survival in order for their children to have a better standard of living. The CSG serves as an intervention in this regard, and aims to fulfil the Constitutional right in Section 27(1)(c) which states that "everyone has the right to have access to social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents" (Constitution of RSA, 1996: 8). Therefore it is imperative that all deserving children access the CSG and that there is wide coverage and effective access to benefits of the grant. This would ensure that children have increased food security, would be clothed and would be able to access other services such as education and healthcare. This ideal situation of wide and effective coverage of the CSG depends heavily on functional administrative processes. Much research has been done on the CSG coverage in urban areas however minimal research that focuses on grant coverage (which is largely impacted by the eligibility criteria) and access to benefits of being a grant recipient has been conducted in rural areas. There is thus an existing gap in the knowledge regarding grant coverage and access to benefits in rural areas in South Africa. Therefore this study is important as it will provide information pertaining to how effective the administration process adopted by SASSA is in alleviating household poverty in rural areas, which is essential for the long term development of the country.

1.4 AIM OF THIS STUDY

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the current administration process of the CSG employed by SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality, towards alleviating household poverty.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this research is to study the role of public administration processes in alleviating household poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality through provision of the CSG. The study is then guided by the following secondary objectives, which aim to:

- Examine the criteria used to identify those who qualify for the CSG;

- Examine the effectiveness of the application process employed by SASSA;

- Evaluate the role of the public administrators in this regard;

- Assess the challenges experienced by SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality; and

- Examine primary caregivers' experiences during and after the application process.

1.6   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- What is the application procedure to access the CSG?
- How effective is the administration process employed by SASSA?
- What role do public administrators play in the CSG application process?
- What challenges does SASSA encounter in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality?
- What were the experiences of the primary caregivers during and after the administration process?

1.7   LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher conducted an intensive review of the literature concerning the research problem in order to identify the gap that exists in current literature. Thus international and national journals, articles, dissertations (published and unpublished), books and reports written by researchers, and acts pertaining to social grants and administration were reviewed. Catalogues of books from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and electronic databases were consulted. This also enabled the researcher to understand previous research conducted related to the problem under investigation in this study, the approaches that were used, and the findings that the researcher may not have been aware of.

1.8   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Public administration scholars often distinguish between Public Administration (with capital letter P and A) and public administration (with small letters). Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux (1997) argue that Public Administration signifies a study, whilst public administration

is an activity. This study focused on public administration, the activity, because the aim was to evaluate the public administration process employed by SASSA, which constitutes the activity of public administration. Du Toit and Van Der Waldt (1997) define public administration as a broad combination of practice and theory, which aims to promote public policy making which is sensitive to the needs of the citizens. In light of this understanding of public administration this study was grounded upon Henri Fayol's theory, as extended by Luther Gullick, of administrative processes known as the business administration theory, David Osborne and Ted Geabler's New Public Management (NPM), and the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997).

1.8.1 Generic Public Administration Processes

This study draws on Henri Fayol's theory as extended in Luther Gullick's business administration theory, which is largely known for the acronym POSDCORB that stands for the various steps in administrative processes (Agriwal & Vashistha, 2013). These include (Agriwal & Vashistha, 2013):

- Planning;
- Organising;
- Staffing;
- Directing;
- Control;
- Reporting; and
- Budgeting.

However, to be able to ascertain the effectiveness of the current administration process employed by SASSA in the Mthonjaneni Local Municipality, the study focused only on planning, organising, staffing, directing, controlling and reporting. Because the administration process of the CSG requires direct interaction with the applicants (clients), it becomes important to gain an insight into the role that SASSA plays in ensuring the effective coverage and benefits of the grant, by first understanding these administration processes.

1.8.2 New Public Management Model

The study also draws on the managerial model of public administration known as the New Public Management (NPM) model proposed by David Osborne and Ted Geabler in the late

1980's. The model suggests a combination of dividing large bureaucracies or structures into smaller, more fragmented ones, thus promoting competition between different public agencies and in this way ensuring effectiveness and efficiency (Dunleavy & Margetts, 2006). As a consequence of the DSD's failure to efficiently and effectively provide social security grants, the South African government through an emphasis on decentralisation of authority, developed an agency, SASSA, which was tasked with the responsibility of administration of social grants. However, because SASSA is a government agency, it is obligated to adhere to South African legislation and polices, such as the *Batho Pele* principles.

1.8.3 The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997)

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (WPTPSD) emphasises the importance of putting 'people first' by widening citizen participation channels on policy-making issues and consultation regarding service delivery concerns (Mubangizi, 2011). It consists of the 8 *Batho Pele* principles: consultation; service standard; access; courtesy; information; openness and transparency; redress; and value for money (WPTPSD, 1997). The *Batho Pele* principles were introduced as an initiative to motivate public servants to be service-orientated, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit themselves to continuous service delivery improvement. It is a simple, transparent mechanism, which allows customers to hold public servants accountable for the type of services they deliver. However, this cannot be possible if there is no proper planning, no proper organising of functions within the agency, a lack of well-capacitated staff, no clear work procedures, and no one responsible for overseeing the processes on a day to day basis (Agriwal & Vashistha, 2013). The *Batho Pele* principles may be considered as complementary to the administration process, rather than a substitute. Fayol's administration principles in combination with the WPTPSD (1997) were used to guide the study.

1.9   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.9.1 Research Approaches

There are three approaches that can be used when conducting research; these include a qualitative approach, a quantitative approach, or a mixed-method approach. Patton and Cochran (2002) note that a qualitative approach is characterised by aims that relate to

understanding some aspects of social life, and is an approach that generates words instead of numbers as data for analysis. Therefore the approach that was adopted in this study is a qualitative approach because the researcher's aim was to understand the experiences of the research participants, from their points of view. A qualitative approach assists researchers to understand the participants in the social and cultural contexts in which they live. Such research permits the worlds under study to be well explored and represented (Philip, 1998).

1.9.2 Study Site

The setting of this study is Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. This is a Category C municipality situated on the northern coastal region of KwaZulu-Natal, under UThungulu District Municipality, and the municipality has a small town called Melmoth as its commercial centre. It is made up of six wards: Kwayanguye; Entembeni; Melmoth; Ekuthuleni; Kwamagwaza; and Ndundulu. Mthonjaneni Local Municipality has a population of 47 818, and an unemployment rate of 28.5% (Statistics South Africa.gov.za, 2011). This area has a backlog of social services and infrastructure such as adequate roads, clinics, schools and housing. This is more evident in the deep rural areas of the municipality, such as Entembeni, Kwayanguye and Ndundulu. A large proportion of the population in the municipality is unemployed, which may result in household poverty which ultimately affects the core wellbeing of the household members. Cahyat, Gonner, Haug and Limberg (2007) state that core wellbeing includes basic material as well as non-material needs which consist of nutrition, health and knowledge.

1.9.3 Target Population

In this study the population was selected from Mthonjaneni Local Municipality and comprises: primary caregivers of children receiving the CSG in this area; ward committee members and community leaders within this area; and public administrators in SASSA at the local government level.

1.9.4 Sampling Strategies

A non-probability sampling method was employed in this study. To identify eligible participants for each category, different sampling techniques were used. For the caregivers of the CSG beneficiaries, ward committee members and community leaders the technique adopted was snowball sampling, which is known as chain referral sampling. It is used in cases where the population of interest cannot be identified other than by someone who

knows a particular person who has the necessary experience or characteristics to be included in the study (MacNealy, 1999).

To identify the public administrators for SASSA, quota sampling was used. This sampling technique is largely based on access, convenience and visible relevant characteristics (MacNealy, 1999). Quota sampling was used in this instance because these participants are not the same as the other participants included in the overall sample. Public administrators were easy to identify because they are collected in one place (department offices), as compared to beneficiaries who are dispersed in different locations within Mthonjaneni Local Municipality.

1.9.5 Sample Size

The initial number of participants that the researcher intended to target for this study was 45, consisting of: 30 caregivers of the CSG beneficiaries; 5 ward committee members and community leaders; and 10 public administrators within SASSA. However, during the process of the data collection the researcher reached a saturation level with the data collected from the primary caregivers. The researcher also discovered that only eight administrators in SASSA at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality actually deal with the administration of the social grants, and because of the lack of availability of the ward committee members the researcher was only able to interview 3 participants. Therefore the total number of participants in the final sample was 39, made up of: 28 primary caregivers; 8 grant administrators; and 3 ward committee members.

1.9.6 Data Collection Methods

In a study which uses a qualitative approach, data collection involves direct interaction with individuals on a one on one basis or in a group setting (Hancock, 2002). Therefore the data in this study was collected through the use of: a literature search; in-depth semi-structured interviews, which allowed for the phenomenon under investigation to be explored in depth; a focus group, which allowed the researcher to draw upon experiences, attitudes, and reactions; and observations which were conducted at the SASSA office in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. This study, for the most part, used semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection; thus open-ended questions were formulated by the researcher to gather information from the primary caregivers and the SASSA administrators about the

role of the CSG in alleviating child poverty and public administration processes employed by SASSA with regard to the CSG.

1.9.7 Data Quality Control

Triangulation is an important approach that was used to assess the validity of the results obtained in this study. Individual interviews were conducted with all participants in the study. The focus group that was conducted was only used to gather further information from the caregivers of the beneficiaries. Another method used was participant observation during which extensive field notes were also gathered. The data gathered from the interviews were triangulated with participant observation, especially the interaction between the beneficiaries of the CSG and the SASSA administrators during the application stage. The triangulation processes were conducted at various levels of data collection.

1.9.8 Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study and based on the ways in which the data was collected, the data was analysed through the use of thematic analysis, which involves reviewing all the data to determine the common issues that reoccur, and determining the main themes that sum up and are representative of all the views collected.

1.10   ETHICAL ISSUES

This study is based on a qualitative approach, thus the researcher had to engage sincerely with the participants and enter their personal territories of values and challenges, and also had to understand the participants' perceptions of certain matters in order to collect data. The researcher therefore had to take into careful consideration the ethical issues during and after the research had been conducted. These issues include the following: acquiring ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal; obtaining a gate-keeper's letter from Mthonjaneni ward councillors; obtaining a letter from SASSA to conduct interviews with their staff before going into the field; and ensuring that informed consent was obtained from all participants.

1.11   CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

The thesis constitutes seven chapters which consist of the following:

Chapter One consisted of an orientation to the study and presented a background to the research problem, which included an outline of the motivation for and significance of the study. The research aim, objectives and questions that guide the research were also included in the chapter. A brief introduction to the theoretical framework underpinning the study was presented, which will be expanded on in Chapter Two. The qualitative research approach and the specific methods used to collect data were also examined. The chapter concluded with a consideration of the ethical issues pertinent to the study, which will be fully addressed in Chapter Four.

Chapter Two consists of a review of the literature pertinent to the research topic. The chapter will begin with a discussion of the difficulty encountered when defining poverty, a consideration of child poverty in South Africa and the government's response to the issue. A review of previous studies conducted on the CSG in South Africa will then be offered. The chapter will then discuss the theoretical framework underpinning the study namely the POSDCORB functions, New Public Management and the WPTPSD.

Chapter Three focuses on a conceptualisation of the CSG within a public administration perspective. A background to the CSG will first be provided, which includes a consideration of the legislative framework that informs the administration of grants in South Africa. The key features and implementation process of the CSG policy and programme will then be examined in greater detail. The challenges encountered in the implementation of the CSG will also be discussed.

Chapter Four presents the research design and methodology which were applied in this research study. The qualitative research paradigm and approach using a case study strategy will first be discussed. Thereafter the sampling methods and research instruments used by the researcher to collect the data will be elaborated on. The specific data collection instruments and method of analysis will then be expanded on. Lastly the ethical considerations and limitations of the study will be considered.

Chapter Five presents the data collected in the study. The data will be presented according to the main themes that emerged from the dataset. The chapter begins with a detailed account of how the researcher went about collecting data and a recap of the research

questions guiding the study. The actual data will then be presented under the following themes: eligibility criteria of the CSG; application process of the CSG; South African Social Security Agency; challenges experienced by SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality; and the use of the CSG money by primary caregivers.

Chapter Six provides a detailed analysis and discussion of the data collected in the study. The data will be discussed in terms of each of the five research questions that guided the study, and the findings will be comprehensively examined in relation to the literature that exists on the topic of the administration of the CSG in South Africa.

Chapter Seven is the concluding chapter to the study, which will provide the overall summary of the findings and will put forth the researcher's recommendations for how service delivery with regard to the CSG can be improved at SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. Recommendations for further research into this area of study will also be suggested.

1.12   CONCLUSION

This introductory chapter has examined the pertinent aspects that provide a background to and overview of the entire study. The chapter began with a consideration of the significance of the CSG in fulfilling children's constitutional rights and assisting in poverty alleviation in South Africa. This study focuses on examining the administration processes in the rollout of the CSG, and real-life experiences of beneficiaries in the Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. The aim, objectives and research questions that guided the investigation into the research topic were outlined. The qualitative research methods employed in the study to gather rich, in-depth data from the sample consisting of SASSA administration staff, CSG beneficiaries, and ward committee members were discussed. Finally the ethical considerations that were kept in mind throughout the research process were mentioned and an outline of the chapters to follow in the dissertation was presented. In the next chapter public administration and social security with specific reference to the CSG will be explored.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with an exploration of how poverty is defined in order to understand the complexity in settling on a particular definition. Thereafter, child poverty in South Africa and the government's response to the issue will be discussed. Following on from this discussion, a review of previous studies pertaining to the CSG will be offered so as to lay a foundation for the research gap that was identified and which is to be filled by this study. The theoretical framework employed in the study will then be explained by drawing from Henri Fayol's theory, as extended in Luther Gullick's theory, of administrative processes, in light of David Osborne and Ted Geaber's New Public Management (NPM), and the WPTPSD (1997).

2.2   DEFINITION OF POVERTY

Understanding poverty is important because of the scale and depth of poverty found in many developing countries, including South Africa. Poverty reduction is considered as the core of development policy-making (Francis, 2006). Numerous authors consider poverty to be a complex phenomenon (Bradshaw, 2007; Tomlinson & Walker 2009; Triegaardt, 2005). Tomlinson and Walker (2009) note that poverty leads to a great deal of stress for those who experience it, which is caused by being unable to make ends meet. Poverty also leads to social isolation and is associated with material deprivation, such as poor housing and living in an impoverished neighbourhood. They also state that poverty is a product of multiple causes and can have different interconnected short and long-term negative consequences that make life more difficult to cope with. Triegaardt (2005) defines poverty as the inability to attain a minimal standard of living, which is measured in terms of basic consumption needs such as shelter, food, water and sanitation, or income required to satisfy these needs.

Bradshaw (2007) has a similar view to Tomlinson and Walker (2009) and states that poverty, in its most general sense, is the lack of necessities. Basic food, shelter, medical care and safety are generally considered to be necessary based on shared values of human dignity. However, it is important to note that what is a necessity to one person is not equally

a necessity to others. Needs may be relative to what is possible and are based on social definition and past experience. Gordon, Nandy, Pantazis, Pemberton and Townsend (2003) also argue that poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities and a violation of human dignity. People living in poverty lack the basic capacity to participate effectively in society. They lack sufficient food and clothes for the family, are unable to go to school or clinics, have insufficient land to grow food and may also not have a job that allows them to earn a living or have access to credit. Poverty results in timidity, helplessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities.

When defining poverty, Gordon *et al*. (2003) differentiate between absolute and overall poverty, stating that absolute poverty is a condition regarded as severe scarcity of basic human needs, including food, adequate drinking water, sanitation, health, housing, education and information to allow public participation. On the other hand, overall poverty takes numerous forms including: lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable living; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited access to education and other basic services; increased disease and mortality; inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion.

From the foregoing discussion it is clear that there are many views regarding how best to conceptualise poverty. However it is evident that poverty has various causes and affects the most important aspects of people's lives; it is complex in its manifestations and multifaceted in nature. All these factors have a bearing on how society responds to and attempts to alleviate poverty.

2.3   POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Kritzinger (2012) argues in his study that there will always be poverty-stricken people in societies and that poverty eradication is just a pipe dream. He emphasises the importance of being realistic and accepting the fact that no one person, no one organisation and no government is able to eradicate poverty. He distinguishes between an individual and the world as a whole, stating that for an individual the abovementioned statements are not entirely true, because one can be born in poverty and grow up in real poverty and still manage to escape it. Kritzinger (2012) also states that the important aspect to consider is how the poor survive in their environment. Kritzinger (2012) likens his approach of poverty eradication to a bridge that must be built over a divide to enable poor people to cross over

towards a formal economy, but argues that the bridge should not be built for the poor but by the poor. In this regard, the South African government launched a social security system which aims to provide people living in poverty with a sustainable living, where they will be able to fulfil their basic needs such as nutrition, clothing, and will be able to obtain the basic services provided by government.

Triegaardt (2002) believes that social security grants are one of the major sources of poverty alleviation in South Africa. The CSG aims to reach the poorest children in the most rural areas. While Booysen (2004) found that social security grants play an important role in alleviating poverty, his study established that households that had gained access to relatively larger social grants were more likely to have improved their standard of living. His study found that the smallest of these grants, like the CSG, did not consistently aid households in escaping poverty. Triegaardt (2002) argues therefore that for social security grants to achieve their mandate certain developmental programmes should be linked to them. In that way the poor will find a way to establish themselves for a longer period of time and their dependence on the government for social assistance will be reduced.

As a developing country just emerging from a history of pronounced socio-economic divisions, alleviating poverty is of such high priority that it is enshrined within the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). Section 27(1) (c) states that "everyone has the right to have access to social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents" (Constitution of RSA, 1996: 8). The Constitution of RSA (1996: 8) further provides that "The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights". Alleviating poverty, particularly child poverty, is as such a constitutional mandate. Section 28(1)(c) of the constitution focuses on alleviating child poverty and states that "every child has a right to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services" (Constitution of RSA, 1996: 8). Since adult poverty is likely to lead to child poverty, it is worth exploring what child poverty is defined as in order to ensure that measures are put in place to deal with the issue.

2.4   CHILD POVERTY

Leatt (2006) defines child poverty as a situation where children are unable to have sufficient resources to enable them to grow up healthy and strong, to obtain education, to grow up in a

safe environment and to reach their full potential. Chirwa (2009), in a study on child poverty and children's rights of access to food and basic nutrition in South Africa, proposes that child poverty refers to a situation whereby a person below the age of 18 lacks access to what is essential to fulfil basic human needs, for example, shelter, clothes, water and sanitation and food. According to Leatt's (2006) definition, child poverty encompasses more than just simply material deprivation of income to be able to satisfy daily needs. Leatt's (2006) depiction of poverty is much broader, and takes into account: the lack of income and productive resources to support a dignified livelihood; the persistence of hunger and malnutrition; ill health; lack of access to education, housing, water, and other basic services; and lack of participation in public decision-making. Therefore child poverty is not simply about lack of income but the effects of this form of poverty occur in multiple and interrelated dimensions.

Mukudi (2009) states that a person below the age of 18 who lacks access to basic needs to be able to fulfil their essential basic human rights is classified as a poor child. Poverty therefore denies children their fundamental human rights as their basic human needs are not able to be met. Child poverty is therefore a measure of the extent to which a child is unable to realise his or her fundamental rights to health, food, education, water, sanitation, shelter and information. Since children living in poverty have fewer economic and political opportunities to improve their well-being and that of their families, poverty often affects such households the most. A report compiled by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2005) defines childhood poverty as the poverty experienced in the childhood period by children and young people, which is the deprivation of social services, including the material required to survive, develop and thrive, to be able to enjoy their rights, and to achieve their full potential or to participate within their societies as equal members.

Hall and Chennells (2011) argue that because children do not work they are not required to earn income, but instead are dependent on the earnings of adults in the households in which they live. Childhood poverty necessitates urgent attention because children are exceedingly represented among the income-poor and many encounter severe deficiency. Poverty and vulnerability harm both the quality and length of children's lives. Childhood poverty is a critical factor that leads to chronic poverty and the inter-generational transmission of poverty, and preventing poverty in childhood can thus help inhibit the entrenchment of this cycle. Chirwa (2009) argues that millions of children in South Africa bear the yoke of extreme forms of poverty and its associated evils, such as malnourishment, stunted growth,

nutritional-deficiency diseases and illiteracy. It is therefore difficult to disregard the reality of poverty in South Africa and its effects on children from poor families.

According to UNICEF (2005), poverty forms a cycle which begins with children because children will grow into future generations. Therefore if childhood poverty is not addressed and tackled, the uneducated, malnourished, poor children will become tomorrow's uneducated, malnourished and poor adults. To break the cycle, governments must provide basic tools to escape childhood poverty such as food security, shelter, healthcare, education and basic services. UNICEF (2005) proposes several strategies that can be implemented to reduce childhood poverty. One of the proposed strategies is cash transfers, which are social assistance payments to low-income families with children, such as the CSG in South Africa.

A DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2009) report argues that childhood poverty can be understood in different ways. The lack of income of the families or households in which the children live can be used as a basic understanding. This is because income enables people to access the goods and services needed to fulfill basic needs and to improve their standard of living. Poverty is closely linked to unemployment because a child living in a household with no adults employed in the workforce, compared to a child living in a household with employed adults, is more likely to experience hunger. Thus childhood poverty is an important issue that must be addressed because it is a root cause for other forms of deprivation including the ability to survive and develop, and to participate and be protected.

According to DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2010) close to 12 million children are categorised as poor in South Africa. Childhood poverty in South Africa in 2010 was estimated at 65.5% compared to the overall poverty rate for the whole population which was estimated at 52.9% (DSD *et al.*, 2010:6). Encouragingly, between 2002 and 2008 the national childhood poverty estimate dropped from 30% to close to 18% amongst all children in South Africa (DSD *et al.*, 2010: 6). However, the challenge of overcoming childhood poverty still remains and is more persistent in female-headed households compared to male-headed households. The CSG is said to play a vital role in reducing childhood poverty, as it increases access to food, education, healthcare and basic services. In 2009 the General Household Survey showed that 59% of all children in South Africa under the age of 15 years were receiving a CSG (DSD *et al*., 2010:7). Even though childhood poverty is more persistent in female-headed households, DSD *et al.* (2010) point out that children living in female-headed households are more likely to receive a CSG than children living in male-headed households.

In response to poverty and child poverty in particular, as mentioned previously, South Africa launched the CSG initiative in 1998. The following discussion consists of a review of literature on social security with specific reference to the CSG and its impact in terms of reducing poverty. This is done with the aim of understanding various aspects of the CSG, as well as to explore areas for further research.

2.5   THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT AND POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The CSG has been under scrutiny since it was introduced in 1998. This scrutiny emanates from the citizens of South Africa, civic interest groups, and researchers at large. Thus many studies have been conducted investigating the CSG in order to understand certain aspects of the policy, and whether or not it is achieving it objectives. The following section consists of a literature review, which allowed the researcher to evaluate the research that has been conducted since the introduction of the CSG in 1998 and to ascertain the gaps that exist for further research.

Some authors believe that the CSG alone does not have the capacity to alleviate poverty. Barrientos and DeJong (2004) reported on the role of cash transfers in the reduction of child poverty in both developing and transition countries. The study suggested that cash transfers are an effective tool for reducing the prevalence of childhood poverty, but that this alone will not be effective. People require investments in other basic services such as water, education, shelter, health and transport. Barrientos and DeJong (2004) further suggest that there should be appropriate policies that will allow for investments to be made by the caregivers of the children. This is because children do not work and earn income; rather they experience childhood poverty because of the background and circumstances of their households.

The main goal of the CSG is to alleviate poverty through targeting the poor, especially in rural areas. To ascertain the reach of the CSG in rural areas, Case, Hosegood and Lund (2005) carried out a study in the KwaZulu-Natal province in the Hlabisa District. This district was chosen because of the following characteristics: it is a rural area and is very poor; it has a high rate of migration; and high incidences of disease and death associated with the HIV/AIDS crisis. The study established that children living away from their mothers are at risk of not accessing the CSG. This is because of the common behaviour by most mothers of leaving their children in someone else's care without proper

documentation. Case *et al*. (2005) also found that households with more than one child are allowed to apply for the CSG for all the children in their care if there is more than one age-eligible child in the household. By the fifth year of implementing the grant, a third of age-eligible children in the Hlabisa District were being reached by the system (Case *et al*., 2005). This shows improvement in the system, because the more children reached through provision of the grant, the greater the chances of the grant alleviating poverty. However, the children in the system also stand a chance of not accessing the CSG as a result of mothers leaving their children in someone else's care.

Brynard (2006), in discussing the implementation of the CSG policy and focusing only on public administration and policy implementation, noted that there were shortcomings in the implementation of the CSG in South Africa. During 2006, the CSG was extended to all eligible children under the age of 14. Brynard (2006) however noted that when a policy is implemented it should take into account the relationship between related policies. The age policy was challenged by the Taylor Committee which recommended an extension of the CSG to all children up to 18 years of age (DSD, 2002). This was based on the Fourth Annual Economic and Social Rights Report released by the South African Human Rights Commission in 2003 (Brynard, 2006), which states that it is unconstitutional for children between the ages of 8 and 18 to be denied access to social security. Brynard (2006) also noted that the grant excludes street children because applications are required to be brought by a caregiver, and yet, as Triegaardt (2005) noted, one of the objectives for the CSG policy is to keep children off the streets and out of juvenile detention centres. The means-testing for the CSG also fails to take child-headed households into consideration; this was reported on in the previously mentioned study by Case *et al.* (2005) who found that children who do not live with their mothers are at risk of not being able to access the CSG.

Brynard (2006) identified the following problems as constraints during the implementation of the CSG: mis-targeting of the grant where assumptions are made that the funds from the CSG reach the eligible recipient; beset systems; poor management; lack of development of human resources; and inadequate infrastructure and information technology support systems. To address these challenges Brynard (2006) noted that training should be provided to all administrators assisting applicants with their applications for social grants in order to create uniformity in the process of applying for the CSG. He further suggested that the DSD should have a more cooperative and supportive relationship with the relevant departments, such as the Department of Home Affairs. A further recommendation was for the DSD to

accept alternative proof of identification instead of the identity document or birth certificate for those still at the application waiting period at Home Affairs. Brynard (2006) concluded his findings by stating that in addressing poverty, it is important for government to take full cognisance of the inter-dependence between children's needs and adult socio-economic needs. For example, in certain instances instead of the caregiver using the grant on the child's needs, the caregiver uses the grant on the household's needs such as rent, food, paying for rates and so on. This inter-dependence has a strong effect on the possibility of the policy not being able to achieve its objective.

The CSG is a policy which targets the poor; therefore the way in which it is implemented is critical as this determines the achievement of the policy's objectives. Parsons (1995) states that effective implementation requires a good chain of command and capacity to co-ordinate and control all processes and parties involved. To understand and evaluate how the CSG was implemented, Mtshali (2006) carried out a study which provided a critical analysis of the manner in which the CSG was implemented by the DSD during the period between 2000 and 2004. The findings of Mtshali's (2006) study showed that there were many problems in the way the CSG was implemented. When the CSG age limit was extended to children up to 14 years old, there were additional problems experienced, particularly with regard to capacity (organisational, material, and human resource) development. As a consequence of the increase in the number of beneficiaries, the system required upgrading in order to increase capacity development.

The CSG was implemented through a top-down approach. Anderson (1997) states that a top-down approach is a process that involves instructions being transferred to the lower levels without these lower levels having the authority to change or take decisions on implementation. Hill and Hope (2002) argue that it is a form of authoritative policy decision-making and that it ignores or restricts any policy contribution made by the street level bureaucrats, for example, the police, teachers, nurses or public administrators. Mtshali (2006) noted that the top-down approach posed a challenge to the lines of communication used in the DSD, because it did not allow for flexibility or inputs from lower levels of the department, and this affected the outcome of the policy. There was also insufficient monitoring and evaluation by the DSD. Mtshali's (2006) study showed that due to the way in which the policy was implemented the DSD lost a significant amount of money through fraud and maladministration.

Public administrators at the local level have a significant role to play in policy implementation and ensuring that the policy achieves its objectives, therefore they should be immensely involved in the whole process from planning to execution. Theodoulou and Kofinis (2004) state that public policy implementation represents a stage where a specific policy is put into action by government executives, including the respective minister, directors, managers and administrators. During this stage all relevant government departments and agencies are formally made responsible for implementation; theoretically the agencies responsible are given the requisite to ensure that the policy is carried out as intended. Hill and Hope (2002) argue that for the policy to be implemented properly and for favourable outcomes to be achieved from the policy there are several conditions that need to be met. These include: a clear set of objectives that must be established; sufficient and adequate resources must be provided; clear channels of communication must be available; and personnel responsible for managing the resources should be used. This necessitates the application of proper public administration processes that are in line with the objectives of the programme and outcomes intended.

The CSG aims to decrease poverty however there have been concerns expressed that the grant may have negative externalities. In economics this is defined as a product or decision that costs the society more than its private cost (Business Dictionary, 2015). For example, some would argue that the CSG could be the reason for the increase in teenage pregnancy. This raises the question of whether the objectives of the grant are still valid, or whether there may be individuals who are using the CSG for other motives. In 2006, a report presented by the Kesho Consulting and Business Solution in partnership with the DSD on incentive structure of social assistance grants in South Africa indicated that the international evidence actually showed that the incidence of teenage pregnancy was high in the United States and United Kingdom where benefit levels were low. Evidence showed that the increase in teenage pregnancy was in existence long before the establishment of higher benefits in the 1960's and 1970's in the United States and United Kingdom (DSD, 2008). The local results indicated that South Africa already had a moderately high teenage pregnancy rate before the CSG was introduced in 1998. Based on these results it is evident that the CSG had very little relationship with the teenage pregnancy rate in South Africa by 2006. In confirmation of these findings, a study by Hunter and Adato (2007) discovered that the issue of woman falling pregnant in order to access the CSG was strongly disapproved of by the recipients, community members and key informants in rural areas.

Makoma (2008) carried out a study which aimed to determine and to understand whether there is a link between the CSG and teenage fertility. Two methods were adopted, including a quantitative and a qualitative method. Makoma (2008) discovered that in the quantitative data, while there was an association between the CSG and teenage fertility rate, the data did not show a causal relation, therefore it could not be concluded that the CSG influences teenage fertility. From the qualitative data Makoma (2008) found that most teenagers only registered for the grant because of financial pressure in their households. Makoma (2008) also found that there were those that abused the system by receiving the CSG on behalf of children that did not reside with them, and further discovered that there were certain individuals who intentionally had more children in order to receive more money. However, Makoma (2008) established no clear evidence that links the CSG and teenage fertility rate, other than the external factors leading to the registration of the child for CSG. The studies discussed above show that there is no link between the CSG and teenage pregnancy; however it was established in these studies that because of poverty most families use the money to support the whole household and that the benefits of the CSG are not restricted to the eligible child alone.

The CSG is administered as an unconditional grant, meaning that the recipient caregivers have no obligations as to how the grant money must be spent, as this is not monitored. This raises questions as to the effectiveness of the grant in terms of whether it has any effect in improving the lives of children. Several studies have been carried out on the use of the CSG money especially in poor households. For example, in 2007 the DSD, SASSA and UNICEF endeavoured to evaluate the implementation of the CSG and to analyse the impact of the grant. Two separate studies were published in 2008 by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) which was appointed to conduct a study in low-income areas in South Africa. The first study was qualitative and targeted caregivers of children between the ages of 0–13 years, specifically in low income areas, with the objective of scrutinising the use of the CSG in poor households. The study established that primary caregivers have the power to determine how the CSG money is used. A higher percentage of women in rural or informal urban areas (57%) indicated that they partook in financial resolutions regarding how to use the CSG money than women in formal urban areas (44%) (DSD, 2008). However, this could be because most women in non-rural or informal areas in the study were the heads of their household.

The second study adopted a quantitative approach and was based on an analysis of the impact of the CSG. It aimed to provide a statistical analysis that would portray the significance of the impact of the CSG in reducing child hunger and improving school attendance, specifically in pre-school and early grades of schooling. Regarding the reduction of hunger, the findings showed that between 2002 and 2004 hunger among children decreased both for children receiving the CSG as well as non-participants. This indicates that the grant does not only have the ability to improve the life of a child who receives the grant, but also those close to the child, that is, family members. Regarding education, the results of the study showed a positive impact in the level of school attendance during the period between 2002 and 2004, and also found that the grant may assist in supporting the agricultural activities of the household (DSD, 2008).

Other researchers believe that conditions imposed on how the grant is spent have a greater effect on the CSG policy achieving its objectives, as these conditions determine the behaviour of the recipient. Fiszbein, Schady, Francisco, Grosh, Kelleher, Olinto and Skoufias (2009) state that conditional cash transfers are programs that aim to transfer cash to the poor on the condition that specified investments in human capital of the beneficiaries will be made by the household. The conditions may be with regard to health, nutrition, or education and they require proper monitoring and evaluation by the respective department. Bassett (2008) published a study on the effect of conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs in reducing child malnutrition. Under-nutrition is regarded as a serious problem and as one of the major challenges that most developing countries face. It has long term effects on the development of the child, and eventually when the child grows into an adult it affects their productivity and their contribution to the economy. Basset (2008) argues that CCT programs provide cash payments especially to poor households, who are then able to meet the specified behavioural requirements related to the beneficiaries' health, nutrition, and education. Basset (2008) states that the combination of cash transfers and conditions allows the program to boost household spending in the short-term, and also allows poor households to invest in the long-term human capital development of the child. This has the possibility of decreasing dependency, which can then contribute to the development of societies in South Africa. For example, after the children reach the age of 18 and no longer qualify for receipt of the CSG they will learn to become independent and not be dependent on government to change their lives.

Santana (2008) carried out an evaluation of the impact of South Africa's CSG on school attendance. The aim of this study was to investigate whether the unconditional CSG had impacted school attendance. The study revealed that the unconditional CSG had no impact on a child's behaviour (Santana, 2008). The study also found that cash transfer was expected to improve children's school attendance, because the cash injection improved the household's liquidity and also because the cash transfers lowered the cost associated with school expenses, for example, a school uniform. The findings of the study showed that it is easy for school attendance to improve under the CCT, as it is mandatory for the caregiver to ensure that the child is going to school if they want to continue receiving the grant. Therefore since the CSG is unconditional it may have different, unintended results. This is because the caregiver may not use the grant only on the child; instead the grant may be used on household priorities.

Some authors question the idea of whether imposing conditions on the grant in South Africa is necessary. For example, Lund, Noble, Barnes and Wright (2008) published a study on whether there is a rationale for CCT for children in South Africa. Lund *et al.* (2008: 4) argued that CCTs require a change in behaviour, and it is assumed that receiving the grant money will facilitate this change. It is also assumed that cash constraints keep the recipients either from obtaining health services or obtaining education, and that cash provides an incentive in encouraging attendance at school and improving the health status of children. In a similar vein as Lund *et al.* (2008), Fiszbein *et al.* (2009) state that CCTs are targeted to the poor and are associated with a set of conditions imposed on certain behaviour in recipient households. These are conditioned on a minimum level of use of health and education services, for the benefit of the children in that household. It may be questionable as to whether imposing conditions on the South African CSG is necessary since education (public school) and health services have been made free to all. Hulme, Hanlon and Barrientos (2012) argue that cash transfers alone cannot end poverty as they cannot work on their own. They suggest that health and education are important; therefore if cash transfers are to be made conditional the essential services must be available to all, including those living in deep rural areas, and there must be elimination of user fees to avoid people having to pay for government services with the money given to them by the same government.

On the other hand, Triegaardt (2005), when discussing the implementation of the CSG, argues that in order to effectively and efficiently implement the grant and alleviate poverty, there needs to be more inter-sectorial collaboration and that this inter-sectorial collaboration

must be managed and coordinated in all sectors. Therefore the related institution must form partnerships with related government departments. UNICEF (2005) suggests that in order to break the cycle of child poverty government must provide basic tools to escape child poverty such as food security, shelter, healthcare, basic education and basic services. Lund *et al.* (2008) state that the CSG reach has increased substantially over a short period of time, extending to children in rural areas, and that it is well-targeted for the poor. Several studies conducted regarding this phenomenon have shown that there has been an increase in school enrolment as a result of the CSG (Barrientos & DeJong, 2004; Case *et al.*, 2005; DSD, 2008; DSD, 2011).

However, the question is not whether the CSG changes behaviour of recipients, but whether the CSG administration processes are effective in alleviating childhood poverty. Close to 12 million children are categorised as poor in South Africa, and child poverty in South Africa is at 65.5% compared to overall poverty for the whole population which is 52.9% (DSD, SASSA and UNICEF, 2011). As of 2010 over 35% of South African children live in households that are income poor (Hall, 2013). Lund *et al.* (2008) argue that the CSG was initially targeted for pre-school children during the design process and that conditions were not considered. However, if it was initially intended for older children, conditions on school enrolment would have made more sense because primary school enrolment is high compared to enrolment in high school.

According to Mukudi (2009), one of the greatest tragedies of poverty is its inter-generational transmission: children who grow up in poor households tend to remain poor. Mukudi (2009) suggests that education is a weapon that can be used by societies to stop the progress of the intergenerational transmission of poverty, a true means by which children can be rescued from the family cycle of poverty. Social security, through its distributive character, plays an important role in poverty reduction and alleviation, preventing social exclusion and promoting social inclusion (Mukudi, 2009). Improving lives through social security is therefore one of the central foci of the South African government in an effort to alleviate poverty. Access to the CSG can ensure that poor and vulnerable children remain in school and enjoy their fundamental human rights, especially their socio-economic rights. However, the effectiveness of the CSG, as indicated by Mukudi (2009), largely depends on sound administration processes of the grant, to ensure that all poor children access the grant and are able to enjoy its benefits.

Neves, Samson, van Niekerk, Hlatshwayo and du Toit (2009), when conducting a study on the use and effectiveness of social grants in South Africa, discovered that social grants support consumption and improve the welfare of recipients as well as their households because the caregiver uses the money for food and groceries, transport to school, fees and clothes. Receiving the grant allows the beneficiaries to save, mostly through the use of stokvels. Since the grants in South Africa are unconditional, the results of the study by Neves *et al.* (2009) showed that the social grants are used in different ways to be able to absorb the costs of different resources needed within the household. Neves *et al*. (2009) argued against imposing conditions on the South African social grants because conditions on social grants are usually used as a mechanism for solving existing problems such as child labour or low school enrolment, which are not common issues in South Africa. In areas where there is a low level of social service provision, it is largely not because of lack of demand for the services but because of the lack in supply. Neves *et al.* (2009) suggest that imposing conditions is costly both administratively and for applicants, and that a large number of poor people will be excluded from the system if conditions are imposed. Therefore, CSG in South Africa remains an unconditional grant which unfortunately creates more chances for the CSG to be abused.

In 2010 Aguëro, Carter and Woolard conducted a study on the impact of unconditional cash transfer, specifically the CSG, on nutrition in South Africa. The aim of this study was to evaluate whether having no conditions on the CSG had any impact on nutrition. This study was done on the basis that it is commonly held that childhood malnutrition contributes to the regeneration of poverty. The study indicated that the unconditional CSG has strengthened early childhood nutrition, because the fact that there are no conditions allows for more flexibility in terms of what the money can be spent on, as needs as well as the economy change over time (Aguëro *et al*., 2010).

In 2011 and 2012 the DSD in partnership with SASSA and UNICEF carried out further studies. The first study carried out in 2011 comprised an evaluation of the CSG and consisted of a qualitative research report. The aim of this study was to provide an in-depth understanding and context for the quantitative study that would follow in 2012. In order to achieve this, the topics investigated were narrowed around the following issues: the process of CSG applications; the experience during the receipt of the grant; how and what the grant was spent on; issues concerning adolescents; and protection and early childhood development (DSD, 2011). The findings of this study showed that, in terms of access to the

grant compared to previous years when the CSG was still being phased in, most people were aware of the processes involved when applying, there were fewer documents required, and information on the procedure was well-communicated. In terms of the experience at the pay-points, the new system of CSG delivery was updated thereby speeding up the processes involved in grant pay-outs (DSD, 2011). With regards to the use of the CSG, the findings showed that the funds are not used solely on the child's needs, but because of the prevalence of poverty and unemployment the funds are diluted in the needs of the whole household. In terms of education, the study showed that most children end up dropping out or missing days of school because of economic and social reasons. This results from not having the money for school fees, not having a proper uniform and shoes, and a lack of food being provided from home that will assist with the child's level of concentration in class. With regard to health, the findings showed that there is a relationship between the CSG and healthcare services because the money is generally used to pay for healthcare for any member within the household (DSD, 2011). Even though public healthcare is free, most hospitals require fees for consultations so the grant money may be spent towards covering consultation fees. Early childhood development is very important for children between the ages of 0-6 years and the findings from the study showed that most of the money received from the CSG is used to pay for day-care and crèches, which is normally between R30-R250 per month (DSD, 2011).

In 2012 a follow-up quantitative study was carried out which aimed to assess the South African CSG using the information obtained from the qualitative study that was done in 2011. This study aimed to assess the impact of the CSG on the outcomes and interests of beneficiaries. The findings in this study showed that access to the CSG varies with age, it is high for children over the age of seven to ten years, and for infants it is generally low (DSD, 2012). This is because most caregivers face several challenges and delays in obtaining the birth certificate for the child and other related documents in order to fully qualify. In terms of the well-being and development of the children, early enrolment in the CSG system impacts positively on nutrition, health and education. Findings also showed that the CSG has a positive developmental influence on children, directly and indirectly reducing poverty and contributing to long-term developmental changes (DSD, 2012).

Coetzee (2013), when evaluating the impact of the CSG in South Africa, argued that with the rapid increase in the number of beneficiaries, there is also an increase in spending by government on the CSG, thus it is important that there is continuous evaluation of whether it

is effective in improving the lives of the targeted beneficiaries. It is suggested that the CSG increases the overall purchasing power in the household even though the grant is targeted specifically towards the children. Coetzee (2013) argued that in order to alleviate poverty the spending should be channelled away from the general items of the household and instead towards spending that will benefit the child's development. When measuring the effect of the CSG on education most studies have used school attendance as the measurement of effectiveness (DSD, 2008; Santana, 2008; UNICEF, 2010). However, in his study Coetzee (2013) used educational attainment as a measurement instead of school attendance. This was based on the notion that educational attainment would indicate the level of support offered by the caregiver and how the child's living conditions impacted on the learning process of the child. The results obtained from Coetzee's (2013) study show that there are some positive effects of the CSG on the health, nutrition, and progression of the children at school. However, the estimates in Coetzee's (2013) study were small, therefore the study did not provide clear evidence regarding whether the funds were utilised only for the benefit of the children.

From the literature discussed thus far, it is evident that the CSG has had a positive impact in addressing social service challenges, for instance, health, nutrition, and education challenges experienced by children living in poverty. The literature also suggests that imposing conditions on the CSG will yield negative results, as there are areas (especially rural areas) that still do not have access to certain social services including healthcare, proper education and basic services. There is little known about the role of public administration in ensuring that the CSG policy is well-implemented and achieves its objective, which is to alleviate child poverty.

Brynard's (2006) study established that mis-targeting of beneficiaries was a significant issue in the implementation of the CSG. This study will fill the gap in the literature regarding public administration by examining the criteria used to identify those who qualify for the CSG so as to ensure that mis-targeting does not occur. Brynard (2006) and Coetzee (2013) both found that in order to alleviate poverty, spending of the CSG should be channelled away from general consumption and the overall household needs towards spending that will benefit the child's development. This study aims to evaluate the administration processes employed by SASSA and the role of public administrators in ensuring that the objective of the CSG is achieved. Mtshali (2006) pointed out that the CSG was implemented using a top-down approach, which created challenges in the line of communication used, did not allow

for flexibility, and in turn affected the outcome of the policy. This study aims to investigate the challenges that public administrators face in ensuring the success of the grant. Makoma's (2008) study discovered that most teenagers register for the grant because of the financial conditions in their household, and there are also those that abuse it. This study will evaluate the perceptions and attitudes of the caregivers in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality towards the CSG. This study aims to address the issues identified above in order to ascertain the role of the CSG in alleviating poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality and the contribution of public administration in this regard. All the issues identified are largely related to the administration of social grants, and administration is guided by theories. Therefore public administration theories and the role that they play in ensuring effectiveness in the social security grant system will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

2.6   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Gerbers (2001) states that social security is about the translation of principles into practice, and it focuses on transforming the promise of the law into achievable results. The overall task of any social security organisation is to ensure provision of accurate and effective payment of benefits to members of the society (Gerbers, 2001). This draws heavily on public administration; therefore public administration is relevant and substantial to this research since SASSA is governed by the regulations that are disseminated by the RSA Constitution.

Public administration, according to Cloete (1992), refers to the administrative processes which must be carried out and which are inseparably linked with the functional activities of the various public institutions. Public administration is therefore not a matter of carrying out goals set by politicians in the most cost-effective manner; it is about administering policy to achieve its main objectives while fulfilling the mandate of democracy. It is every South African citizen's right to have access to social security and to be treated fairly and respected in the process of accessing social security.

This study draws on Henri Fayol's theory, as extended in Luther Gullick's theory of administrative processes, known as traditional public administration. The acronym POSDCORB is used to describe the 7 generic administrative functions of officials identified by Fayol (Agriwal & Vashitha, 2013). These 7 administrative functions will be expanded on in the section below.

28

2.6.1 POSDCORB

Planning (Policy): Du Toit and Van Der Waldt (1997) define planning as a series of functions that are used as a tool of execution to achieve certain goals. Hellriegal, Slocum and Woodman (2001) state that if planning is undertaken properly, it should assist in identifying future opportunities, anticipating and avoiding future problems, developing courses of action and understanding the risks and uncertainties associated with various options, giving the organisation a better chance of achieving its general goals.

The Constitution of RSA makes it a mandate for government institutions to adhere to Section 195 (1)(c) as part of planning, which states that public administration must be development-oriented, thus proper planning and policy-making must be undertaken. The DSD along with SASSA must therefore plan with the future in mind. The CSG only targets children under the age of 18 years; therefore there should be programs aimed at developing children while they are still in the system so that when they are no longer in the system they are able to escape poverty.

Organising: Du Toit and Van Der Waldt (1997) refer to organising as a process of establishing structures, each with specific responsibility for a particular functional area, and grouping certain functional activities and structures together. According to George and Jones (2006) organising generally follows planning and decision-making and is a process that managers use to establish a structure of working relationships that allows employees to interact and co-operate to achieve organisational goals. SASSA is responsible for ensuring that the right to access to social security is adhered to, thus the way in which functions are grouped along with personnel must all work towards the fulfilment of this right.

Staffing (Personnel): Every organisation, whether in the private or public sector, requires personnel for the right position at the right time in order to function optimally. In both sectors provision of capacitated personnel is essential for the proper implementation of policies (Cloete, 1992). Section 195 (1)(h) of the Constitution of RSA (1996) states that good human resource management and career-development practices to maximise human potential must be cultivated. It is an obligation of SASSA to ensure that the agency has capacitated staff to constantly meet the needs of the customers; this involves training, team building and job rotation. There should be no instance where customers are turned away without assistance as a result of a shortage in staff. There are also legislations that provide a

mandate for staffing, and managers are required to stay updated and to be aware of them to ensure adherence to legal developments and requirements.

Directing: Cloete (1992) states that after the policies have been developed, institutions divided into structures, and personnel allocated systematically, then work can begin. However, to ensure that everyone within an organisation in their specific unit works together in achieving policy objectives, it is important that work procedures or instructions are laid down for each task. This results in accountability, and proper implementation and monitoring of the set policies. This will lead to the achievement of the set objectives.

Control: Du Toit and Van Der Waldt (1997) define control as an administrative function, that ensures that all administrative tasks are carried out effectively and efficiently to achieve objectives. The outcome of the control process is the ability to measure performance accurately and regulate organisational efficiency and effectiveness (George & Jones, 2006). Section 195 (1) (b) of the Constitution of RSA (1996) states that efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted. Proper control ensures the fulfilment of this principle and the achievement of objectives.

Reporting: Varghese, Bharati and Srineketan (2000) state that reporting is about informing one's executive or superiors about various aspects of work, projects and programmes, and challenges encountered during implementation of programmes. This is done through record-keeping, research, and inspection and must be done in all levels within the organisation. Proper reporting allows employees to be proactive rather than reactive, and gives effect to monitoring and evaluation (Republic of South Africa Public Service Commission, 2008).

Certainly reporting has become an important aspect within government institutions and agencies especially since citizens are more aware of their rights and are thus more interested in the impact of services delivered, rather than the administration of laws. Consequently the South African government has realised the need for monitoring, evaluation and reporting in government in order to further ensure that tangible results are achieved (Republic of South Africa Public Service Commission, 2008). It is on this basis that government institutions must provide annual reports as part of the reporting mechanism to executive and South African citizens at large. Hence SASSA as an agency is required to report to the DSD, parliament and citizens.

According to SASSA's Annual Report 2012/13 the number of CSG beneficiaries grew by 3.79% from 2011 to 2013, which indicates that more South African citizens are able to access the CSG. However, the impact of the CSG cannot only be determined by the number of people accessing the grant, as intangible results are needed to determine its actual effectiveness. This is also because there may be people that abuse the system by receiving the grant on behalf of a child who does not physically reside with them (Makoma, 2008). Therefore the type of reporting SASSA does must be able to yield results of not only the quantity, but the quality of the improvement of children's lives, as this will assist in determining the impact of the grant on its receivers.

2.6.2 New Public Management

This study also draws on the managerial model of public administration known as New Public Management (NPM) proposed by David Osborne and Ted Geaber in the late 1980's. It represents a combination of dividing large bureaucracies or structures into smaller, more fragmented ones, promoting competition between different public agencies (Dunleavy & Margetts, 2006). Cheema (2005) points out that decentralisation promotes public administration and good governance through provision of institutional framework, with the aim of bringing decision-making closer to the people, and building partnerships and interactions among actors and organisations at the different levels to achieve economic and social developmental goals. NPM calls for decentralisation of authority and resources from the top-national to bottom-local levels of government. Decentralisation promotes effectiveness of public administration and governance through partnership in decision-making, increased accountability, reduced red-tape and provision of channels for local citizens to play a direct role in the development process.

Peters and Pierre (1998) argue that the applicability and effectiveness of NPM varies considerably from one country to another. Thus NPM is closely used along with Good Governance. Peters and Pierre (1998) note that government entails processes, while NPM is about outcomes. Cheema (2005) suggests that good governance focuses on the society finding ways of organising themselves as a way of promoting equality in opportunities and equity of social and economic justice for all citizens; that good governance is regarded as a value in itself, but can serve as an important means of achieving the Millenium Development Goals, for example, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.

In discussing the transformation of public administration to governance, Cheema (2005: 3) states that "[p]rinciples at the heart of good governance are participation, pluralism, subsidiarity, transparency, accountability, equity, access, partnership, and efficiency". These principles call for public institutions to reinvent themselves in order to improve the level of service delivery and to ensure that the policies implemented are successful in achieving the set objectives. Mubangizi (2011) defines Good Governance as a process of ensuring that human rights and the rule of law are respected, that democracy is strengthened and that transparency and capacity within public administration are promoted.

Mubangizi (2011) also noted that NPM is one of the important aspects with regards to poverty reduction as it acknowledges and accepts the contribution of the role players involved in service provision to the poor through partnerships and decentralisation of sub-units of government. As a result of participation between the private, public and civil sectors, participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of poverty reduction policies as well as social development programmes are promoted. NPM also puts forth the concept of Alternative Service Delivery, which involves the identification, development, and adoption of departments and agencies that would be responsible for delivering public services, rather than using the traditional, hierarchical bureaucracy (Russell & Bvuma, 2001). There is an increasing need to decentralise government as a means of improving service delivery, effectiveness and efficiency, and as a result the South African government, through the use of NPM, is continuously establishing agencies that are responsible for providing services that national and provincial departments are failing to properly execute. It is for this purpose that SASSA was created. As a government agency it is mandated to comply with the laws and policies set in place by government. The NPM model is exemplified in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997) and SASSA must uphold the *Batho Pele* principles enshrined in the White Paper.

2.6.3 The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (WPTPSD) (1997)

The policy on the transformation of service delivery was developed to meet the shortcomings within NPM. It calls on all government institutions to make service delivery a priority because "[p]ublic services are not a privilege in a civilised and democratic society, they are legitimate ones" (WPTPSD, 1997:10). The Bill of Rights, section 28(1) (c) states

that every child has a right "to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services" (RSA Constitution, 1996:8).

In line with South Africa's Constitutional requirements, it becomes important to re-arrange the public service towards a proficient and democratic instrument for executing government policies and meeting the needs of all citizens and thus the WPTPSD, 1997 was drafted. Of the eight transformation priorities set out in this White Paper, the key priority is to transform service delivery. In this respect, the government envisioned a public service that would be guided by an ethos of service and would be: committed to the provision of services of an excellent quality; geared towards development and reduction of poverty; goal and performance orientated; efficient and cost effective; consultative and democratic; and transparent, honest and accountable (WPTPSD, 1997). The White Paper adopted the ideologies of the private sector regarding customer care, which emphasises the importance of putting 'people first' by opening citizen participation channels on policy-making issues and consultation regarding service delivery concerns (Mubangizi, 2011).

Based on the fundamentals of the White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service of 1995 and the South African Constitution of 1996, the *Batho Pele* White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997 was formulated to "provide a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service delivery" (WPTPSD, 1997: 9). *Batho Pele* is an initiative to encourage public servants to be service-orientated, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit to continuous service delivery improvement. It is a simple, transparent mechanism, which allows customers to hold public servants accountable for the type of services they deliver.

It consists of the 8 *Batho Pele* principles: consultation; service standard; access; courtesy; information; openness and transparency; redress; and value for money (WPTPSD, 1997). These principles aim to improve the way in which services are delivered. *Batho Pele* calls for a shift away from bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, towards a new way of working which is better, faster and more responsive and which puts the needs of the public first. *Batho Pele* signals a dynamic process to nurture a cordial, friendly and customer-focused relationship between the public service and its individual clients (Ncholo, 2000). Each of the *Batho Pele* principles will be explained further below.

To regularly consult with customers: which involves "asking the citizens about the level and quality of public services they receive, and providing choices where possible on

services that are offered" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). Section 195(1) (e) of the South African Constitution (1996: 62) states that "[p]eople's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making". This requires public institutions to create channels for public participation and to also be able to raise concerns. For the principle of consultation, government departments, including agencies, need to ensure that consultation is taking place in one of the following manners: stakeholder and citizens forum engagements; customer satisfaction surveys in order to measure customer satisfaction; workshops and summits; road shows; *imbizos*; exhibitions; and joint management meetings with service delivery partners (Dayaram, 2010). An example of this principle would be the choice given to the beneficiary on how they would like to access their social grant (i.e. either at the pay-point or the bank) depending on what is suitable for them.

To set service standards: where "citizens are informed about the level and quality of service they receive, to ensure that they are fully aware of what they are entitled to receive" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). An example of this would be to provide notices that all beneficiaries can access, detailing the changes in time and dates of the payment of grants, as well as upgrading beneficiary information. This notice should be given well in advance to allow the beneficiary sufficient time to become aware of the changes. This is particularly important in rural areas as most beneficiaries have to travel to reach pay-points. For example, most beneficiaries in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality have to spend an average of ZAR20 in traveling expenses to town, which means that they would waste money to travel if they were unaware that the date for the payment of their grant had changed.

To increase access to services: in order to "promote equal access to services to all South Africans citizens" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). An example would be an official refusing to take the application form of the potential beneficiary, without giving the applicant any written reasons or guidance on what to do for the application to be accepted. This may be seen as denying the access to the right, and can be challenged in a court of law. These above three principles are informed by the public administration principles in the Republic of South Africa Constitution (1996: 62) Section 195 (1) (d) which states that, "services should be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias". If citizens are aware of the level and quality of services they should receive and that they have equal access, they will be able to differentiate fair from unfair treatment.

To ensure higher levels of courtesy: where "all citizens are treated with courtesy and consideration" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). Section 10 of the RSA Constitution (1996: 8) states that "everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected". This means that South African citizens should at no point accept insensitive treatment, or be turned away without being attended to or referred to the appropriate government institution for that particular service. An example of upholding this principle would be an official attending to the beneficiary with courtesy and respect. Clients want to be respected, treated as individuals and know that they matter.

To provide more and better information about services: this includes "provision of full and accurate information about the public services citizens are entitled to receive" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). Access to information in South Africa is a fundamental right for citizens and is enshrined in the Constitution. Section 32(1) (a) states that "everyone has a right of access to any information held by the state" (Constitution of RSA, 1996:9). In addition Édes (2000) states that, in every large organisation whether private or public, a professional unit is required to manage the flow of information to the citizenry, both directly and through media. For example, in South Africa most deep rural areas do not have electricity, these areas are further away from towns, and most of the citizens in these areas are not computer literate, which makes it difficult for them to access information from websites, television or radios. They may therefore be unaware of the requirements necessary to apply for a grant and may therefore come into the SASSA office to apply for a grant without all the required documents. The attending officials should therefore provide accurate information about the requirements.

To increase openness and transparency about services: by "informing the citizens about how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). Edes (2000: 2) noted that "in a well-functioning democracy it is a fundamental right of all citizens to know what their public offices are doing, the policies being pursued, and programmes they are running". Allowing citizens to understand the development of a policy makes it easier for government to build support for implementing the policy and achieving the underlying objectives. Section 195 (1) (g) of the Constitution of RSA (1996: 62) states that "transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information". However in the process of dissemination of information the differences and challenges that exist in urban and rural areas must be taken into careful consideration. An example of openness and transparency

would be to inform the public about how an agency of the government arrives at the decision of approving a social grant application.

To remedy failures and mistakes: this applies when a customer is promised a certain standard of service but this level of service is not delivered. An apology must be offered to the customer, as stipulated by the WPTPSD (1997: 15) which states that "a full explanation must be given and a speedy and effective remedy, and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response". This requires public administrators to have the spirit of *Ubuntu* and human values, which makes it easier for public servants to implement the *Batho Pele* principles and the values and principles governing public administration, enshrined in the South African Constitution. For example, if an applicant was promised that the application would be finalised within a day yet this does not happen in the specified time, a full explanation and apology should be provided.

To give the best possible value for money: this is where "services are provided economically and efficiently to ensure value for money" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). Officials should refrain from requesting clients or beneficiaries to constantly return to the SASSA offices as a result of incomplete information given. This duplicates work and results in fruitless wastage of resources. In addition it strains the clients financially as they are already experiencing financial constraints if they find it necessary to apply for a social grant (WPTPSD, 1997).

SASSA must be able to implement all of the aforementioned principles because they are interrelated and interdependent on each other. This means that if SASSA is open and transparent there will be consultation with the citizens as service users, the service users will be treated with courtesy, and adequate information will be made available to the citizens so they can have access to services they require. Furthermore, if SASSA is open and transparent the agency is more likely to meet its set service standard and if not, it can apply redress mechanisms. As a result, citizens will experience value for money in the public service (Public Service Commission News, 2013).

Social security in South Africa constitutes a large proportion of government expenditure; as a result sound administration, proper management, strict control and reporting systems are required. Therefore Fayol's administrative principles in combination with David Osborne and Ted Geaber's New Public Management theory, and the WPTPSD (1997) were used as the theoretical framework grounding this study.

2.7   CONCLUSION

From the review of existing literature, it was discovered that there is a gap in the literature regarding the administration aspect of the CSG. The preceding chapter therefore focused on a discussion of child poverty and studies that have been conducted regarding this issue in South Africa. Thereafter the administration theories that are pertinent to the study and provide a foundation for interpreting the results of the study were discussed. These are the POSDCORB administrative processes as introduced by Fayol and extended by Gullick, New Public Management and the WPTPSD, 1997. The ways in which each of these frameworks are applicable to the administration of the CSG in South Africa were highlighted, as these are to be investigated in this this study. The next chapter will explore the South African legislation that impacts on the administration of social security grants, in light of the Child Support Grant within a Public Administration perspective in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND ADMINISTRATION OF CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

3.1   INTRODUCTION

An important part of public administration is to ensure that public policies and legislations drafted by government are fully implemented and aligned to public institutions in order to achieve efficient, effective and economical use of public resources while ensuring customer satisfaction and poverty alleviation. This chapter conceptualises South Africa's CSG within a public administration perspective. It does so by first providing a background to the CSG. It then proceeds to discussing the legislative framework that informs the administration of grants in South Africa. Lastly, this chapter outlines the CSG policy and programme and the key features of this policy. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implementation process of the CSG.

3.2   BACKGROUND TO THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

The CSG was introduced in 1998 to help alleviate the poverty experienced by many children in South Africa. Leatt (2006) defines the CSG as a cash grant for children who are cared for by adults living in poverty. During the period of transition from the apartheid government to the democratic government there were intense policy-oriented activities. One of those changes was targeted towards government social welfare, because the way in which grants were previously issued did not cater for people living in poverty especially in rural areas. The Welfare Ministry in 1995 (today known as the Department of Social Development [DSD]) established the Lund Committee for children and family support. The committee was given a mandate whereby it had to: undertake a critical analysis of the existing system of social security to children and families in all departments; explore alternative policy options in relation to social security for children and families as well as other anti-poverty, economic empowerment and capacity-building strategies; and present a report giving findings and recommendations. A number of policy alternatives were derived which included, among others: to increase financial support for mainstream social welfare services; support nutrition programmes for young children; support early childhood development programmes; and develop a new cash transfer system. Developing a new cash transfer

system was one of the alternatives that was decided upon because the State Maintenance Grant was deemed unsustainable and inappropriate (Lund, 2008).

When the CSG was developed and implemented in 1998, it was decided that the initial amount that would be paid to the child would be R100, from ages 0 to 7, and the applicant had to first pass the means test. The CSG is currently a cash grant to the value of R310 per month. Considering the inflation rates and the real value of the South African Rand, the grant amount has gradually increased. The grant now covers children aged 0 to18 years. (SASSA, 2014).

During the roll-out stage of the CSG the following were required for the means test: the identity document of the applicant; a photo of the applicant; a form in which the consent of the natural parent was given to state who the caregiver will be; a birth certificate for all children under the age of seven in the household; and an immunisation card or a Road to Health Card of the child. A year after the introduction of this grant, changes were made to the requirements. The caregiver had to produce birth certificates or identity documents for everyone in the household under the age of 18 years, and the caregiver was required to prove that she or he had registered with or participated in a community development project (Lund, 2008). Most of these requirements, which were largely administrative, were unnecessary and placed the people living in rural areas at a disadvantage. A further complication experienced was that some children grew up not knowing who their parents were because some parents leave their children at a young age, which made it impossible to fulfil the requirement of obtaining consent from a natural parent. Thus even if these children were fortunate enough to have their relatives take them in, some ended up on the streets because their families were unable to access the CSG.

The CSG was mainly designed to shift racially biased welfare spending towards all children in very poor households by 30% of children and was means-tested, for example, the child had to be residing in a household with an income below a specified threshold. The threshold for household income was set at R800 for children living in urban areas and at R1100 for those living in rural areas or in informal settlements (Agüero, Carter & Woolard, 2009: 5). There were also various conditions that were put in place. In 2004 the draft regulations to the Social Assistance Act stated that a child must receive immunisation and, if of school-going age, must attend school regularly. However both these conditions were done away with as they were seen as unnecessary and impossible to implement. Five years later in 2009

amendments were made to the policy. Behavioural conditions were introduced whereby proof of the child's enrolment and attendance at school was to be produced by the caregiver every six months. Failure to do so would lead to the suspension of the CSG. Because of the implications which included limited access of the CSG by the poor, the conditions they were softened (Hall, 2011). Along with these amendments a new formula was introduced for calculating income threshold which was set at 10 times the amount of the grant. In 2009 income threshold was R2 400 per month for a single caregiver and R4 800 per month for the joint income of the caregiver and married spouse. The administration of the grant was transferred from the DSD to an agency that was created by government known as the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) which will be discussed later in this chapter.

All of these changes were necessary but have created uncertainties within the policy, its administration process and whether an agency is fit to deal with matters of the public and as a result fulfil the mandate of the social security. Triegaardt (2005) states that the CSG has four objectives which are to: ensure greater access for poor children to a combined and sustainable security system in the country; provide impartial child grants to all children in need irrespective of family arrangement or race; prevent children from unreasonably entering or remaining in statutory substitute care; and keep children off the streets and out of juvenile custody centres. Children are considered as poor because of the household background they come from that is faced with poverty. This is because children are not required to work or earn income and are therefore dependent on the income earned in the family. It is the primary caregiver that must provide for the daily needs of the child, but this is not always apparent in people living in rural areas who may be faced with unemployment. Therefore the CSG aims to close this gap by providing social assistance to children that are living in poverty. Social security in South Africa is a commitment that government made to its citizens not only to address the imbalances of the past, but also to improve the living standard of most citizens living in extreme poverty. Government made social security one of the priorities to be addressed in the country, along with education, healthcare and housing, by making it a right for everyone to have access to social security. Thus social security such as the CSG is largely grounded by South African legislations, which therefore makes it imperative that the legislations impacting on the CSG are discussed.

3.3   THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK INFORMING THE CSG

Social security provisioning, irrespective of whether it is at a national, regional or international level, is a complex undertaking. It requires efficient administrative systems, institutions and resources, for example, human and financial resources. In addition, there are rights to be respected and pertinent social security issues in South Africa which are to be protected, promoted and fulfilled by various parties which include the state as well as juristic and natural persons. In essence, South African social security provisioning endeavours are built on a plethora of legal instruments. These instruments draw largely from social legislation, for example, pure social security law, labour law, administrative law, international law and, most importantly, constitutional law.

3.3.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

The South African Constitution is the supreme law of the country, meaning any law or conduct that is not in accordance with the Constitution is regarded as invalid. Chapter 2 of the Constitution clearly expresses the role that the Constitution is expected to play with regards to social security regulation, policy-making, and administrative practice. Furthermore, the obligations imposed by the Constitution must be fulfilled. Chapter 2 of the Constitution contains the Bill of Rights, which applies to all and binds the legislative, executive, judiciary, and other organs of the state.

The Constitution of RSA provides in Section 27 (1)(c) that "everyone has the right to have access to social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants, appropriate social assistance" (Constitution of RSA, 1996: 8). The right to have access to social security can be separated into two interrelated factors; the first factor is administrative access to the grant (before), which includes means testing and eligibility criteria. This focuses on the administrative aspect of the CSG which ultimately results in the second factor being the access to benefits (after) which includes the use of the social grants. With regards to this study the children receiving the grant must enjoy full benefits of being a CSG recipient. Therefore this study aims to evaluate both of the access factors.

Section 27 (2) of the Constitution of RSA (1996: 8) states further that "the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources to achieve the progressive realisation of these rights". This upholds government's intention to address the imbalances of the past. Section 27 gives the state the right to develop or implement

legislations, and do all that is possible for the realisation of the rights stated in Section 27 (1) (Constitution of RSA, 1996). It is on this basis that the Social Assistance Act, 13 of 2004 was created along with South African Social Security Act, 9 of 2004 to be further discussed. Brockerhoff (2013) argues that the South African Constitution underpins the obligation to fulfil the rights stated in Section 27 but the state has limited resources. In this regard the realisation of the right to social security is dependent on the availability of state resources. While the government is aware that it has limited resources, it nevertheless assures the South African citizenry that government will continuously work towards the realisation of this right. Brockerhoff (2013) further states that when government chose to use the phrase 'progressive realisation', it meant that even though the government acknowledges that it has limited resources, it is nevertheless obligated to continuously improve grant accessibility in number and in range. However, 'progressive realisation' can also mean improving not only the quantity but also the quality of the social security. Part of improving the quality, number, and coverage of the social security measures requires sound administrative practices, and Section 33 (1) of the Constitution of RSA ensures that existing administrative practices promote equality with regards to provision of service delivery.

Section 33 (1) of the Constitution of RSA (1996: 9) states that "everyone has the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair" and Section 33 (2) further states that "everyone whose rights have been adversely affected by administrative action has the right to be given written reasons". The administration of the CSG is done by public officials that are responsible for the fulfilment of the right to social security. If such officials treat applicants unfairly and discourteously, this can result in a negative impact on service delivery, and can hinder the social grant achieving its objectives which are to reach the poorest of the poor and to alleviate poverty. To ensure that the administrative rights stated in Section 33 of the Constitution of RSA are adhered to, Section 195 binds all organs of the state to practice fair and equitable administrative practice by applying the principles enshrined in Section 195 (1).

Section 195 (1) of the Constitution of RSA (1996: 62) serves as a guideline for all organs of the state in all spheres, and states that "[p]ublic administrators must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution". In implementing the CSG, public officials are governed by the Constitution and the legislations of South Africa. Public administration principles also apply to public officials and must guide their behaviour and performance.

Section 195 (1) of the Constitution of RSA, 108 of 1996, further provides other principles that ought to inform public service delivery. These are:

- A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained;

- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted;

- Public administration must be development-orientated;

- Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias;

- People's needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making;

- Public administration must be accountable;

- Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information;

- Good human resource management and career development practices, to maximize human potential, must be cultivated; and

- Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation (Constitution of RSA, 1996: 62).

The Constitution of RSA is considered as influencing all other decision-making processes in the country, all laws are derived from it, and all policies are guided by it. Thus, the development of the Social Assistance Act, 13 of 2004 was one of the legislations developed by government with the aim of fulfilling the right to social security.

3.3.2 Social Assistance Act, 13 of 2004

Social grants in South Africa are regulated by the Social Assistance Act which is administered by SASSA. The Social Assistance Act provides for social grants which are direct money transfers to designated groups that are faced with challenges of extreme poverty and vulnerability (Social Assistance Act, 2004). The Social Assistance Act is grounded upon the Constitution with the aim of fulfilling the right to social security. The Act provides a national legislative framework for the provision of different types of social grants and stipulates eligibility criteria and procedures for accessing social relief of distress including the delivery of social assistance grants by a national agency. The Social Assistance Act provides procedures to be followed in applications for all grants such as

signing of forms, and the documentation to accompany the applications. It further provides the reasons and procedures for the discontinuation (lapsing) of the grant which could be as a result of a person abusing the grant, the beneficiary going out of the country, or no longer meeting the means-test, for example, a child being older than 18 years. This Act aims to ensure that there is uniformity in all institutions responsible for the administration of social grants.

The Social Assistance Act, 13 of 2004 followed on from the Social Assistance Act, 59 of 1992. In terms of the previous Social Assistance Act (1992), the provision of payment of social grants was delegated to provincial departments under the DSD. However, from the 1st of April 2006 SASSA began its operations due the failure of the DSD to properly administer the roll-out of social assistance grants. The agency was guided by the South African Social Security Act, 9 of 2004, to be discussed in further detail below.

3.3.3 South African Social Security Agency Act, 9 of 2004

The South African Social Security Agency Act, 9 of 2004 provided for the establishment of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) as a schedule 3A public entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1 of 1999. The main aim of the Social Security Agency Act (2004) is to make provision for the effective management, administration and payment of social assistance and service through the establishment of SASSA. The Act guides the day to day operations of SASSA to ensure that the agency fulfils the mandate of the Social Assistant Act. SASSA is an agency created by government to deal with the administration of social grants, a process which involves directly interacting with citizens (clients) on a daily basis to provide services. As defined in Chapter Two of this study an administrative agency is an official governmental body created by government, which is empowered to direct and supervise the implementation of a particular legislative act, in this case the Social Assistance Act, 13 of 2004. Since SASSA is a government body dealing with administration of social grants and the associated issues, it must comply with the Constitution and all other legislations that impact on social security and the rights of clients, such as the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000 which is discussed below.

3.3.4 Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000

Any public institution or organ of the state dealing with public administration must comply with the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000 known as PAJA. The Act

"gives effect to the right of the public to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and to the right to written reasons for administrative action" (PAJA, 2000: 3), as stipulated in Section 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The Act also outlines what constitutes a good code of administration. In any administrative decision taken by SASSA fair administrative action must be promoted, which includes notifying the applicants or clients about why a certain decision was taken and informing the client of the rights that they have in terms of an appeals process. The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act protects both the affected person (client) and the administrator. SASSA is also required to uphold the *Batho Pele* principles discussed in Chapter Two of this study. This directly impacts on the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000 discussed below.

3.3.5 Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000

The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000 provides for the Constitutional right of access to information held by any public or private body and is required for the exercise or protection of any rights. The Act details the procedures to be followed when making such a request for information held either by a public body or private body. This Act ensures that the applicant is provided all the necessary information from the beginning of the application process till the approval or declining of the application. The applicant must be told how and why certain decisions were taken and what other rights they have regarding the decision. This speaks to the *Batho Pele* principle of ensuring access to information for all clients accessing public services.

Accessing social security is deemed a right for every South African citizen if they are unable to support themselves or their dependents. Whether a person passes the means test or not, the Constitution of RSA (1996) stipulates that it is a right for everyone to be able to access social security, meaning that anyone is able to apply for a grant. The criteria for eligibility is then important to ensure that only those who are unable to support themselves and their dependants are able to qualify for a social grant as determined by the Social Assistance Act. To operationalise this grant, a capable institution is mandatory. Thus the South African Social Security Agency Act, 9 of 2004 was developed to guide the day to day operations of SASSA to be discussed below. A large aspect of operationalising the right to social security depends on sound administration processes, which are executed by administrators who are human beings and are therefore subject to emotions and judgement. To ensure that such emotion and judgment does not interfere with fulfilling the mandate

stated in the Constitution, the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000 was developed and implemented. This ultimately ensures that the Social Security Act, 13 of 2004 is adhered to and that the decision to approve or dismiss the application is taken based on valid reasons related to the eligibility criteria. If ever a client's application is dismissed, clear verbal and written reasons must be given and the options that the client has must be clearly communicated. If the applicant can appeal she/he must be made aware of where and whom to direct the appeal to, and what will happen after the appeal is sent. The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000 ensures that such awareness of the appeals process is executed. As highlighted in this section SASSA is responsible for the administration of the social security. This will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

3.4   PROVISION OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) is responsible for the administration of all social grants; it is thus useful to begin with a discussion of SASSA.

3.4.1 The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA)

Prior to the establishment of SASSA, the administration of the social security system was administered by the provincial departments under the DSD and was financed by the provincial legislature. SASSA was established as a result of numerous cases reported of provincial departments failing to adhere to the rules of administration law, unskilled and rude administrators, fraud and corruption and lack of uniformity in all nine provinces, which eventually resulted in service delivery backlogs in the previous social security administration (Brockerhoff, 2013). SASSA is thus a new agency that came into existence in 2004 and only started operations, administration, approval and payment of social security grants in April 2006. During 2004 the South African Social Security Agency Act, 9 of 2004 along with the Social Security Assistance Act, 13 of 2004 were signed into law. In 2006 all social security administration processes were moved from DSD offices in provinces to SASSA (Dayaram, 2010). When SASSA was established it aimed to deal directly with the administration of social grants. This was to be done with a view to ensure specialisation of technology, staff and administrative processes that would in turn ensure excellence in service delivery. Brockerhoff (2013) noted that when in 2002 the Taylor Committee was planning on developing SASSA, they called it a one-stop shop for the administration of social security where the application process would begin and end in the same place.

The current administration, management and payment of social assistance grants are delivered in terms of a four-tier system, namely, Head Office operations; Regional operations; District operations and Local office operations (SASSA, 2014). For example, Mthonjaneni Local Municipality, the focus of this study, is one of SASSA's local offices catering for six wards. The SASSA offices in all tiers of the system have the same vision and mission (SASSA, 2014).

3.4.2 Vision

SASSA's vision is to provide "world class social security services" (SASSA, 2014). This ultimately means that SASSA must provide exceptional social security services, free of error and maladministration. For SASSA to be able to reach this state, sound administration processes are required that will allow the agency not only to focus on the quantity of the access, but also the quality of the grants.

3.4.3 Mission

SASSA has a mission which is to administer quality social security services, cost effectively and timeously, using appropriate best practices by:

- Developing and implementing policies, programmes and procedures for an effective and efficient social grants administration system;

- Paying the right grant amount, to the right person at the right time and at the most convenient place that he/she may choose; and

- Delivering innovative, cost effective and efficient services to individuals, their families and community groups via multi- and easy access channels using modern technology (SASSA, 2014).

SASSA aims to "pay the right social grant, to the right person, at the right time and place. All the time (NJALO)!" (SASSA, 2015) This is an indication of the commitment to ensure access to social grants, through administration processes that leave no room for error, and which demand excellence in every process or transaction. The fulfilment of this aim draws heavily on the administrative processes employed by SASSA in issuing social grants. According to the South African Social Security Agency Act (2004), the main objective of SASSA is to ensure the efficient and effective management, administration and payment of social security grants in the country through optimal utilisation of partnerships.

The adoption of the South African Social Security Act and the Social Assistance Act by National Parliament paved the way for more professional, coordinated and consistent delivery to social grant beneficiaries. It was imagined that in the future this would result in: payment of social grants anywhere in the country regardless of where the client resides; the ability to apply for a grant at any city or province in the country; reduction of the waiting period to receive a grant outcome from 3 months upwards to one to five days; establishment of pay-points at every 5km radius; elimination of or upgrading of pay-points without proper facilities; and employment of staff that have been through security vetting processes to avoid recruiting staff members with dubious intentions (Dayaram, 2010). Despite the wishes and plans that SASSA had regarding the service delivery of social grants, the agency has still encountered challenges which will be discussed in the following section.

3.4.4 Challenges Experienced by SASSA

Certainly much progress has been made in integrating the disjointed social security systems inherited from the apartheid regime; nevertheless various administrative problems continue to hinder access to social assistance grants. This assertion is confirmed by research findings from several researchers (Brynard, 2006; Brockerhoff, 2013; Triegaardt, 2005). For example, Brynard (2006) pointed out several challenges that SASSA has been faced with which include: mis-targeting the CSG by assuming that it reaches the right beneficiary and that it is used for the development of a child; lack of uniformity with regards to means testing; and a lack of standardisation in the processes and documents required. Brockerhoff (2013) stated that some SASSA regions are still experiencing overcrowding at service points, long waiting periods for services, repeat visits by clients, backlogs in the processing of applications, lack of adequate office accommodation, and significant growth in beneficiary numbers. These challenges prohibit South African citizens from freely accessing the social security. However, when these challenges were identified in Brockerhoff's (2013) study they were generalised to all provinces, therefore this study aims to evaluate the challenges experienced by SASSA in a rural setting, with a focus on Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. For SASSA to progressively work towards the achievement of the right to social security, constant planning to improve on the existing system is required.

3.4.5 Administration Process of the Child Support Grant

To be able to deal with the challenges highlighted in the previous section, SASSA had a responsibility to come up with a new strategy which would improve social security delivery.

SASSA, in the 2011 service delivery briefing to the President and the Minister of the Department of Social Development, presented a new system which was called an Improved Grants Administration Programme (IGAP). This system aimed to improve the administration of social grants, by using an automated biometric grant payment system, and focusing the application process on the needs of the customers who are the beneficiaries of the social grants (SASSA, 2011).

Figure 3.1: Social Assistance Administration Process

(Source: www.sassa.gov.za)

Figure 3.1 above illustrates the process that is guided by the underlying Social Assistance Administrative Principles. The social assistance administration forms the heart of SASSA and focuses on all processes from the point when a customer approaches or is approached by SASSA customer service staff until benefits are terminated. Major components of this administration process are:

- Benefits administration (application management, beneficiary maintenance, internal decision reviews and enrolment) and benefits transfer (payment);

49

- Integrated end-to-end processes supported by interfaces with external databases for verification of information and an automated decision support system (Social Pension System - SCOPEN);

- Consistent review of the grants which means every contact with beneficiaries will be used as an opportunity to update beneficiary information;

- Implementation of an internal review mechanism, which will provide SASSA with the opportunity to review its own decisions, before these are taken on appeal or judicial review;

- Effective management of complaints and queries with feedback to the customer; and

- Holistic quality assurance through the implementation of approved policies and procedures (SASSA, 2011).

This process employed by SASSA aims to achieve the following:

Beneficiary Education - All customers must be made aware of and educated regarding the services they are entitled to, what is required in order to qualify, and the rights they have as customers;

Quality Assurance - SASSA must ensure that all processes are done accordingly following the policy and related legislations, to avoid cases of corruption or fraud. This also relates to value for money;

Informed Community - If beneficiaries are educated enough about social grants, this will result in an informed community, and will allow the customers or community to question SASSA if they have concerns. SASSA must be accountable to the public; and

Stakeholder Management - SASSA must constantly interact with customers and most importantly have proper record keeping (SASSA, 2011).

The above administration process is used to administer all social security grants offered by SASSA. However, customers are not the same in all the social grants. For example, the Old Age Grant is a grant for men and women aged 60 or above. They are the customers because they physically are responsible for applying for the grant, they receive it, and have all the rights to spend it on their needs. On the other hand for a CSG the customer in this regard is a primary caregiver but the grant is for a child. The primary caregiver is the one who applies,

receives, and decides how the grant money must be spent because the child is considered not mature enough to make decisions. In the previous chapter, it was suggested that government must understand that there is an inter-dependence of the child's needs and adult socio-economic needs (Brynard, 2006). This means that a primary caregiver may decide to spend the money on household needs such as food, paying for rent or paying for rates instead of using it on the child's specific needs such as school uniform, clothes or paying for school fees. Even though theoretically a child benefits from household needs being met, the child's specific needs are neglected. Furthermore the primary caregiver may initially apply for the CSG while they still live with the child, but over the course of time the primary caregiver may leave the child in another person's care while he/she continues to receive the grant on behalf of the child. Therefore this administration process does not consider the conditions that may transpire after the application process, and these conditions may seriously hinder the effectiveness of the CSG.

3.4.6 Eligibility Criteria for the CSG

According to Rosa, Leatt, and Hall (2005), a targeting mechanism is used to identify who is and who is not eligible for a grant. Eligibility for the CSG thus employs a variety of targeting mechanisms, namely means-testing, proxy indicators and progressive categorical targeting of children up to the age of 18. The CSG is targeted via two types of targeting mechanisms namely:

a.   **Individual assessment** – this mechanism is an assessment of the means or the income of the primary caregiver and his or her spouse, better known as a means test. Two threshold levels of income are set in order to target the grants at the poorest rural and urban children in South Africa. The means test thus also incorporates the use of proxy indicators of poverty such as housing or rural/urban location (SASSA, 2014).

According to the South African Government Services, to pass the means test a client or caregiver must not earn more than R37 200 per year, which equates to R3 100 per month, if a client is single. If the client is married, the income is combined and should not be above R74 400 per year or R6 200 per month (SASSA, 2011).

b.   **Categorical targeting** – this mechanism is a delineation of a category of children within a certain age group who may be eligible for the grant. The child must be under the age of 18 years, not be cared for in a state institution and live with the primary caregiver

who is not paid to look after the child. Both the caregiver and the child must live in South Africa (SASSA, 2014).

According to SASSA, the eligible children at Mthonjaneni area can access the CSG through the mother or father of the child, or through the person who is known as the primary caregiver. This is the person who looks after the daily needs of the child but who may not necessarily be related to the child.

The Social Assistance Act defines the 'primary caregiver' as "a person older than 16 years, whether or not related to a child, who takes primary responsibility for meeting the daily care needs of that child" (Social Assistance Act, 2004: 19). If the caregiver is not the child's parent, he/she must provide proof that they are indeed the child's primary caregiver through an affidavit from a police official, a social worker's report, and an affidavit from the biological parent or a letter from the principal of the school attended by the child (SASSA, 2014).

The following are required as part of the means-test in order for an applicant to qualify for the CSG (SASSA, 2014):

- The primary caregiver must be a South African citizen, permanent resident or refugee.
- Both the applicant and the child must reside in South Africa.
- The applicant must be the primary caregiver of the child/children concerned.
- The child/children must be under 18 years old.
- The applicant and spouse must meet the requirements of the means test.
- The primary caregiver cannot apply for more than six non-biological children.
- The child cannot be cared for in state institution.

In addition to the above, as part of the administration process the primary caregiver is required to provide his/her identity document when applying for the grant. This has an implied age cut-off as a person must be at least 16 years of age before they can apply for an identity document (Rosa *et al*., 2005). Therefore, children with a primary caregiver that is younger than 16 years would automatically be excluded from applying for the CSG.

3.4.7 Appeal

According to the Social Security Act (2004) Section 18 (1), if the applicant is declined access to the CSG as a result of not meeting the eligibility criteria, and disagrees with the decision, the applicant has the right to appeal. The Act states that the applicant can do this within 90 days of gaining knowledge of the decision. The applicant must lodge a written appeal to the Minister with the applicant's address or other point of contact and in this written appeal they must state clearly the reason why the Minister should change the decision. As much as the child may qualify for the grant, the caregivers need to also keep in mind that the grant may lapse or discontinue. The instances where this may occur are discussed further below.

3.4.8 Lapsing of a Child Support Grant

When considering the CSG, it is important for the clients in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality to consider that the grant may lapse or discontinue. According to the Social Assistance Act 13 (2004) the CSG may lapse as a result of the following: if the child has passed away; if the child is admitted in a state institution; when the grant is not claimed for three consecutive months by the caregiver; if the child is absent from the country; and when the child turns 18 years old at the end of the month.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Triegaardt (2005) believes that a small grant like the CSG is less likely to be capable of helping people escape poverty, but if it is well linked to developmental programmes, the poor may find a way to establish themselves for a longer period. With regards to this study it remains unknown whether SASSA has any development programmes to support the objective of the CSG. The Social Assistance Act, 13 of 2004 states that if a child turns 18 the grant will lapse, with the perception that the child has been sufficiently supported and developed to be able to escape poverty. However, from the new administration process discussed previously it is unclear as to what role SASSA actually plays to ensure that the grant is used towards the development of a child in terms of both short-term and long-term development. If for some reason the caregiver is abusing the CSG, SASSA can suspend the grant or appoint another recipient.

3.4.9 Abuse of Social Grants

Sections 1 and 2 of the Social Assistance Act 13 (2004) state that if SASSA, within reasonable grounds, suspects that the beneficiary, parent, or a primary care giver is abusing

the CSG the agency has the legal right to appoint a person to investigate the matter. Another word for abuse is misuse and in this regard misuse of the CSG would be using the grant money for other purposes and not on the development of the child. The Act states that if it has been discovered that abuse of the grant has indeed taken place, the agency may appoint another person to receive the CSG on behalf of the beneficiary and the grant must then be used for the benefit of the beneficiary.

According to the administration process discussed in this chapter there is little emphasis placed on ensuring that the CSG is used for the development of the child. This raises concerns in terms of the primary caregiver abusing the grant and getting away with it, since there is no clear strategy that SASSA uses to track whether the grant is being misused. As a result of the lack of a proper tracking process, whether a child who is the rightful beneficiary actually does access the money received by the grant remains unclear.

3.5   CONCLUSION

Since 1994, the government has been trying to overcome the historical factors that were responsible for underdevelopment that led to poverty, inequality and many other oppressive human factors. Social grants emerged as one of the most significant ways of alleviating poverty in South Africa. The administration of the CSG by SASSA is firmly grounded by legislative mandates and is delivered within the prescripts of clear policies. The implementation of the CSG is steeped in the New Public Management Model and, at least in theory, is administered through clear processes and guidelines employed by SASSA as the implementing agent. Needless to say, the sound administration of these grants is a necessity in fulfilling the intended ideals of the CSG. Mal-administration would have detrimental effects on the efforts to alleviate child poverty especially in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality, which is a rural area. It is against this backdrop that this research was conceptualised. The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the current CSG administration process employed by the DSD through SASSA as the implementing agent in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. In the next chapter the research design and methodology used in this study will be discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to understand the role of public administration processes adopted in the administration of the CSG towards it achieving the government's objective which is to alleviate household poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. This chapter will introduce the research design and methodology adopted in the study. Firstly, the paradigm and approach adopted in the study will be discussed. Secondly, the case study design adopted in this study will be explained and the sampling methods and research instruments used to collect the data will be elaborated on. The chapter will then discuss how the data collected was analysed using the thematic data analysis method, and the triangulation and ethical issues relevant to the study will be considered. Lastly, the limitations to the study will be identified and discussed. Research methodology is important in research as it assists a researcher to answer the main questions and to meet the objectives of the study by understanding the most suitable method for the study.

4.2   RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to Wahyuni (2012), the research paradigm adopted in a study aims to address the philosophical dimensions of social sciences. It can be seen as the collection of assumptions and beliefs directed to how people perceive the world, which in turn provides a thinking framework and guides the researcher's behaviour. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) define the term 'paradigm' as a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts, and propositions that position the thinking and research. The theoretical paradigms discussed in this section are the positivist, constructivist, and transformative paradigms.

4.2.1 Positivist Paradigm

Dash (2005) states that the positivist paradigm focuses on exploring social reality; it emphasises observation and creating reason in order to understand human behaviour. The positivist paradigm would suggest that true knowledge is built on the experience of the senses and can be attained through observation. Positivistic researchers use scientific

methods to generate knowledge. Mertens (2005) argues that positivism may be well-applied to the social world on the assumption that the social world can be studied in the same way as the natural world, that there is a method for studying the social world and those explanations of a causal nature can be provided. Positivism regards human behaviour as submissive, well-ordered and determined by the external environment (Mertens, 2005).

4.2.2 Constructivist Paradigm

According to Cohen and Manion (1994) a researcher who employs the constructivist approach to research aims to understand the world of human experience in terms of the belief that reality is socially constructed. Creswell (2003) argues that this approach relies on the participants' views of the phenomenon or situation being studied, and that their own background and experiences have an impact on the research. In addition, Kaplan and Maxwell (1994) argue that constructivist research does not predetermine the dependent and independent variables, but stresses the full complexity of human sense-making as the situation emerges. The constructivist researcher aims to explain the reasons and meanings that are the basis of the individual's social action. The researcher in this approach can use qualitative data collection methods or mixed methods.

4.2.3 Transformative Paradigm

Cresswell (2003) states that transformative researchers believe that investigation should be associated with politics and a political agenda, and that it must contain an action agenda for change, that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions where the participants work or live as well as the researcher's life.

This study adopted a constructivism paradigm. This paradigm gives the researcher a greater possibility to address subjects of inspiration and impact, and ask questions such as what the CSG is used for and if it were to be cancelled how would that affect beneficiaries. The constructivist paradigm allows the researcher to be able to understand the experience that the participants have with the CSG, be it the administrators or the beneficiaries, from their own points of view. The constructivist paradigm addresses important features of shared meaning and understanding, and is concerned with the knowledge created and interpreted (Cohen and Manion, 1994). For the aim of this study, the individuals' cultural contexts are considered as this influences their subjectivity based on their previous experiences and understanding. Therefore the researcher positioned herself as a researcher within the

parameters of a constructivist paradigm, and the data was collected through the use of a qualitative approach.

4.3   RESEARCH APPROACH

Creswell (2014) states that research approaches serve as plans and procedures for the research, as the approach narrows down the broad assumptions to specific details such as data collection methods, analysis, and interpretation. There are three approaches to research; it is the onus of the researcher to select the most relevant and appropriate approach before the commencement of the research. These approaches include quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method approaches. According to Lynch (1983) the quantitative approach means the systematic empirical investigation of quantitative properties and phenomena and their relationships. Hughes (2006) also suggests that the quantitative approach is concerned with the collection and analysis of data in numerical form. Creswell (2014) defines the quantitative approach as an approach adopted to test theories through the examination of relationships among variables that the researcher seeks to know.

The qualitative approach on the other hand, according to Silverman (2000: 15), "explores people's lives and everyday behaviour, and it provides a deeper understanding of social phenomena than quantitative data. Qualitative approach seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspective of the local population it involves". Mixed methods research consists of the combination of both the elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research. Creswell (2014) argues that the combination of approaches allows the researcher to have a more complete understanding of the research problem than using either of the approaches individually. For the purpose of this study a qualitative approach was adopted in order to explore the phenomenon under study, which is explained in the following section.

4.3.1 Qualitative Research Approach

As mentioned above, a qualitative research approach aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Silverman (2000) states that the qualitative approach is particularly effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours and social contexts of particular populations. Qualitative research is widely regarded as field research because it includes the researcher physically going to the field to collect the data through

observations and recording of events and behaviour in their natural settings (Fetterman, 2010). In the qualitative paradigm the researcher is able to interact with participants under study by observing their interaction and behaviour in their natural environment. Kindon, Pain and Kesby (2007) argue that the main strength of qualitative research stems from the fact that an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study can be obtained. In addition, the qualitative approach also allows for flexibility because the field research plan can be modified at any time (Creswell, 2014).

Specifically, this study used a qualitative research approach because it allowed the researcher to discover the 'what' and 'how' behind the administration process of the CSG and its role in alleviating poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality rather than 'how many' or 'how much', which are answered by quantitative methods (Patton & Cochran, 2002). Furthermore, qualitative research allows researchers to use the language and behaviour of the study population. In addition, qualitative research can generate new insights for understanding a phenomenon from the view of the insider and allows the researcher to grasp the significance of the local situation (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). However, for a qualitative research approach to be well-implemented it needs a design to assimilate different elements of the study in a logical manner. In this regard, a descriptive research design was employed to ensure that the research problem under study was effectively addressed, which is discussed in the following section.

4.4   RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design can be perceived as the rationality of a study that guides how the research will be conducted. It portrays how all of the important sections of the research will flow together with the aim being to answer and address the research problem. It can also be perceived as actualisation of reasoning in a set of processes that enhances the validity of data for a given research problem (Mouton, 1996). According to Mouton (1996), the research design serves to plan, structure and execute the research to maximise the validity of the findings. It provides directions from the underlying philosophical paradigm to the research design and data collection. In addition, Yin (2003) states that a research design is a plan of action for getting from where one is to where they wish to go, where the initial point is the primary set of questions to be answered and the destination is the set of conclusions or answers. For the purposes of answering the research questions and objectives in this study, a

case study design or strategy was employed. The case study strategy will be discussed more fully below.

4.4.1 The Case Study Strategy

A case study is one of numerous ways of conducting research in the field of social science or in socially related investigations because the approach intends to understand human beings in a social context by interpreting their actions as a single group, community or a single event: in other words, a case. Gillham (2000) describes a case study as an analysis used to respond to the research questions which pursue different evidences from the case settings. Yin (2003) defines a case study as an experimental analysis that investigates a modern phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the limitations between phenomenon and setting are not clearly defined. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) argue that the case study approach is very valuable in circumstances where contextual surroundings of the event being studied are critical and where the researcher has no power over the events as they happen, and the main defining features of a case study are the multiplicity of perspectives which are ingrained in a specific setting.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), the case may be seen as a program, an event, or an activity constrained in time and place. A case study examines a case over time in detail, employing various sources of data established in the setting. All the collected confirmations are organised to arrive at the best probable responses to the research questions. As a result the researcher may achieve a sharpened understanding of what exists, and what might become imperative to look at more extensively in future research. According to Yin (2003) the case study approach uses multiple methods of data collection such as interviews, document reviews, direct participant and observations, which allows 'thick descriptions' of the phenomena under study; it involves observing the data in rich details of the case, interpreting in order to understand the structure the social world (Durepos, Mills & Wiebe, 2010). The 'thick descriptions' provide the researcher access to the refinements of changing and multiple interpretations.

Given the interpretive/constructivist paradigm adopted in this research and the nature of the research question, the case study methodology was adopted because of the view that it is the most suitable approach to employ because it affords the researcher a systematic way to collect and analyse data, report the results, and thus understand a particular problem or situation in great depth.

4.5   RESEARCH SETTING

The setting is important in qualitative research. Holloway and Wheeler (2002: 32) argue that a setting comprises the "environment and conditions in which the study takes place as well as the culture of the participants and location". The setting of this study is Mthonjaneni Local Municipality area. This municipality forms part of the category C local municipality, which means that it shares the municipal executive and legislative authority in the area with the district municipality, as per the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), section 155. It is situated on the northern coastal region of KwaZulu-Natal, under UThungulu District Municipality. It is made up of the following areas: Kwayanguye; Entembeni; Melmoth; Ekuthuleni; Kwamagwaza; and Ndundulu. Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is considered as a rural area with high levels of poverty and unemployment and a lack of service delivery. It has a population of 47 818, and an unemployment rate of 28.5% (Statistics South Africa.gov.za, 2011). This area has a backlog of social services and infrastructure especially in the deep rural areas, for example, Entembeni, Kwayanguye, Ekuthuleni, Kwamagwaza and Ndundulu. There is a high need for the provision of social services such as water and sanitation, housing, electricity, adequate roads, schools and clinics. The researcher selected Mthonjaneni Local Municipality because it is not an urban area, where there is easy access to social services, government departments and municipal offices. The SASSA office, Home Affairs office, Municipal office, and South African Police Service office are situated in Melmoth Town which is the commercial centre for Mthonjaneni Local Municipality, meaning citizens in the surrounding areas have to travel to this town in order to access the services provided by these institutions. Mthonjaneni Local Municipality was also chosen because it is faced with a high rate of unemployment, thus people in this area depend largely on agriculture and the government for survival, which may be through the provision of social services and social grants. The study therefore focused only on the citizens within Mthonjaneni Local Municipality as elaborated below.

4.6   TARGETED POPULATION

The targeted population for a study is defined as the total quantity of units which can be grouped together; these may include individuals, artefacts, events or organisations (Parahoo 1997). Burns and Grove (2003) describe a target population as the number of units consisting of all the features that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study. They also define population criteria as a list of certain features that are essential for membership in the target

population. In this study the population was selected from the Mthonjaneni Local Municipality using the population criteria. The area, as mentioned above, was selected because it is regarded as a rural area faced with a backlog of social services and infrastructure. A large number of people in this community are unemployed, which is likely to result in household poverty which ultimately affects the core wellbeing of the household members. Therefore the criteria for inclusion used in this study were:

- Public administrators of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) in Mthonjaneni local office;
- Primary caregivers of the Child Support Grant beneficiaries;
- Ward committee members in this municipality.

4.7   SAMPLING PROCESS

Polit and Hungler (1999) define a sample as a section of a population. During the process of conducting research, it is impractical for the researcher to study the whole targeted population, especially for an in-depth qualitative study. For example, this study explores the administration of the CSG in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality, which requires responses from administrators, primary caregivers and ward committee members. It would be virtually impossible to study every single person that fits the population criteria because this would constitute a very large number of people. According to Gerrish and Lacey (2010) a sample is a subset of a target population, normally defined by the sampling process. In other words, a sample is a subset of the population being studied. A sample therefore represents the larger population and is used to make interpretations about that population. A sample is largely used in order to collect information regarding the population without studying the entire population (Littwin, 2002). The sample in this study was selected from Mthonjaneni Local Municipality using the above population criteria. Different methods were used to select samples which are demonstrated in the following section.

4.7.1 Sampling Method

Latham (2007) defines the sample method as taking a representative selection of the population and using the data collected from the selected participants as research information. Burns and Grove (2008) state that sampling is a method of choosing a group of people, events or behaviour with which to conduct a study. Lawrence, Botan, and Kreps (2000) define a sample as a subgroup of a population. Polit and Hungler (1999) confirm that

during the process of sampling, a section that represents the entire population is selected. It is a process of obtaining or accessing the population by enhancing only a part of it. In general, sampling is categorised into two overall methods, being the probability sampling method and the non-probability sampling method. In the probability sampling method every unit of the population has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample (Lawrence *et al*., 2000). On the other hand, non-probability sampling units for the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher. This is also known as purposive or judgmental sampling (Latham, 2007).

The non-probability sampling method was used in this study. Coyne (1997) describes non-probability, or purposeful sampling, as a method where the researcher purposefully selects the participants to include based on the needs of the study, and every person who meets the criteria is asked to be a participant. The underlying principle for choosing this sampling method in this study is that the researcher aimed to gain knowledge from: the caregivers of the children receiving the CSG as they were able to provide information based on their experience and perceptions regarding the CSG; public administrators of SASSA who provided the practical information regarding the application of the public administration process at the local level; as well as the ward committee members who shared their perceptions and realities that exist in this local municipality as they interact with the beneficiaries.

To identify eligible participants for each category, different sampling techniques were used. To identify the beneficiaries a snowballing sampling technique was used, which is also known as a chain referral. This technique is used in cases where the population of interest cannot be identified other than by someone who already knows a certain person who has the necessary experience or characteristics to be included (MacNealy, 1999). In this technique participants or informants contact has already been made use their social networks to refer the researcher to other people who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study (Henry, 1990). The adoption of SASSA as an agency to administer social grants was done in order to enable all South Africans in any province to be able to apply for the grant anywhere in the country. The number of beneficiaries in the local office of Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is not specific to the area. In addition people in this area do not easily disclose to anyone that their children receive the CSG. The reluctance of people to openly disclose that they receive the CSG meant that the snowballing technique became a useful method for

the researcher because once one person was identified then it was likely that they knew another person who received the CSG and so on.

To identify the public administrators at SASSA and the ward committee members, quota sampling was used. This sampling technique is largely based on access, convenience, and visible relevant characteristics. This technique was selected in this instance because it was easier to identify the administrators since they are collected in one place, namely the SASSA office, and are well-known in terms of their occupations and the work that they do in the SASSA office in the area, as compared to beneficiaries of the CSG in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. The same can be said for the ward committee members as they are also well-known in terms of their occupations and roles in the area.

4.7.2 Sample Size

Holloway and Wheeler (2002) state that sample size does not impact the position or quality of the study, and they also note that there are no procedures in creating a sample size in qualitative research. Qualitative researchers do not usually know the quantity of people in the research beforehand; the sample size and type may alter during research. Sampling goes on until a target has been reached, for example, until more information has been generated (Holloway, 1997). Babbie (2007) defines this as data saturation, where a researcher is in that stage of the process of data collection when there is no new or relevant information surfacing from the study being conducted. Researchers therefore consider saturation as the stage at which no more data need to be collected.

The targeted number of participants for this study was 45, including the following: 30 primary caregivers of the CGS beneficiaries; 10 SASSA administrators; and 5 ward committee members. However, during the process of the data collection the researcher reached a saturation level with the primary caregivers, where no new information was emerging from the study. The researcher also discovered that only 8 administrators in SASSA at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality actually deal with the administration of the social grants, and because of the lack of availability of the ward committee members the researcher was only able to interview 3 ward committee members. Overall the total number of participants was 39 made up of: 28 primary caregivers; 8 grant administrators; and 3 ward committee members.

4.8   REFLEXIVITY

Sandelowski and Barroso (2002) explain reflexivity and reflectivity as a symbol of excellent qualitative research as it entails the process where a researcher acknowledges and takes into account the various ways that they may have influenced the research findings, and what can be accepted as knowledge. Reflectivity is categorised as a persistent movement between being in the phenomenon and stepping outside of it, and is defined as "the process of stepping back from an experience, to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences" (Ben-Ari & Enosh, 2010: 10). The researcher fully understood the importance of validity and reliability in this study and thus reflected on who she was as an individual involved in the study. The researcher was born in one of the townships known as Thubalethu, under Mthonjaneni Municipality area where the study was conducted. This afforded the researcher an opportunity to conduct the study successfully because being from Mthonjaneni Local Municipality allowed the researcher some confidence to approach the participants with regards to the phenomenon under study. The researcher was also able to create relationships with the SASSA administrative staff as well as the ward committee members, which facilitated trust between the researcher and participants.

Having grown up in the area and having lived in this rural area that is faced with poverty influenced the researcher's reflexivity. The researcher had to be aware that it would be difficult to stay neutral in the process of conducting the study. To constantly be aware of the possible impact of the researcher's background on the study, the researcher employed a reflexive strategy that permitted her to be mindful of her inner self and other influences that would impact on the research process, particularly the data collection, analysis, conclusion and reporting. The researcher kept a notebook with her during the process of data collection as part of retrospection. The notebook contained the main aim of the study, as well as the objectives and broad questions to be answered. This allowed the researcher to stay mindful of the influences, and maintain a neutral position in order to carry out more valid research. Reflexivity allowed the researcher to think carefully about the research process and how her own dispositions would affect the study in order to avoid bias.

4.9   RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

According to Seaman (1991), data collection instruments can be referred to as devices used to collect data such as questionnaires, tests, structured/semi-structured interview schedules and checklists. Polit and Hungler (1999) define a questionnaire as a method of assembling information from participants about attitudes, knowledge, beliefs and feelings. The aim of this study was to gain deep understanding of the role of administration processes employed in the CSG programme in alleviating poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. This involved more than just a description of the phenomenon. Thus, the study adopted qualitative research instruments to give clear structure to the data collection in line with addressing the research problem and to provide more in-depth understanding of the topic from the participants' points of view.

In a qualitative approach data collection involves direct interaction with individuals on a one on one basis or in a group setting. The main methods of collecting data in a qualitative approach involve the following: literature search, individual interviews, focus groups, and observations (Hancock, 2002). A literature search is considered one of the quickest ways to conduct research; it involves a search through online sources, newspapers, magazines, academic literature or published statistics (Patton & Cochran, 2002). This study employed individual in-depth semi-structured interviews, observations, and focus groups to obtain data. These data collection instruments were selected to facilitate the process of data collection regarding the administration process applied in the CSG programme. The main reason for selecting these instruments was that they allowed the researcher to gain deeper insight into the participants' views and experiences of the research phenomenon, which is in line with fulfilling the aims of understanding the administration process of the CSG.

The process of this study began with observations at the SASSA office in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. Thereafter in-depth interviews with the SASSA administrators, the primary caregivers and ward committee members were conducted. This was followed by the focus group interviews with primary caregivers to clarify issues that emerged from the individual interviews (see Appendix G for interview schedules).

4.9.1 Observations

Observations are a technique that can be used when data collected through other means can be of limited value or difficult to validate (Hancock, 2002). Patton and Cochran (2002) state

that in order to fully understand the complexities of many situations, direct participation in, and observations of, the phenomenon of interest can qualify as a beneficial research method. Observational data is also useful in overcoming discrepancies between what people say and what they actually do and this might help the researcher uncover the behaviour of the participants themselves. As part of the observations conducted in this study, the researcher had the field notes taken during the researcher's first visit to the SASSA local office in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. The observations were only conducted at the SASSA local office under Mthonjaneni Local Municipality; this involved observing the daily operations at SASSA, and the administrators' behaviour towards applicants. The researcher chose to only observe the local office in order to be able to understand the daily operations at this office as well as the setting, to ascertain their effect on CSG access.

4.9.2 Interviews

Interviews portray everyday conversations, although they are fixated on the researcher's needs for data. They differ from everyday conversations because the researcher is concerned with conducting them in a most subjective way in order to ensure reliability and validity (Patton & Cochran, 2002). Hancock (2002) states that there are different types of interviews: highly structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews. A structured interview consists of the interviewer asking each respondent the same questions in the same way and a tightly structured schedule of questions is used, very much like a questionnaire. A semi-structured interview involves a series of open-ended questions based on the topic areas the researcher wants to cover. These types of open-ended questions allow the interviewer and the interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. A semi-structured interview schedule also allows for freedom for the researcher to request the interviewee to elaborate on the initial reply or follow a line of inquiry introduced by an interviewee. Unstructured interviews are usually referred to as in-depth or depth interviews because there is minimal structure. The interviewer starts the interview with the aim of discussing a narrow number of topics, sometimes one to two, and structures the question on the basis of the interviewee's preceding response.

Semi-structured interviews which constitute in-depth interviews were deemed appropriate to collect the data with regards to the phenomenon under study. This type of interview was used in this study to ensure that the data collected was focused and rich. During the process of the interviews, the researcher first introduced herself to the participant, explained what

the aim of the research was, and if the participant approached at that time agreed the researcher then obtained consent from them. 39 individual interviews were conducted, made up of 28 primary caregivers, 8 SASSA administrators, and 3 ward committee members. The in-depth interviews were held between November 2014 and January 2015.

4.9.3 Focus Group Interviews

Focus groups consist of a small number of individuals grouped together to have a conversation about the same topic of interest. The discussion is directed by a moderator who is in the room with the participants. Focus groups can be useful to obtain a certain type of information or when circumstances would make it difficult to collect information. The primary advantage of a focus group is that they are more interactive in nature; there is also a snowballing effect whereby a comment by one can trigger a chain of responses from others (Hancock, 2002). The focus groups in this study were conducted with the primary caregivers only, to gain an understanding of the experiences of the primary caregivers during the application process. The researcher did this to obtain information regarding aspects of the questions that were not made clear during the one on one interview. The researcher had difficulties in finding a time where the primary caregivers were all available to come to the interview in one place during the same time. This led to only one focus group interview being conducted, which was made up of 5 participants. The researcher had to obtain informed consent from all participants, the discussions lasted for 45 minutes and discussions were recorded and notes were taken.

Results obtained from the observations, in-depth and focus group interviews were compared to ascertain if related or similar results were found. The findings from these data collection instruments were similar, therefore validity was achieved. Data collected from the research instruments discussed above were analysed using thematic analysis which will be discussed in the next section.

4.10   DATA ANALYSIS

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define qualitative data analysis as a process of collecting data, organising, separating them into controllable units, coding, combining, and creating patterns. The aim of this approach is to analyse data in order to ascertain patterns, concepts, themes and meanings. In case study research, Yin (2003) argues that there is a requirement for searching through the data to find 'patterns' which may describe or identify fundamental

links in the data base. During this phase, the researcher firstly focuses on the entire data, then tries to separate it and re-build it again more meaningfully. Categorising allows the researcher to make evaluations and distinctions between patterns, to reveal certain patterns and complex threads of the data intensely and make logic of them.

For the purpose of this study and the way in which the data was collected, the researcher analysed the data through the use of thematic data analysis, which involves looking across all the data to identify the common issues that reoccur. In order to identify the main themes that summarise all the views collected codes were created (Patton & Cochran, 2002). The process of coding enabled the researcher to establish the relationships between the collected data and the broad aim of the study. In so doing, the researcher was able to identify main themes and sub-themes in a simple format. Therefore, the analysis of data took place during and upon completion of data collection and triangulation was also considered.

4.11   TRIANGULATION

According to Mathison (1988), good research practice obliges the researcher to triangulate, which means to use various methods and data sources to improve the legitimacy of research findings. Irrespective of which philosophical, epistemological or methodological standpoints a researcher is drawing on, it is important to utilise various methods and sources of data in the roll-out of a study in order to avoid biases. Triangulation is normally considered to be a tactic for refining the validity of research or assessment findings, thus triangulation is expected to back up the findings by presenting the independent measures which agree with it or, at least, do not contradict it (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Yin (2003) states that triangulation emerged because of an ethical need to sanction the validity of the methods and in case studies this can be accomplished by using several sources of data such as participant observation, focus groups and member checking in order to collect numerous viewpoints on the same issue in order to achieve a more complete understanding of the phenomenon. Triangulation is used to equate data to decide if it corroborates and validates research findings. It is one of the most vital ways of improving the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings (Creswell, 2003; Patton & Cochran, 2002).

Triangulation is an important approach that was used to assess the results of this study. Individual interviews were conducted with all participants involved in the study. Another

method used was a focus group interview with the caregivers receiving the CSG, and observations at the SASSA office, which included field notes. The outcomes of the interviews were triangulated with focus groups and observation to ensure validity in the responses given by the participants, especially the beneficiaries and administrators of SASSA. Thus the triangulation process was done at various levels of collection of data.

4.12   ETHICAL ISSUES

This study is qualitative thus the researcher had to relate deeply with the participants and had to enter their personal territories of values, challenges, lifestyles and the like to collect data. Therefore, the researcher considered the ethical issues during and after the research had been conducted. These issues include some of the following. Firstly, ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal was obtained before going into the field (see Appendix A). Gate-keepers' letters were obtained from three ward councillors in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality (see Appendices B and C). Informed consent was obtained from participants during the individual interviews and focus groups to ensure that the participants were fully aware of what the research involved. The researcher ensured that the participants were not to be harmed or placed at risk in any way, and that their privacy and confidentiality was protected by not revealing their identities at any point of the research process. This was guaranteed through a consent form to be signed by the researcher and the participants (see Appendices E and F). In addition, permission to conduct interviews with the SASSA administrators in the Mthonjaneni Local Office was obtained from the provincial office in Pietermaritzburg (see Appendix D).

4.13   LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations which may impact on the external validity of the study. In terms of the design of open-ended questions, these open-ended questions presented a slight difficulty in that respondents did not understand the questions in the same way and some participants, in particular the caregivers, were less interested in fully answering the questions; thus they provided vague responses which proved unusable. This resulted in the researcher going back to the field to conduct one-on-one interviews with new respondents.

The findings from this study may not be applicable in other areas especially urban areas. It is important to note that people in urban areas have far more easy access to government

services compared to people living in rural areas. However, the findings of this study can be largely applied in most rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal, because the challenges they encounter may be similar. The findings of this research will provide insight into whether the administration processes employed in the CSG are effective in helping to alleviate poverty in rural areas.

4.14   CONCLUSION

This chapter has explained the research paradigm/theories, research methodologies, strategies and design used in the study, including the target population and sampling, data collection tools and analysis methods, and data credibility issues. The research design for this study is descriptive and uses an interpretive/constructivist case study strategy. Data was collected by means of a qualitative approach using individual interviews, a focus group interview and observations. The researcher understood the importance of ensuring that the data is valid, thus the chapter addressed the issues of triangulation by discussing the measures that were put in place to ensure that the data collected from all the research instruments were consistent. The data was analysed using a thematic analytical method. Examination of the data collected, data analysis and data presentation from the respondent's interviews, focus group and observations follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to explore the role of administration processes of the CSG in alleviating poverty at a household level in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. In the preceding chapter the research methodology used in this study was discussed. This chapter presents data collected from SASSA administrators, primary caregivers and ward committee members. A qualitative approach was adopted in the study, therefore in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and observations were conducted to collect data to address the research objectives. The data collected was analysed manually by the researcher using thematic data analysis. This chapter presents a discussion of the research process followed by the researcher. It then gives a brief presentation of the demographics of the respondents, followed by a recap of the research questions that guided the study. Lastly a detailed presentation of the data relevant to each of the objectives of this study is given.

5.2   RESEARCH PROCESS

The researcher had to obtain permission to conduct the research from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) Research Office before commencing with the data collection. As part of maintaining ethics, during the data collection process all respondents had to read, understand, and sign the consent form (See Appendix E). The collection of the data occurred over three (3) months and took place between November 2014 and January of 2015. The researcher first had to introduce herself to the respondents and explain the main purpose of the study. The researcher explained to the respondents the issues of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. After the respondents agreed to be part of the study, the data collection process began.

A non-probability sampling method was employed to identify respondents for inclusion in the study, where a quota sampling technique was used to identify the SASSA administrators and a snowball sampling technique was used to identify the primary caregivers and ward committee members. The SASSA employees were selected for inclusion in the sample to share their roles and responsibilities with regard to the administration of the CSG. The

primary caregivers were selected so that the researcher could gain an understanding of their experiences during the application process for the CSG as well as after this process when they begin receiving the grant. Ward committee members were selected on account of their knowledge of the CSG and their role as community leaders so that the researcher could ascertain their perceptions towards the grant.

All the in-depth and focus group interviews were recorded using an audio recorder. The researcher was also responsible for facilitating the interviews, operating the tape recorder, and taking notes during the interview sessions. A total of thirty nine in-depth interviews were conducted with the SASSA employees, primary caregivers and ward committee members; while one focus group discussion was held with a group of five primary caregivers. The researcher had difficulties getting all the primary caregivers to participate in the focus group and most of them declined because of their fears regarding the protection of their privacy and confidentiality, as well as time constraints. Observations were only done at SASSA offices only. The main purpose of utilising these tools for data collection was to gather data that would be relevant to providing an understanding of the role of public administration processes in alleviating poverty through the CSG. All the respondents' responses were transcribed, coded and categorised into the following themes: grant access; application process; SASSA; challenges and opportunities; the use of the CSG money; and monitoring the CSG. The data relevant to all of the six major themes is presented in this chapter, while the analysis will be presented in the following chapter.

5.3   DATA PRESENTATION

Social security is mainly about translating principles into practice and focuses on transforming a promise of law into achievable results. The overall task of any social security organisation or agency is to ensure provision and accurate and effective payment of benefits to members of the society (Gerbers, 2001). This draws heavily on public administration, thus public administration theories and principles were used to guide this research. The data presentation in this chapter is informed by these theories and principles which include POSDCORB, New Public Management, and the *Batho Pele* principles as discussed in Chapter Two, section 2.5. These theories also informed the main and sub-questions of the study.

The findings from the in-depth interviews, focus group and observations were all combined into a more manageable dataset based on the themes of the study's questions and objectives. The researcher read through all the data, highlighting concepts, interactions and terminologies used in order to create meaning of the major themes and sub-themes. By identifying themes and sub-themes the researcher was able to also identify patterns, similarities and differences, and the relation between themes. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) state that after the themes and sub-themes have been identified by the researcher, it is important for the researcher to stand back and think about what has been learned by examining the major lessons and new lessons and most importantly determining what the people reading the evaluation will be most interested in knowing. It is on this basis that the researcher decided to present the data using the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data in line with the objectives of the study.

5.4   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main aim of this study, as discussed in Chapter One, is to evaluate the role of public administration processes in alleviating poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality through the provision of the CSG. Sub-questions were formulated in order to operationalise the main questions. These questions are:

- What is the procedure of application for eligibility for the CSG?
- How effective is the administration process employed by SASSA?
- What role do public administrators play in the CSG application process?
- What challenges does SASSA encounter in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality?
- What were the experiences of the primary caregivers during and after the administration process?

The following section presents the data collected according to the six themes that were identified from the interviews, focus group and observations. The responses of the respondents are presented using paraphrased quotes.

5.5 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA OF THE CSG

This section presents the sub-themes that were identified from all the respondents' responses with regards to the procedure followed to identify those who qualify for the CSG, which is determined through the eligibility criteria. These include means testing, documents required, the applicant's reason for applying, and the role of ward committee members in this regard.

5.4.1 Means Testing of the Client

When SASSA administrators were asked about the eligibility criteria for the CSG, all respondents indicated the importance of the client passing the means test in order to determine if she/he qualifies to apply for the CSG. The means test has an income threshold that measures the means of the client and the respondents indicated that a client's income must be within the threshold. However, there were inconsistences with the SASSA administrators' knowledge regarding the specific income threshold. One of administrators mentioned that an income threshold for a single client is R2700. One of the SASSA assistant managers expanded on the means test for the CSG:

> *The child qualifies if the mother and the father are not working, but if they are working we then put them in a means test, where both their salaries are combined and must not exceed R35000 per annum. If it a single parent it can be less (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).*

The response above indicates that an unemployed client is not means tested but that these clients automatically qualify to apply for the CSG. Only those clients that are employed go through the process of means testing. Part of means testing requires proof of income from the clients to make the calculations. The respondents alluded that calculations are not made by them as the administrators; rather the calculation is done with a system known as Social Pension System (SCOPEN) using the amounts loaded by the administrators. This means that during this stage of means testing the knowledge of the administrators is not vital as they have no influence on the decision. Regarding the operation of the SCOPEN system one of the SASSA grant administrators said:

> *We as administrators put in the figures of the salaries in the SCOPEN system, which then calculates for us. We do not make the decision even if we see that you might not qualify, we let the system decide (#4 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

When respondents were asked about the eligibility criteria they emphasised the importance of a client being the primary caregiver. This was emphasised by one of the SASSA assistant managers:

> *The client must be a primary caregiver which is a person that stays with the child 7 days of a week. That does not necessary have to be a biological mother of a child (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).*

The data presented above shows that it is not just anyone who can apply on behalf of a child for a CSG and that being a biological parent does not automatically mean that a person becomes a primary caregiver for that child. It also reveals that children taken care of by a non-biological parent are not excluded from the system. However, the respondents further elaborated on the requirements if the client is not a biological parent. One of the SASSA assistant managers stated:

> *If the applicant is not the biological parent, there is a form they must fill called implied form, where a biological parent must also sign showing that she agrees, and is aware that the child will be looked after by the other caregiver (#2 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).*

This response by the SASSA assistant manager reveals that a non-biological parent cannot apply for the CSG on behalf of a child if the biological parent is not aware of it. To ensure that the client is indeed the primary caregiver, background checks are conducted if it is suspected that the information provided by the client is not true:

> *We thoroughly check the information, for instance to identify those parents that may not be staying with the child, we give them a school form which must filled at school and stamped. We then send out our administrators to do home visit and school visit, to confirm that the client is really a primary caregiver. Because we believe that a grant follows a child (#2 SASSA assistant manager, In-depth interview).*

This sub-theme reveals that part of the eligibility criteria for the CSG is passing the means test and the client must also be the primary caregiver of the child. If the primary caregiver is not a biological parent, consent from the biological parent is mandatory, and decision-making on who qualifies is made by the SCOPEN system. Another aspect in determining the eligibility of the client is the provision of supporting documents.

75

5.4.2 Supporting Documentation required from the Client

All SASSA administrators clearly indicated that part of determining the eligibility of the client is the provision of supporting documents by the client. All respondents mentioned the following supporting documents: the identity document of the applicant; their marriage certificate (if applicable); their payslip (if applicable); the child's birth certificate; their immunisation card; and a school attendance form signed at school if it a school-going child. An assistant manager expounded on this:

> *The CSG has its own requirements and they are an ID document with a green barcode, child birth certificate, immunisation card, and if it a school-going child there must be a school attendance form (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).*

Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is a rural area, which makes it difficult for people to access some services such as those offered by Home Affairs because the town where all government departments and the municipal offices are situated is relatively far away from the residences of people living in the area. Therefore, some clients may not have all the relevant documents. However, the SASSA administrators indicated that there is a rule under Regulation (11)(1) of the 2008 Regulations of the Social Assistance Act of 2004, which allows the client to continue with the application even if they do not have some of the supporting documents such as an identity document or a birth certificate. The SASSA administrators are allowed to accept alternative proof of identification. However, this proof must comprise of: an affidavit provided by SASSA or another authorised office, or proof of the application for an identity document or birth certificate at Home Affairs. The respondents also indicated that this regulation has a time limit of three months after which the CSG money will be discontinued. It is then the responsibility of the client to return to the SASSA offices with the outstanding documents to re-apply. A SASSA grant administrator expanded on this:

> *There are those clients that come without an ID; we take that application using regulation eleven that is where we take a temporary ID so that they receive the grant for three months. After three months the client comes back to report if they have the ID, if not we then call Home Affairs offices to ask them to confirm how long it will take, the client then re-applies (#2 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

The findings above reveal that supporting documents are critical during the application process as they help to determine whether the primary caregiver is eligible to apply for the grant or not. The findings also reveal that the chances of deserving children being excluded from the CSG as a result of shortage in supporting documents are low; this due to the allowance made through Regulation 11 for alternative proof to be accepted by SASSA.

5.5   APPLICATION PROCESS OF THE CSG

This section presents the data obtained from the respondents regarding the application process adopted to access the CSG to ascertain its effectiveness. From the respondents' responses regarding the CSG application process, three sub-themes emerged including: a four step model, appeal process by clients, and the role of ward committee members.

5.5.1 Four Step Model

The researcher asked the SASSA administrators what the application process for the CSG entails. All respondents indicated that the application process is based on a four step model that consists of: screening, attesting, quality control, and verification/approval. However, the respondents indicated that before a client begins the four step model they must first go through customer intake where a customer care administrator engages with clients. Here the customer care administrator educates the client about the grants they want to apply for, ensures that the client does qualify to start the application process and then advises the client accordingly. This was expanded on by one of the SASSA administrators:

> *When clients arrive they start at the office number 10 which is for customer intake. We then ask them for an ID to check if that child does not already exist in the system, we then write an affidavit for the CSG. After that, the client goes to office number 1 where they begin with step one of the four step model (#6 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

The quotation above shows that customer service at SASSA is important and as such employees ensure that clients receive the right information and have a good experience. The researcher's observations also revealed that the first point of contact is with the customer care administrator in office number 10, who is responsible for directing the clients to the right office for assistance. This ensures that every client that starts the four step model does

indeed meet the requirements, and should the client not meet the requirements the customer care administrator is responsible for advising the client accordingly.

After customer intake the clients are then sent for screening which involves a process whereby the SASSA database is checked to determine whether the client does qualify for the CSG. Following this step the customer care administrator then directs the client to the next step, which is attestation:

> *Attestation is step 2 where we confirm that the information captured by the administrator in screening is correct. We then ask the applicant where they will like to receive the money (pay-point); we load that information in the system. The applicant must then sign before they move to the next step (#2 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

The findings above suggest that accuracy is important during this process, and that the client is part of the whole process.

According to the SASSA administrators, step number 3, quality assurance, is regarded as important, as it ensures that steps 1 and 2 were done according to the policy, and that there are no mistakes with the application. This helps to identify if there are any fraudulent practices and to ensure that clients get value for money:

> *Quality control is step 3; this is my responsibility where I then check all documents sent in to see if everything was done well, and if it is in accordance with the client (#2 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

The last step, number 4, is verification; the respondents indicated that during this step a decision is made whether to approve or dismiss the application. During this stage, if the application gets approved SASSA notifies the clients about the date the grant money will start coming in. This forms part of information provision:

> *Verification is step 4 where a decision is made to approve or not, and when we tell the applicant when they will start receiving the money (#2 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

Figure 5.1: Summary of a Four Step Model

Verification

Quality
Control

Attesting

Screening
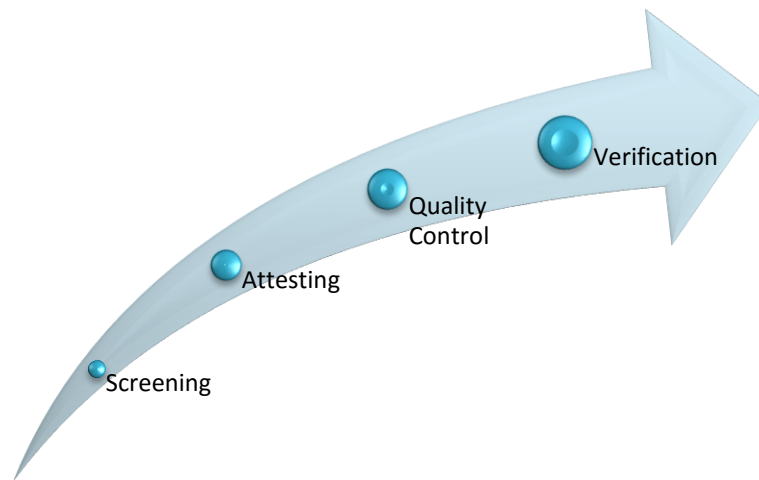
Figure 5.1 above shows a visual representation of the findings presented by the SASSA administrators regarding the four steps of the application process. The findings suggest that there are clear work procedures (directing) of how and what is to be done from the beginning of the application process right to the end. The findings also show that the employees at SASSA are aware of their roles and how they feed into each other, which means that the second step will not take place without the first step being finished; the same applies to the other steps. These findings also suggest that it is not the administrators taking the steps, rather primary caregivers move from one step to the next with the assistance of the administrators in each step. Therefore one application passes through four different administrators instead of one administrator being responsible for all the steps. During this process reporting is critical. As each primary caregiver moves to the next step with the file which is physically handed over to the next administrator by the previous administrator, the previous step forms part of reporting.

The researcher asked the respondents about the person responsible for controlling all the processes and most administrators said that this is the responsibility of the assistant manager:

> *The assistant manager is the overseer of everything, she checks all the transactions made in accordance with the administrators responsible for those transactions, to check if the transactions are original or not fraudulent (#2 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

Other respondents indicated that a four step model allows all four administrators to oversee the process, with the help of the assistant manager:

Using the four step model we all oversee every process as the client moves to the following step, we then have a person that checks the quality and procedures, if they were followed before the file moves to PMB to be stored; which is the responsibility of our assistant manager. If there is a file with a loophole they check who was responsible and that person must account (#8 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).

The data presented above indicates that control of all the processes is not only done by one person but that each process acts as a control mechanism, and through control, administrators report on their aspect of work. Reflecting on the previous data on the four step model, checking in the system or manually is mentioned by administrators in all the processes, which affirms the responses of some of the administrators that everyone is responsible for controlling the process. The findings reflect that control by the assistant manager is done at the end, after the application has been approved. The findings show that the assistant manager only checks the files at the end of the working day. The findings also reveal that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is responsible for the first five (5) steps of the social assistance administration process indicated in Chapter Three in Figure 3.1, namely: screening applications; managing pre-applications; administering intake; verifying information; and enrolling of applicants. The rest of the administration processes are conducted at the District Office of SASSA, which is situated in Pietermaritzburg.

The findings from the section above also indicate that there are some applications that do not get approved and thus do not move to the stage of enrolment. These clients have an opportunity to appeal their application.

5.5.2 Appeal by Unsuccessful Applicants

Clients whose applications are denied are allowed to appeal this decision. This was shared by the SASSA assistant manager. Out of eight (8) SASSA respondents only the assistant manager reflected on what happens to those clients whose applications are declined:

If rejected we advise the clients about the alternatives. Some of the advices are that the client can start the whole process after three months. Do an internal reconsideration process, where an applicant writes a letter to the Minister

complaining, that is where we as SASSA apply PAJA, because the client has
the right administratively. We send this along with the Interim Reconsideration
process to launch the application. This is sent to the regional office where they
then make a decision. If it is dismissed again the client then applies for an
appeal (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).

This finding reveals that the right to fair administration gives the applicants the opportunity to re-apply for the grant and to be given comprehensive reasons as to why the application was unsuccessful. However, the lack of emphasis by the administrators on the appeal process suggests that it is less likely for clients to have their application declined.

5.5.3 Improvements in the Application Process

This section aims to reflect on the changes that have been made to improve the application process for the CSG, as these changes may determine the effectiveness of the administration of grants. SASSA administrators believe that the new application process has improved grant access by decreasing the time it takes for the application to be processed and approved, and also by decreasing the time it takes for the client to start receiving the grant:

The four step model has improved the process such that it now takes a day for
an application to be approved. We have a one day turnaround strategy now
because of the four step model, so long as if a person has all the relevant
documents (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).

The respondents indicated that application through the four step model takes only one day to be processed and for the decision to be made. This suggests that the processing time for each application is dependent on other factors, such as provision of the supporting documents. Observations uncovered that some clients would sit in the waiting area for almost the entire day, waiting for a family member to bring the documents they had left at home. Some applicants were asked to go back and collect the documents from their homes. A process that could have taken few hours in one day therefore ended up taking a whole day or more than a day. One SASSA administrator reflected on the improvements now that SASSA is responsible for the administration of social security grants compared to how the process was previously facilitated under the DSD:

The application process used now is good compared when it was first
Department of Social Development responsible for the administration of the

grants. Since 2005 there are improvements, because back then a person had to
wait for two to three months for the money to come in. Before files were done
here in Melmoth then captured at Ulundi, whilst now the process is done in a
same day in one place (#2 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).

The excerpt above reveals that the new application system implemented by SASSA is more coordinated and more efficient when compared to the previous system under the DSD. It also reveals that the government's adoption of an agency to provide services, and decentralisation of service provision has created more efficiency in the application process and fewer backlogs. Two clients who had applied for the CSG before SASSA was responsible for the administration of the grant shared their experiences of how long it took for them to start and finish the application process. Their responses show that the grant system under the DSD was much slower as compared to the administration of the grant under SASSA. The government's aim of improving service delivery has contributed to the productivity of SASSA administrators by decreasing manual processes and increasing online processes. One of the SASSA administrators reported that they now have an outreach programme, where they go to areas that are far away from main town centres, areas considered as deep rural areas, so that clients would not have to travel all the way to Melmoth town to apply:

For the clients in wards that are further way from town, we have started a new
programme where we dedicate one day in a week, which is Thursdays for now,
to go Kwayanguye and take their application (#2 SASSA grant administrator,
in-depth interview).

The above responses suggest that not only has the time for a grant to be approved been drastically reduced, but the chances of fraud being perpetrated are much less and therefore productivity in the provision of the CSG has improved.

5.5.4 Role of Ward Committee Members

The ward committee members are closest to the community, are aware of the challenges that exist and have a responsibility towards the community. To determine the ward committee members' role in ensuring that people access the CSG, the researcher asked them what their role is in ensuring that the community is aware of programmes such as the CSG. The

respondents indicated that meetings are conducted where the ward committee members educate the community about the grant and the requirements:

We teach the community where we call meeting and we ask relevant institutions to come and share the information (#1 ward committee member, in-depth interview).

Over and above educating the community about the grants, one ward committee member mentioned that assistance is given to those who really need it; some of this assistance is provision of jobs for the unemployed and houses:

We teach the community and ask businesses and departments to come in to provide jobs to those unemployed, it can be in road or house constructions (#2 ward committee member, in-depth interview).

The evidence provided above regarding the role of ward committee members suggests that the departments, municipality and businesses work together to fight poverty by increasing job opportunities for the community members of Mthonjaneni Local Municipality.

5.6   SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY

SASSA is an agency responsible for the administration of social security grants and its administration is centred on the customer, which in theory shows the act of *Batho Pele* (putting people first). However, the implementation of this new administration system is largely dependent on its drivers, namely the administrators within SASSA. This requires the consistent application of the *Batho Pele* principles, and also requires the administrators of SASSA to be capacitated enough to be able to deliver quality services to its customers. In this main theme three sub-themes emerged including: applicants' interactions with grant administrators; SASSA staffing; and complaints from both the administrative staff and clients.

5.6.1 Applicants' Interactions with Grant Administrators

The researcher asked the primary caregivers (SASSA clients) to share their experiences during the application process. Some reported to have had a bad experience because of the way the administrators treated them. On the other hand, others indicated that they had a

good experience during the application process. One respondent feels that she had the worst experience during the application:

> *They treated me badly, I had to sit from morning till afternoon in their tent and it was cold. They paid no attention to us while we sat there, later on the day they came and told us to come back the following day (#27 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).*

During the focus group the behaviour of SASSA administrators emerged as a topic of discussion, and some respondents in the group indicated that administrators exhibit different behaviour, which is often inconsiderate towards applicants. This shows that the personalities of administrators in this local office hinders them from upholding the *Batho Pele* principles, and the essence of putting others first before one's own emotions is lacking in most SASSA administrators. This kind of behaviour inflicts fear in clients, making it difficult for them to access services because of the fear of being shouted at or treated as less than human. It was observed that the SASSA offices at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality do not have *Batho Pele* principles posters on any wall for both the administrator and clients to read and implement. This helps to remind not only the clients what they are entitled to, but also serves to remind clients how the administrators must behave. The information contained in these posters also enables the clients to question the administrators if they do not receive the services in the way they are entitled to. During the focus group discussion primary caregivers indicated that such behaviour is not prevalent in all administration staff:

> *They are not the same, because sometimes you find a good person, the next door you find a rude person (1# primary caregiver, focus group discussion).*

One respondent indicated that having a family member working at SASSA made things very easy for her:

> *They treated me well because there were my family members that work there (#23 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).*

The above responses reveal that it is likely that training has not been offered to all the administrators regarding the application of the *Batho Pele* principles and the essence of customer service. The crux of customer service in the public sector is derived from the *Batho Pele* principles, which gives clear direction on how public servants must treat their customers. The data from the previous theme regarding application process revealed that

SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality has a customer care administrator who is responsible for pre-screening all clients as they come in to the offices. The customer care administrator should not only be responsible for pre-screening applicants, but should also ensure that all customers have the best service experience. One respondent indicated that having a family member working at SASSA made things very easy for her. When a group of primary caregivers were discussing their experiences with SASSA administrators, it also emerged that even if they have had a bad experience there is nowhere that complaints can be lodged. However, the observations revealed that in the waiting area where all applicants sit, there is a small box for comments and complaints placed in a corner which made it hard to notice, and the administrators place minimal emphasis on it as there is no pen or paper with which to write placed next to it. Some clients complained about the level of service delivery in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality SASSA office:

I did get help, even though I did not get it on the same day. I had to go back and forth to get everything sorted, sometimes when I would get there, they would tell us that the system is down (#9 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).

The above quote suggests that the repeat visit was not due to slow processing time for the application process, but rather because of certain requirements that the client was lacking. The client therefore had to make repeat visits to the SASSA office to finish the application process. This delay can be avoided by ensuring that all the necessary information regarding the application process and required documents is communicated to the clients at the beginning of the application process.

5.6.2 SASSA Staffing in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality

The researcher asked the SASSA administrators if they have enough staff to meet the daily demands of the clients. All respondents reported that SASSA does have enough staff:

Yes, we have enough staff because if it is a busy day of which is unusual, mostly it is the CSG clients because in some months it is like they have been delivered by a bus. But in that instance I contact the District Office for help, where they send in administrators to come and help during those very busy days (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).

This finding shows that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality has enough staff members to meet the daily needs of all the clients, and that having an extremely busy day is an unlikely occurrence for this local office. Some administrators raised the relatively low number of residents residing in the municipality as the determining factor for not having too many busy days. The data reveals that repeat visits are not as a result of shortage in staff but is instead due to other factors such as the SCOPEN system which this local office has little control over. One respondent felt that the office layout is the reason why they have the number of the staff they have.

The above findings provided an understanding of the role played by administrators within SASSA in ensuring effectiveness of the administration processes in the provision of the CSG. These findings have provided an insight regarding the role of administrators in SASSA at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality which, in the main, is to process application forms in accordance with policy and to ensure that the CSG is given to deserving beneficiaries.

5.7 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY SASSA IN MTHONJANENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

SASSA's vision is to provide world class social security services to all citizens that qualify. However, SASSA administrators indicated that there are several challenges which make this vision hard to attain for SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. The challenges indicated by most respondents range from inadequate facilities to fraud by clients and uniformed clients. There is a concern amongst respondents about the facilities at the SASSA offices as respondents feel that the kind of facilities they are using are not conducive because the offices are inaccessible to clients with physical disabilities. Observations revealed that SASSA facilities are made of Pack homes that only have staircases, and a tent is used as a waiting area for all clients. The SASSA assistant manager mentioned that the facilities they are using create problems for clients that are disabled, as sometimes they have to physically lift these clients up the stairs so that they can access the office.

> *A challenge we have is infrastructure, because we are working in Pack homes and we have staircases only, so our offices are not user friendly. We sometimes have to pick up our clients (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).*

One of the respondents indicated that not only do the inadequate facilities prohibit physically disabled clients from accessing services at SASSA, it also makes it difficult for administrators to effectively implement their new strategies such as the four step model:

> *The layout of these offices does not allow us to fully practice the four step model. It is not even conducive for a disabled client, we sometimes have to pick-up our clients into the office and out if they are using a wheelchair, and this alone consumes time (#8 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

Another challenge highlighted by the respondents is that some clients may be uninformed about the grant application process and therefore come to apply without all the necessary documentation. This is a result of most clients not being aware of the requirements to apply for the grant:

> *The challenge that we usually have as administrators is when a client comes to apply only bearing an ID document without the other supporting documents, as a result of not having the information on what is required (#6 SASSA grant administrator, in-depth interview).*

This finding reveals that clients sometimes do not bring all supporting documents not because they do not have access to them but rather because of a lack of knowledge regarding the CSG requirements. It is the responsibility of SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality to educate the community about the grants and the respective requirements. When asked where they got the information about the requirements of the application for the CSG, some primary caregivers indicated that they were told at SASSA by the administrators on the day they came to apply for the grant:

> *They were very helpful because they told me all the documents I needed (#2 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).*

The findings above reveal that requirements are not communicated early enough with citizens in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality area, thus some clients come to apply for a grant at SASSA with certain documents missing. The findings also reveal that administrators do try to inform clients but the fact that most citizens of Mthonjaneni Local Municipality reside far from where SASSA offices are situated means that it is difficult to inform clients in advance about the grant requirements. Educating the clients about the grant requirements on the day they come to apply is not beneficial as it only results in repeat visits. As evidence

that SASSA administrators are not doing enough to educate this community, one of the primary caregivers reported to have had the information before they went to apply but this information was acquired from the other community members who may have applied for the grant previously and not from SASSA administrators.

> *People around my community told me what I needed, so I went by the offices with all the documents (#16 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).*

These findings reveal that SASSA as an agency is not making much of an effort to educate the citizens about the CSG requirements outside of the SASSA office parameters. Such information can be communicated in local clinics, hospital, taxi ranks, and high schools.

This section aimed to provide insight regarding the challenges that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is facing with regards to administration. The findings suggest that the effectiveness of the administration process within SASSA is also dependent on the infrastructure and the client's knowledge of the requirements for applying for social grants. The findings also suggest that the dignity and rights of physically disabled clients are compromised by the lack of adequate infrastructure in this local office. Thus getting SASSA to reach a state where they are able to provide 'world class social security services' as stated in their vision may be difficult to attain while such challenges exist.

5.8 THE USE OF THE CSG MONEY BY THE PRIMARY CAREGIVERS

The basic principle underpinning the CSG programme is that the primary caregiver who receives the CSG is expected to use the money for the benefit of the child. Thus primary caregivers were asked how they usually spend the CSG money in a month. Most respondents indicated that they use the money mostly on food, mainly general household food but sometimes this expenditure may be child-specific, for instance, to purchase baby milk. A number of respondents said that the CSG enables them to buy clothes for their children and allows them to attend to school expenses such as school uniform and school fees. A few respondents said they use the money on things like savings and paying for rent. While the primary caregivers use the money for the benefit of the child, there was a concern that the value of the grant is small and that it does not satisfy all their children's needs. It was clear from the discussions that a number of primary caregivers were unhappy with the monetary value of the CSG. Some respondents, while complaining about the value of the grant, indicated that it also depends on how one uses it:

It's not enough, but I am able to use it wisely and also since I am working it helps to do other things I cannot afford to do with my salary (#4 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).

Furthermore, the majority of respondents feel that an increase of more than R200 per month would be beneficial in meeting their children's needs. Such findings suggest that most primary caregivers are struggling to meet the daily needs of the beneficiaries and are thus dependent on government for support. The researcher asked the SASSA administrators whether there are any developmental programmes that are linked to the CSG:

We do not have programmes beside that when a client applies we advice the young girls to continue studying, and we refer some to DSD because they have programmes to sponsor people to further their studies in higher institutions. The grant lapses when the child turns eighteen (18) years (#3 SASSA assistant manager, in-depth interview).

The researcher asked the ward committee members to share their views regarding the CSG, since they are closest to the community. All of them reported that the CSG is there to help those faced with poverty, not to be misused.

The CSG helps families and for children to attend to their needs, because here in this rural area most people do not work, and some get paid small salaries from their jobs. To me the CSG is very helpful in such families; it also helps in school matters and to buy food in households (#1 ward committee member, in-depth interview).

5.8.1 Reason for Applying for the CSG

The researcher needed to know what motivated primary caregivers to apply for the CSG. Various reasons were stated, among these were: poverty, unemployment, child's needs, and unsupportive father(s). The majority of the respondents mentioned unemployment as the reason for applying for the grant, as they were unable to support their children:

I applied for the grant because I was not working, thus was not able to support my children every month (#16 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).

Mthonjaneni Local Municipality has an unemployment rate of 28.5% (Statistics South Africa, 2011). This means that those who are unemployed have to find other means of survival, and social grants serve as a means of income for most families in this area. One respondent stated that their standard of living was not good and the father of the child took no responsibility and she thus saw a need to apply for the CSG. According to this respondent the CSG has made a remarkable difference in her life and those of her children:

> *The life I was living was hard. My children have a father but it was like they are fatherless. So I saw that in order for my children to eat, and be clothed I needed to apply for the grant. Back then people used to get a lot of money during the first period. When I finally got it after waiting for many months, I got close to R8000 (#24 primary caregiver, in-depth interview).*

The data above suggest that primary caregivers apply for the CSG because of the living conditions they are faced with that compel them to rely on government for support. These conditions undermine their role as primary caregivers, which is to take care of their dependents and to ensure they are fed, clothed and have proper shelter.

5.8.2 Misuse of the Grant by Primary Caregivers

While stating that the CSG is a good programme since it has made a difference in most families, two ward committee members also indicated that there are those who misuse the grant.

> *The CSG is a good thing even though there are those that end up using it in an unacceptable manner, for instance you find that the mother of a child receiving the grant while the child does not stay with her, the responsibility remains with the grandmother who has to use her pension to also support the child. But for those that know how to use it wisely, it is a good programme. It is our responsibility to report such cases to SASSA (#3 ward committee member, in-depth interview).*

The findings suggest that poor monitoring by SASSA is the reason for the abuse of the CSG, as there is no follow up made with those that are receiving the grant. The findings suggest that as a result of the lack of monitoring, the CSG sometimes does not reach the right beneficiary. It also suggests that measuring the success of the grant only through the number of people reached by the system, is not sufficient as a person who is supposedly a

primary caregiver can receive the money on behalf of the child, but does not physically stay with and does not spend the money on the child. The SCOPEN system would reflect that the child is a beneficiary of the CSG and it is thus assumed that the child does not struggle with poverty-related issues, while this may not always be true. As a result of this abuse some children in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality are still faced with childhood poverty. The data reveals that the only way to detect the abuse of the CSG is through community members reporting such incidences.

This section of the data presentation intended to evaluate the experience of the primary caregivers after the application process when they start receiving the CSG to assess the way the money is spent, as the children have little say in the matter. A further aim was to understand what constitutes abuse of the CSG. This section reveals that the CSG does make a difference to most families living in poverty. However, the long term development of those receiving the CSG is not taken into consideration by the system. This suggests that SASSA along with the DSD must find ways of monitoring the CSG to ensure that the child benefits directly from being a recipient. There is also a need for developmental programmes for those children in the CSG system.

5.9   CONCLUSION

The data presented on administration of the CSG in this chapter provides results that are relevant to the aims and objectives of the study. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the administration processes employed in the rollout of the CSG, with the ultimate goal of providing increased access to the grant in order to alleviate childhood poverty. The themes were derived from the data gathered and from the main objectives of the study.

- The first theme addressed the topic of evaluating the eligibility criteria for clients to be able to apply for the CSG. From the data it was established that eligibility is determined by means testing of clients and by their ability to provide supporting documents. In these findings it was revealed that the information administrators have with regards to the eligibility criteria and means testing is not aligned with the social security regulations, thus there is an over-reliance on the SCOPEN system to make decisions.

- The second main theme addressed the second objective of the study regarding the effectiveness of the application process to access the CSG. The findings revealed that the current administration process is effective, but this is also dependent on other factors discussed in the third and fourth themes. The findings also showed that the administrative activities engaged in at SASSA are aligned with the principles of POSDCORB outlined in Gullick's business administration theory.

- The role of public administrators during the application process was discussed in the third theme. The findings reflected that there is a lack of uniformity in behaviour by administrators, and that *Batho Pele* principles are not upheld by all administrators in this local office. This may have a detrimental effect on the administration process of the CSG as discussed in the second theme.

- The fourth theme related to the challenges faced in making the application process for the CSG more accessible to clients. The findings showed that SASSA in Mthonjaneni has challenges of inadequate infrastructure and clients who may be uninformed about the requirements to apply for the CSG. These factors have a negative effect on the administration process and prevent SASSA from reaching its full potential in the rollout of the CSG.

- The final theme addressed the experiences of the primary caregivers when they started receiving the CSG and what the money received is spent on. The data showed that the grant money is used by most primary caregivers for the basic needs of the child such as food and clothing, which contribute to the development of the child. In certain instances the CSG is abused and the money does not reach the intended child.

The next chapter will provide a more comprehensive analysis and discussion of the findings obtained in the study.

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this research was to study the role of the public administration processes in alleviating household poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality through provision of the CSG. The purpose of this study is to answer the following main questions:

- What is the procedure of application for eligibility for the CSG?
- How effective is the administration process employed by SASSA?
- What role do public administrators play in the CSG application process?
- What challenges does SASSA encounter in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality?
- What were the experiences of the primary caregivers during and after the administration process?

The previous chapter presented the primary data collected to help answer the main questions of the study. This chapter aims to provide a more comprehensive analysis and discussion of the data presented in Chapter Five. For clarity the findings will be discussed using the main themes presented in the previous chapter, therefore Chapters Five and Six should not be considered as discrete chapters but rather as inter-related chapters aiming to derive common conclusions.

6.2   ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA OF THE CSG

The findings presented in Chapter Five show that there are inconsistencies in the information provided by the SASSA administrators as all respondents indicated different amounts that they understood the income threshold to be in order for clients to be considered eligible to apply for the CSG. The information that they provided is also inconsistent with the Social Security Regulations (2015) which state that the primary caregiver must not earn more than R37 200 per annum (R3100 per month) if they are a single parent. For a married primary caregiver, the amount that the spouse earns is added and the combined amount must not exceed R74 400 per annum (R6200 per month). Consequently, this inconsistency may create confusion for the clients and could also

discourage the citizens at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality from applying for the CSG because they could be led to believe that they do not fall under the income threshold and thus do not qualify for the grant.

One of the *Batho Pele* principles states that clients should be "provided full and accurate information about the services they are entitled to receive" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15). This inconsistency with regard to administrators' knowledge of the income threshold indicates that the SASSA district office and the local office in Mthonjaneni do not consistently communicate. For SASSA administrators to be able to provide accurate information at all times, changes to the policy regulations should be clearly communicated early enough by the SASSA district office to SASSA at the Mthonjaneni local office. The findings presented on this theme in the previous chapter revealed that there is an overreliance on SCOPEN to make the decision on who proceeds with the application process and the decision on approval or declined applications, meaning that most processes at SASSA at this initial stage are not taken manually but rather are made electronically.

SCOPEN is regarded as a comprehensive system run by the DSD, together with SASSA, for all social assistance grants such as the CSG. SCOPEN is primarily used for processing applications for all social assistance grants, producing a pay file monthly for more than 16 million grants and automatically producing a list of beneficiaries (Petersen, Vundule & Koster, 2015). This reliance on SCOPEN in decision-making may also be a reason why the SASSA administrators have outdated information about the income threshold, because of the view that knowing this information will not make a difference since they have no influence on the system's decision. However, SASSA must consider that Mthonjaneni citizens still deserve to know how the SCOPEN system arrives at a decision. The right of access to information in Chapter 2, section 32(1)(a) states that "everyone has a right of access to any information held by the state" (Constitution of RSA, 1996: 9), therefore by providing inaccurate information SASSA administrators in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality are not fulfilling this right, and not upholding the *Batho Pele* principle which states that "citizens must be provided with full and accurate information about the public services citizens are entitled to receive" (WPTPSD, 1997: 15).

The data presented in the previous chapter indicate that a further criterion for eligibility to apply for the CSG is the client's ability to provide relevant supporting documents. However, to some clients this may be a challenge because of a difficulty in accessing other services,

specifically those of the Department of Home Affairs. In rural areas some clients do not have identity documents and as a result of this any child born to that client would not have a birth certificate. This is usually because areas such as Mthonjaneni Local Municipality are rural areas and all public institutions are situated in towns which are not close to where citizens reside, making it difficult for a person to apply for and to receive an identity document. In the literature review it was suggested by Brynard (2006) that the Department of Social Development should accept alternative proof of identification for those still at the waiting period at Home Affairs for documents such as an identity document or birth certificate. The data revealed that the administration under SASSA has developed a rule under Regulation 11(1) of the 2008 Regulations of the Social Assistance Act of 2004, which allows administrators to accept and process applications even if the client is still waiting for an identity document or a birth certificate from Home Affairs. However, it is important that the SASSA clients at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality are aware that the regulation is subject to a time limit of three months, after which the grant will be discontinued. Such practice ensures that children in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality stricken by poverty have the opportunity to access the grant even without some of the supporting documents. The following section discusses the findings on the application process of the CSG.

6.3 APPLICATION PROCESS OF THE CSG

It is understood from the literature review that the way in which the CSG is implemented determines the effectiveness of the grant, and part of the implementation of the grant is the application process. The findings reveal that the application process adopted by SASSA is well-planned and designed to meet the needs of the clients (primary caregivers), has clear procedures and is well-controlled. The way that the application process is designed shows the strength of mitigating service delivery backlogs within the agency. Each and every administrator in this agency has a role to play towards the application process, as all steps in the process are interdependent. The way in which the application process is designed helps to mitigate chances of corrupt practices and improves productivity. It takes only a day to process one application which means more children are reached by the system. These are also the benefits of decentralisation achieved through the managerial model of public administration as outlined by David Osborne and Ted Geaber in their NPM model which was discussed in Chapter Two, section 2.6.2. Cheema (2005) argues that decentralisation promotes effective public administration and good governance through provision of

institutional framework, with the aim of bringing decision-making closer to the people, increasing accountability, reducing red-tape, and providing channels for local citizens to play a direct role in the development process. The four step model indicated in the previous chapter in Figure 5.1 shows that processing of the application and decision-making is done on the same day and the clients are notified immediately.

The findings also reveal that most of the POSDCORB functions are well-incorporated in the application process, such as planning, organising, directing, controlling and reporting. George and Jones (2006) state that organising generally follows planning and decision-making and is a process that managers use to establish a structure of working relationships that allows employees to interact and co-operate to achieve organisational goals. The data shows that each step within the process of applying for a CSG is well-structured, and linking one step to the other allows for collaboration between administrators to achieve one common goal which is to ensure that a client receives value for money. Cloete (1992) states that after policies have been developed, institutions divided into structures and personnel allocated systematically, then work can begin. This requires clear work procedures and the findings reveal that personnel at SASSA are allocated according to the stages in the application process and each administrator is well aware of their role in the process. The data shows that the design of the application process allows for each step to serve as a control and a reporting mechanism because all steps are dependent on each other.

The findings also indicated that the administrative rights of the clients are considered in line with the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000 which states that the public has a right "to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and to the right to written reasons for administrative action" (PAJA, 2000: 2). In regard to this right, clients whose applications are denied must be given full written reasons stating how and why the application was denied. This also gives a client the right to appeal the application. The findings in this study revealed that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality ensures that this right is fulfilled at all times. The following sub-section discusses the role of SASSA administrators in the CSG application process.

6.4 SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY

The *Batho Pele* principles are an initiative to get public servants to be service-orientated, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit to continuous service delivery

improvement. It is a simple, transparent mechanism, which allows customers to hold public servants accountable for the type of services they deliver (WPTPSD, 1997). The SASSA administrators are expected to uphold these principles which include: consultation; service standard; access; courtesy; information; openness and transparency; redress; and value for money (WPTPSD, 1997). The data presented in the previous chapter reveal that some SASSA administrators do not practice some of the *Batho Pele* principles. Sub theme 5.7.1 in the previous chapter revealed that some administrators did not have courtesy towards the clients. The WPTPSD (1997) defines courtesy as treating all citizens with courtesy and consideration. Therefore, such behaviour on the part of administrators undermines the vision of the agency which is to provide world class social security services as discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.4.2. A lack of courtesy also undermines the rights of clients to be treated with human dignity, which is identified as a human right in the RSA Constitution (1996).

The Public Service Commission (2013) recommends that all *Batho Pele* principles must be able to be implemented simultaneously because they are interrelated and interdependent on each other, meaning that each principle on its own cannot transform service delivery. On the contrary, the administrators at SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality struggle to implement most of the principles which makes it difficult to implement all of the principles together. In addition, the findings reveal that some SASSA administrators at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality are biased as a result of familial relationships with clients. This was reflected upon by one of the respondents in section 5.7.1. This does not only go against the *Batho Pele* principles but also the public administration principles in the Constitution Republic of South Africa (1996:62) Section 195(1) (d) which states that "services should be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias".

The findings reveal that there are no educational mechanisms such as posters on the *Batho Pele* principles to educate and remind both the administrators and clients about the appropriate level of service provision. Findings in the previous chapter showed that clients are not aware of their rights as customers, which are clearly indicated through the *Batho Pele* principles. Hence when they dissatisfied with the level of service delivery and have been treated unfairly they do not complain to anyone because they may not be aware that they can do so. Even though the data revealed that channels for lodging a complaint are in place the clients do not utilise these channels. The findings showed that minimal emphasis has been placed on the process to lodge a complaint by the SASSA administrators.

Moreover, the lack of awareness by clients regarding their rights may be the reason why they do not see the need to lay a complaint when treated unfairly. This study shows that plans cannot be achieved if intended goals are not properly implemented and the implementation of the *Batho Pele* principles would result in excellent public administration. Therefore *Batho Pele* principles should become a day to day practice of the administrators infused in the administration processes to ensure service delivery efficiency and value.

6.5 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY SASSA IN MTHONJANENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The findings from Chapter Five show that inadequate infrastructure of offices at SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is a challenge. The findings in the previous chapter reveal that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality makes use of Pack homes as offices and a tent as a waiting area for clients. The findings further reveal that inadequate infrastructure negatively affects the ability of administrators to perform their daily duties effectively, as clients with physical disabilities have to be carried in and out of the offices by the administrators. The findings show that the challenge of inadequate infrastructure prohibits the proper implementation of the four step model, as it requires the four administrators that are involved in each step to constantly interact with each other and with clients in order to provide synchronised service delivery. This challenge also negatively affects clients with disabilities, specifically clients who are physically disabled. Koma (2005) identified the same challenge of inadequate infrastructure, especially in rural areas, and SASSA at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality still clearly struggles with this challenge. The inadequate infrastructure for SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality has been a challenge since the introduction of SASSA in 2008. While this is a concern for administration staff as well as the community, it seems to be getting inadequate attention from the district office.

In addition to inadequate infrastructure, the data presented in the previous chapter revealed that SASSA administrators battle with uninformed clients that lack knowledge about the CSG. The findings show that the reason for this challenge is that SASSA administrators do not educate the clients about the grants in their communities often enough. The findings also indicated that the administrators at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality do not believe it is their responsibility to educate the clients beyond the SASSA facilities. Mthonjaneni Local Municipality has local clinics, a hospital and community halls, and posters could be pasted in these areas because many possible SASSA clients use these facilities. This can serve as

an educational mechanism that will have a far greater impact, because the findings of this research indicated that most clients obtained the information from fellow community members. Therefore through such publicity techniques fellow community members would pass on accurate information about the CSG. The effectiveness of the administration processes is largely affected by these challenges and thus requires immediate attention.

6.6   USE OF THE GRANT MONEY BY THE PRIMARY CAREGIVERS

The findings in Chapter Five reveal that primary caregivers understand that the CSG is for the benefit of the child and also show that the CSG money is used not only on the children's needs but also on the needs of the household. Coetzee (2013) challenges this behaviour by primary caregivers and states that in order to alleviate childhood poverty the spending should be channelled away from items for the household and instead towards spending that will benefit the child's development in the household. However, the development of a child also requires spending on household needs as the child benefits indirectly from this. This is because there is a direct link between household poverty and childhood poverty. Because children do not work, they are not required to earn income but instead are expected to be dependent on the earnings of adults in the households where they live (Hall & Chennells, 2011). Therefore children experience poverty because of the household background and circumstances and in this regard spending channelled toward either the needs of the child or the household will benefit the child. This is supported by Neves *et al*. (2009) who argue that social grants support consumption and improve the welfare of recipients as well as their household because the caregiver uses the money to purchase food and groceries, for transport to school, and for fees and clothes. Brynard (2006) also indicates that there is inter-dependence between children's needs and adult socio-economic needs.

The findings show that there are children who are at risk of not enjoying the benefits of the CSG as a result of the primary caregivers abusing the CSG. Brynard (2006) argues that one of the shortcomings with the CSG is mis-targeting of the grant where assumptions are made that the funds from the CSG do actually reach the eligible recipient. From the findings presented in Chapter Five it is evident that SASSA is committed to ensuring that the CSG reaches the right beneficiary, which is the child, by ensuring that only a primary caregiver applies for the grant. Reaching the right beneficiary means that the child gets to enjoy the full benefits of the CSG through the primary caregiver. The data revealed that a primary caregiver is not always a biological parent of a child but if a child is under the care of a non-

biological parent; both the parents (biological and non-biological) must be present during the application process. The ability of some children in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality to access the CSG is reduced because most teenagers have children while attending high school and while focusing on their studies decide to leave their children with their relatives, usually grandmothers of the child. This increases the possibility of the child not accessing the CSG. This was also indicated by Case *et al.* (2005) who suggested that children living away from their mothers are at risk of not accessing the CSG as a result of the common behaviour of most mothers who leave their children in someone else's care without proper documentation. Moreover, the child may be registered as a CSG beneficiary whilst the mother who lives away from the child has access to the grant and the benefits are therefore not shared with the child.

The abuse of the CSG was reflected upon by the ward committee members in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. Ward committee members are closest to the community thus are aware of the issues that occur. In Chapter Three, section 3.4.9 the Social Security Act (2004), Sections 1 and 2 were discussed. The Act states that if the agency within reasonable grounds suspects that the beneficiary, parent, or a primary caregiver is abusing the CSG the agency may investigate the matter. The Social Security Act (2004) states that, if it has been found that abuse of the grant has indeed taken place, the Agency may appoint a person to receive the CSG on behalf of the beneficiary who must use the grant for the benefit of the beneficiary. The Social Assistance Act stresses the importance of a primary caregiver being the only person who applies and receives the CSG on behalf on the child. The 'primary caregiver' is defined as "a person older than 16 years, whether or not related to a child, who takes primary responsibility for meeting the daily care needs of that child" (Social Security Act, 2004: 19). The SASSA administrators indicated that a primary caregiver is a person that lives with the child 7 days of the week. It can be deduced from the secondary and primary data that a primary caregiver is in a better position to understand and meet the daily needs of the child. The data revealed that a person who was once a primary caregiver but no longer lives with the child must report to SASSA that the child will be under someone else's care, so that the person who now lives with the child will access the grant on behalf of the child. The data also showed that claiming to be a primary caregiver while not staying with the child is regarded as abusing the CSG, because it is through this requirement that SASSA can establish that the CSG reaches the right beneficiary. The literature discussed in Chapter

Two, section 2.5 also indicates that receiving the CSG on behalf of the child while not residing with the child is considered as abusing the grant (Makoma, 2008).

The findings reveal that the CSG programme is not linked to any developmental programmes directed to those children who are already in the CSG system to help them escape poverty after the grant lapses. The findings show that the grant is mainly focused on the short-term development of the child while in the CSG system, which one can liken to government building a bridge for children rather than providing resources to help the clients and their children build the bridge for themselves (Kritzinger, 2012). The findings also show that most of the clients that apply for the CSG are faced with unemployment and as a result find it difficult to take care of all the needs of their dependants. Triegaardt (2002) also states that for the social security to achieve its mandate certain developmental programmes should be linked to it. In that way the children in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality will find a way to establish themselves for a longer period of time which will also decrease dependency on government for social assistance.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The findings discussed in this chapter have clearly indicated that the effectiveness of the administration process for the CSG in alleviating poverty is largely dependent on several factors, which were elaborated upon in the discussion above. The findings indicated that eligibility is important because it determines whether the clients will continue with the application process and it is also an important initial part of the application process. Additionally, this requires accuracy and consistency in information provision by administrators, as this is one of the aspects that draw the poorest of the poor to the agency to apply. If inaccurate information is provided to potential clients, the hope for a better life through accessing the CSG is diminished. Regarding the effectiveness of the application process, findings show that the CSG system has improved through the adopted four step application process because it has improved the ability for clients to access the grant and it incorporates the POSDCORB functions well. However, the lack of implementation of *Batho Pele* principles by SASSA administrators affects the clients' service delivery value. Furthermore, the inadequate infrastructure at SASSA and uninformed clients, which is a result of SASSA administrators failing to develop initiatives to educate the Mthonjaneni Local Municipality about the CSG, also negatively affects the value of service delivery. Regarding the use of the CSG money by the primary caregivers, the findings reveal that

clients are aware what the grant is to be used for and whom it should be spent on. The findings show that the Mthonjaneni Local Municipality has made progress in widening access to the CSG system. The findings also show that poor monitoring of the CSG is a threat to the effectiveness of the administration process in alleviating household poverty. In summary, the study has found that the application of the theoretical framework underpinning the study provided important insight into the public administration processes implemented in the rollout of the CSG, and what can be done to improve the administration of the CSG.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the overall conclusions of the study, by drawing on the main issues discussed in the different chapters of the study in order to determine whether the aim and objectives of the study were achieved. The chapter also provides recommendations for improving the administration processes of the CSG at Mthonjaneni Local Municipality SASSA offices, as well as for further research based on the findings of the study. This chapter has three important sections that provide an overview of the study, and these sections include: a summary of the study; contribution of the research; recommendations and final concluding remarks. These are discussed further in the next sections.

7.2 SUMMARY

This section presents an outline of the study, beginning with a recap of the aims and objectives of the research and proceeding to the findings. Chapter One provided a background regarding the role of the public administration processes employed by SASSA in the provision of the CSG. This research was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the administration processes employed by SASSA in the roll-out of the CSG with the goal of alleviating household poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. The particular objectives of the study and research questions were derived from the main aim of the study. The study aimed to critically examine the criteria used to identify those who qualify for the CSG, since these criteria determine the eligibility of clients to access the grant. A critical examination of the application process was also conducted to determine its effectiveness, and the role of administrators during the application process was evaluated. Furthermore, challenges experienced by SASSA were assessed as these may have an impact on the effectiveness of the processes, and primary caregivers' experiences during and after the application process were examined to determine the effect of the CSG in alleviating poverty in their households. The first chapter provided a background to and summary of the study, and was followed by Chapter Two which contained a review of literature related to the topics addressed in this study.

Chapter Two provided a review of the literature related to research conducted by other scholars on childhood poverty and social security grants in order to identify the gaps that exist in current knowledge. The theoretical framework on public administration that underpins this study was also presented in this chapter. Three administration theories were discussed which relate to the aim of the study; these included the theory of administrative processes (POSDCORB), New Public Management and the WPTPSD (1997). Each theory on its own was not sufficient to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the administration processes involved in the roll-out of the CSG and its role in alleviating household poverty, thus all three were used in combination with each other. In order to provide the context of the administration of the CSG the second part of the literature, Chapter Three, was presented. This chapter provided the legislative background of the CSG and its administration. The combination of these chapters provides a link between theory and practice, which was the focus of the study. The literature review and the theoretical framework were later used to analyse and discuss the data collected from respondents from Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. The legislative background and the theoretical framework were used to determine whether the application processes to access the CSG in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality were properly implemented according to the edicts of the policy and the suggested managerial model.

Chapter Four outlined the motivation for the selected research design which ensured that the data collected would be relevant to the aim of the study and the objectives. The methodology, data collection techniques used by the researcher and the data analysis method were presented. The researcher used a qualitative approach in which thirty nine (39) in-depth interviews were conducted: eight (8) with SASSA administrators; twenty eight (28) with primary caregivers; and three (3) with ward committee members from Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. One focus group discussion with primary caregivers was also facilitated and observations were conducted by the researcher at the SASSA offices in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. All the data obtained from the field was analysed using thematic data analysis, which is a qualitative data analysis method.

The results of the study were presented as main themes and sub-themes which included: eligibility criteria for the CSG; application process of the CSG; SASSA; challenges experienced by SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality; and the use of the CSG money by primary caregivers. This research set out to fulfil the objectives and the key findings are summarised and presented below:

7.2.1 Examine the criteria used to identify those who qualify for the CSG

The findings revealed that the eligibility criteria are an important aspect in determining who qualifies to apply for the CSG, and who does not. The findings further showed that SASSA administrators in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality are not kept up-to-date with some of the changes made in the policy, such as the means testing requirements, and thus possess inaccurate information. To determine who qualifies to apply, the findings revealed that only the SCOPEN system makes this decision, and administrators have no influence regarding this. One aspect of determining the eligibility criteria is the client's ability to provide the necessary supporting documents. The findings showed that clients without some of the documents, such as an identity document or a birth certificate, can apply for the CSG under Regulation (11) (1) of the 2008 Regulations of the Social Assistance Act of 2004 which ensures that those applicants without the full supporting documents can access the grant for a period of three months only while they wait for their documents to be issued. After three months the CSG has to be renewed. The criteria for eligibility to apply for the CSG have made it possible for most children living in rural areas to access the grant. When the client passes the eligibility criteria, it means that he/she can begin the application process.

7.2.2 Examine the effectiveness of the application process employed by SASSA

It is affirmed by the data collected from the study that the effectiveness of the administration processes employed by SASSA in alleviating household poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is dependent on various factors, such as the proper implementation of the POSDCORB administrative function. The findings revealed that the CSG application process follows a four step model. This application process provides clear work procedures, decentralisation of tasks, and quality is emphasised in all steps. The findings also suggest that the application process is well-planned, organised and coordinated. The way in which the CSG is administered through the four step model has resulted in easy access to benefits of the CSG by clients, as the process limits the time it takes to start and finish the application process (an average of two days). The application process also caters for those clients whose applications are declined, by ensuring that they are able to appeal the declining of their applications. Therefore, the application process adopted by SASSA is effective, as it minimises excludability of well-deserving children.

7.2.3 Evaluate the role of the public administrators in this regard

SASSA is solely responsible for administering all the social security grants including the CSG, and during this process SASSA administrators play an integral role. The role of SASSA administrators in this study was evaluated through the *Batho Pele* principles, which ensures excellence in service delivery and commits to continuous service delivery improvement. The findings revealed that the role of administrators is to process application forms in accordance with policy and to ensure that the CSG is given to deserving beneficiaries. The findings also revealed that SASSA administrators sometimes fail to uphold all of the *Batho Pele* principles as some clients are not always treated with dignity, and may be treated unfairly and unequally at times.

7.2.4 Assess the challenges experienced by SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality

While the eligibility criteria and the application process of the CSG have increased access to the grant by deserving beneficiaries, SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality still struggles with challenges that threaten the effectiveness of the administration process. The findings revealed that SASSA in this local office is faced with the challenge of inadequate infrastructure and clients who are uninformed about the CSG requirements. These challenges affect both the clients and the administrators. The data showed that SASSA offices are not user-friendly as Pack homes are used as offices, which also makes it difficult for clients with physical disabilities to easily access the services. Because some clients are uninformed about the requirements to apply for the CSG, a process that should take a day to complete extends to more than two days, which increases repeat visits. The findings showed that this is because some clients come to apply with some critical documents missing and as a result are required to return at a later stage with all the relevant documents. This does not apply to the identity document or birth certificate, as proof that these have been applied for can also be provided in the interim until they are issued by Home Affairs.

7.2.5 Examine primary caregivers' experiences during and after the application process

The findings revealed that most children are able to access the CSG, and that this has made a difference in the standard of living in many families. The primary caregivers understand and respect what the CSG is for, even though the findings also showed that some clients

abuse the system and the CSG. The policy emphasises the importance of a primary caregiver applying for the CSG, meaning that once that person no longer resides with the child 7 days a week, he/she can no longer be considered as a primary caregiver and will thus no longer be eligible to receive the CSG on behalf of the child. The findings showed that the common abuse of the CSG is when a person receives the grant but does not live with the child. Most primary caregivers revealed that poverty and unemployment were the reason why they applied for the CSG, and since they have been receiving the grant there has been a difference made in their lives. While the CSG achieves positive results, it was also revealed in the findings that the CSG administration is not development-oriented. Triegaardt (2002) states that for social security to achieve its mandate certain developmental programmes should be linked to it. Linking the CSG to developmental programmes will allow the current needs of the children to be met, while also allowing these children to gain skills to sustain themselves in the long term.

7.3   CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the current administration process of the social security system, namely the CSG, employed by SASSA towards alleviating household poverty using the case of Mthonjaneni Local Municipality. Relevant literature was drawn upon to direct the study and discussions and the study succeeded in evaluating the effectiveness of the administration processes in alleviating household poverty. Using the case study of Mthonajaneni Local Municipality, the findings revealed that the CSG has made a difference in many families' living conditions through efficient administration, because more Mthonjaneni Local Municipality children are being reached by the system.

The public administration theories and principles namely POSDCORB, NPM and *Batho Pele* principles discussed in Chapter Two emphasise the important role of public administration processes in facilitating effective service delivery by a government agency. All these theories aim to highlight the importance of public administration in service provision in order to create social value. These theories were further used in the discussion of the findings in Chapter Five to substantiate the responses from respondents about the administration processes of the CSG as an initiative aimed at alleviating poverty at a household level. Furthermore, the argument that the combination of all the three theories results in effective public administration processes was explored in the discussions of the findings in Chapter Six. The combination of these theories indicates that effectiveness in

administration processes is important in achieving the objectives of the CSG programme to alleviate household poverty and directs the implementation of the programme.

The literature review in Chapter Two indicated that the CSG helps to alleviate poverty because the money received goes towards meeting children's basic needs. The theoretical framework and the findings from the respondents showed that poverty alleviation through the CSG is largely as a result of the public administration processes adopted by SASSA as an agency. The theoretical framework indicated that the administrators as the implementers of the process involved in applying for the CSG are as important as the SASSA clients, and that the POSDCORB functions have little influence in the level of service delivery if not incorporated with the *Batho Pele* principles. It was also shown that government agencies as alternative service delivery providers are more effective than government departments because of the emphasis on decentralisation of authority and structures. However, SASSA is not immune to threats posed by the challenges discussed in Chapter Six, such as a lack of accurate information by administrators, uninformed clients and abuse of the CSG, and these should be addressed immediately. These challenges hinder the effectiveness of the public administration processes.

The overall aim of this study was to reveal the importance of public administration processes in implementing government initiatives such as the CSG. The study further aimed to ascertain the role of the CSG in alleviating poverty at the household level particularly in the rural areas. The study has contributed to the understanding of the role of administration processes in improving access to social services as per the findings; this will also help SASSA function better. The following section provides recommendations to SASSA and future researchers who might wish to further investigate this area of study.

7.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

This section aims to suggest ways in which SASSA could improve service delivery and also aims to suggest future research that may be conducted in the same area of study.

- The finding that inaccurate information about the CSG is provided to clients by the administrators indicates that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is not constantly updated about policy changes. Therefore the researcher recommends that SASSA district office must constantly communicate with the local office about all issues pertaining to policy changes. In addition, when

policies and regulations change all staff members must be provided with clear written documentation electronically and in hard-copy format and these must also be available for the clients to access.

- The findings indicate that SASSA administrators do not uphold the *Batho Pele* principles and as a result the level of service delivery is negatively affected. The researcher suggests that proper training must be provided to all administrators on how a public servant must conduct him/herself, what the *Batho Pele* principles mean, and their importance in service delivery. The posters of the *Batho Pele* principles must be displayed on the walls of the SASSA offices so that all clients are able to see them and the complaint box must be placed at the entrance of the waiting area for the clients to easily access and notice it. This should be done to ensure that all clients are treated in a dignified manner, and this will also educate the customers about their rights.

- Based on the finding that there is inadequate infrastructure which makes it difficult for administrators to effectively perform their duties and also undermines the right to equal access by all citizens, the researcher recommends that SASSA at the district office must make funds available to build adequate facilities for the Mthonjaneni community, as this will provide SASSA staff with adequate working conditions.

- Based on the finding that clients are not informed about the CSG requirements, the researcher recommends that SASSA must plan outreach programmes in partnership with ward councillors and ward committee members to educate the Mthonjaneni community about social security grants. Fliers must be created containing information about the CSG and these must be distributed in the local clinics, hospital, schools, community halls and local businesses.

- The findings revealed that the CSG is not linked to any developmental programmes to assist with children's development both while they receive the CSG as well as when they are no longer in the CSG system (after the age of 18 years). The researcher suggests that SASSA together with DSD must form partnerships with local businesses, non-governmental organisations and departments such as the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Science and Technology and others to develop programs that will support the interests of children receiving the CSG at a young

age, provide leadership developmental skills and mentoring programmes that will encourage the children to see themselves as future leaders. Such programmes can provide short and long term development and will also provide the children with the skills to escape poverty.

- The findings indicated that some primary caregivers abuse the CSG, thus the intended beneficiary does not get to enjoy the benefits. The discussion of the findings revealed that this may be a result of the poor monitoring system of the CSG. Therefore, the researcher recommends that SASSA must find way of monitoring their beneficiaries without posing any conditions. Furthermore, future studies on the monitoring and evaluation of the CSG can provide solutions for ensuring that the grant is not abused by the non-beneficiaries.

- Considering that SASSA recently changed the way the CSG is administered and there is little literature on the administration processes which focuses on rural areas, the researcher suggests that future research should aim to investigate this area of study.

- To support the qualitative results on the effectiveness of the administration processes of the CSG in alleviating poverty, further research on the CSG in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality can also be carried out using other research methods such as quantitative or mixed-method approaches.

7.5   CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on the findings, it is clear that the role of public administration is not just to implement government policies through service provision; it is also about ensuring effectiveness and creating service delivery value. The findings reveal that SASSA as a government agency has effectively incorporated the POSDCORB functions within their application process. Proper planning in the application process is evident and all the steps within the process are inter-linked and organised, which ensures proper control and reporting. Findings show that administrators are systematically placed in each step, and work procedures are clear in each step and all administrators work towards achieving one goal, which is to improve clients' ability to access the CSG. Therefore the application process of the CSG is effective in improving access to the grant.

The secondary data showed that POSDCORB functions are not enough in ensuring effectiveness in the public administration process but that *Batho Pele* principles are also critical in the provision of public services. The *Batho Pele* principles purport that public service should be guided by service delivery ethos and committed to quality services that are geared towards development and reduction of poverty, service should be goal and performance oriented, consultative and democratic, transparent, honest and accountable (WPTPSD, 1997). However, the findings from the primary data reveal that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality fails to uphold the *Batho Pele* principles, which as a result cripples the level of service delivery. In addition, the findings indicate that SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality is grappling with the challenges of inadequate infrastructure and uninformed clients, which affects their daily operations as an agency. The aforementioned discussion indicates the importance of prioritising these issues in order to strengthen service delivery, which will transform the lives of the beneficiaries and through this, SASSA in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality can work towards achieving its vision which is to provide a world class social security system.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER FROM UKZN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

11 July 2014

Ms Jennifer Zanele Nxumalo 210546101
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear Ms Nxumalo

Protocol reference number: HSS/0648/014M
Project title: An exploration of public administration processes in alleviating poverty through Child Support Grants: The case of Mthonjaneni Local Municipality

Expedited Approval

In response to your application dated 13 June 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Professor BC Mubangizi
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor B McArthur
cc School Administrator: Ms A Pearce

APPENDIX B: GATEKEEPER'S LETTER FROM COUNCILLOR ONE, MTHONJANENI MUNICIPALITY

UMASIPALA MTHONJANENI MUNICIPALITY
MUNISIPALITEIT

P.O. Box 11, Melmoth, 3835
Tel.: 035 450 2082
Fax. : 035 450 3224
E-Mail: meltlc@mweb.co.za

22 April 2014

To whom it may concern

I Councillor Gabriel Vusumuzi Philani Gumede state that I know Jennifer Zanele Nxumalo ID NO: 9205010428080 that she is currently studying at University of KwaZulu Natal Westville. She lives at Thubalethu Area, Phase 3, and Room 58 under Ward 1. As a Councillor for Ward 6, I am giving her permission to do Research or get findings on Child Support Grant in Ward 6 and surrounding areas.

Thank You

Cllr. Gabriel Vusumuzi Philani Gumede
Ward 6 (073 574 3091)

Umkhandlu Ka Masipala Wase
MTHONJANENI
Municipality / Munisipaliteit
21 Reinhold Street P.O. Box 11, Melmoth

2014 -04- 22

Tel: 035 450 2082   Fax: 035 450 2056
APPROVED
Sign:...

APPENDIX C: GATEKEEPER'S LETTER FROM COUNCILLOR TWO, MTHONJANENI MUNICIPALITY

UMASIPALA MTHONJANENI MUNICIPALITY
MUNISIPALITEIT

P.O. Box 11, Melmoth, 3835
Tel.: 035 450 2082
Fax. : 035 450 3224
E-Mail: meltlc@mweb.co.za

<u>22 April 2014</u>

<u>To whom it may concern</u>

I Councillor Phumlani Emmanuel Ntombela state that I know Jennifer Zanele Nxumalo ID NO: 9205010428080 that she is currently studying at University of KwaZulu Natal Westville. She lives at Thubalethu Area, Phase 3, and Room 58 under Ward 1. As a Councillor for Ward 2, I am giving her permission to do Research or get findings on Child Support Grant in Ward 2 and surrounding areas.

Thank You

_____
Cllr. Phumlaai Emmanuel Ntombela
Ward 2 (072 4971 621)

Umkhandlu Ka Masipala Wase
MTHONJANENI
Municipality / Munisipaliteit
21 Reinhold Street P.O. Box 11, Melmoth

2014 -04- 22

Tel: 035 450 2082   Fax: 035 450 2056
APPROVED
Sign

APPENDIX D: GATEKEEPER'S LETTER FROM SASSA

sassa

Email   : vusumuzim@sassa.gov.za
Tel no   : 033846331?
Enquiries   : Vusumuzi Mahaye
Date   : 09 September 2014

Jennifer Zanele Nxumalo 210546101
ID Number: 920501 0425 080
School of Management, IT and Governance
Westville Campus

SUBJECT: RESEARCH ON SASSA CHILD SUPPORT GRANT POVERTY ALEVIATION

You are hereby granted authority to conduct research on the impact of Social Grants in alleviating poverty. Authority pertains to SASSA offices under Mthonjanani Municipality.

During the research period you will be responsible for the execution of the research related exercises.

You are wished well during this period.

P.P

Vusumuzi Mahaye
Senior Manager: Communications and Marketing
Date: 04 September 2014

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR PARTICIPANTS – INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance

Dear Respondent,

M Admin Research Project
Researcher: Ms Nxumalo Jennifer Zanele (079 9699 242)
Supervisor: Professor Betty C Mubangizi (031 260 8730)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba 031-2603587

I, (Nxumalo Jennifer Zanele) am a Master of Administration student in the School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled (*An exploration of public administration processes in alleviating poverty through Child Support Grants: the case of Mthonjaneni Local Municipality*).

The aim of this study is to: evaluate the role of Public administration processes in alleviating child poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality through Child Support Grant.

Through your participation I hope to understand whether the current public administration processes used by the Department of Social Development and South African Social Security Agency are effective, in ensuring that the Child Support Grant achieves its objective. The results of this survey is intended to contribute to the body of knowledge, will also enable policy makers and practitioners alike to understand the challenges faced by implementers and beneficiaries in increasing not only coverage but the efficiency and effectiveness of the Child Support Grant.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance, UKZN.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above.

The interview should take about 45 minutes. I hope you will take the time to participate in the interview.

Sincerely

Investigator's signature_____ Date_____

This page is to be retained by participant

M Admin Research Project

Researcher: Nxumalo Jennifer Zanele (079 9699 242)

Supervisor: Professor Betty C Mubangizi (031 260 8730)

Research Office: Ms P Ximba 031-2603587

CONSENT

I_____(full   names   of   participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project,
and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from
the project at any time, should I so desire.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

APPENDIX F: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR PARTICIPANTS – FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance

Dear Respondent,

M Admin Research Project
Researcher: Ms Nxumalo Jennifer Zanele (079 9699 242)
Supervisor: Professor Betty C Mubangizi (031 260 8730)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba 031-2603587

I, (Nxumalo Jennifer Zanele) am a Master of Administration student in the School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled (*An exploration of public administration processes in alleviating poverty through Child Support Grants: the case of Mthonjaneni Local Municipality*).

The aim of this study is to: evaluate the role of Public administration processes in alleviating child poverty in Mthonjaneni Local Municipality through Child Support Grant.

Through your participation I hope to understand whether the current public administration processes used by the Department of Social Development and South African Social Security Agency are effective, in ensuring that the Child Support Grant achieves its objective. The results of this survey is intended to contribute to the body of knowledge, will also enable policy makers and practitioners alike to understand the challenges faced by implementers and beneficiaries in increasing not only coverage but the efficiency and effectiveness of the Child Support Grant.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this focus group. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance, UKZN. However, as this is a participation in a focus group, please be aware that I cannot assure that other focus group members will retain confidentiality.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above.

The focus group discussion should take you about one hour and 30 minutes to complete. I hope you will take the time to participate in the focus group.

Sincerely

Investigator's signature_____ Date_____

This page is to be retained by participant

M Admin Research Project
Researcher: Nxumalo Jennifer Zanele (079 9699 242)
Supervisor: Professor Betty C Mubangizi (031 260 8730)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba 031-2603587

CONSENT

I_____(full   names   of   participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project,
and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from
the project at any time, should I so desire.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

College of Law and Management

School of Management, IT, and Governance

Masters Research Project

Researcher: Nxumalo Jennifer (079 969 9242)

Supervisor: Professor BC Mubangizi (031 260 7429)

Semi-Structured Individual Interview Questions

Beneficiaries (Caregivers)

1. How long have your child been receiving the Child Support Grant?
2. What motivated you to apply for the Child Support Grant?
3. How was the experience during the application process, and receipt of the grant?
4. Did you find the administrators involved in the application process helpful, in terms of provision of relevant information on the documents required?
5. How many people are employed in this household?
6. After receiving the grant every month how do you usually spend it?
7. Does it satisfy all the child's needs?
8. Would you prefer getting food parcels instead of the money?
9. If it were to be cancelled how would you feel, and how would it affect you and the child?

Public Administrators (SASSA)

1. What is the application process of the CSG?
2. What qualifies the child to be a recipient of the grant?
3. In terms of planning, control, and directing what is the role of public administrators in ensuring that the grant reaches the right beneficiary?
4. What is your role as public administrators in ensuring that the CSG policy is well implemented?
5. Who is responsible for the control of all the processes during the implementation of the CSG?

6. Staffing is an important component in the achievement of any set goals and objectives in organisations, for the roll-out of the CSG is there enough and well trained administrators to meet the demand of applicants during the application process?
7. During the roll out of the CSG what are the challenges that you encounter?
8. How do you overcome the challenges?
9. What are your perceptions regarding the application process?
10. Are there any developmental programmes that the department has in place to support the attainment of the CSG objectives?

Ward committee members and community leaders

1. What do you understand about the Child Support Grant?
2. What are your perceptions on Child Support Grant?
3. In your view does the Child Support Grant reach the poor of the poorest?
4. In your knowledge are there any programmes beside the Child Support Grant that help in alleviating poverty?
5. As part of serving the community, what role do you play in ensuring that the community is informed about the programmes such as the Child Support Grant?

Focus Group questions – Caregivers only

1. How did you know about the Child Support Grant?
2. Is the Child Support Grant helpful in fulfilling the needs of the Child?
3. Based on your experience, how long did the application process take?
4. During the application process was the SASSA administrators helpful?
5. If uncertified with the level of service delivery, did you know of any channels for laying a complain?