



**Perspectives and experiences of young mothers who are recipients  
of the Child Support Grant (CSG): A case study in rural**

**KwaZulu-Natal by**

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# COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

## DECLARATION

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since the introduction of the child support grant there have been a number of studies done on the social and economic impact of the grant. There has been much concern expressed about the misuse of the child support grant. In South Africa the child support grant is identified as the social security programme for people living in poverty. Studies globally has shown the positive impact of the social security programmes, particularly for less privileged sectors of societies. This study seeks to understand experiences of young mothers receiving the child support grant. Drawing on the experiences of 15 young mothers aged 18 to 24 years old, this study investigates the perspectives and experiences of young mothers receiving the child support grant. The study was conducted among a sample of young mothers with two or more children in a rural area in KwaZulu Natal. Applying the qualitative approach in the form of open-ended interviews, the study aimed to investigate the use of the child support grant. The focus of the study was mainly to understand the use of the child support grant by young mothers with more than one child. The study further examines the impact of the child support grant on the schooling and health of children with siblings. The study also investigated the factors that contribute to having more than one child.

The study found that the child support grant is used mostly on school expenses and that the grant is not enough to meet all the expenses of children. The study found that young mothers with more than one child experience challenges with raising their children, such as lack of financial, emotional and physical support. The interviews with young mothers revealed that such challenges limit them from seeking employment, furthering their studies and progressing in life. The study found no link between having more than one child and the child support grant. The findings from the young mothers revealed a number of factors including the lack of contraceptive use, the lack of education and health facilities are some of the causes of early pregnancy and of having more than one child. The study recommended the integration of the sexual health education into the school syllabus, the promotion of friendly service at health facilities and the introduction of a strategy to monitor the use of the child support grant.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CSG</b>	Child Support Grant
<b>DSD</b>	Department of Social Development
<b>DOH</b>	Department of Health
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic Health Survey
<b>DHET</b>	Department of Higher Education and Training
<b>DTI</b>	Department of Trade and Industry
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>KIDS</b>	KwaZulu Natal Income Dynamics Study
<b>LFS</b>	Labour Force Survey
<b>NAC</b>	National Adoption Coalition
<b>NGOs</b>	Non- Governmental Organisations
<b>SALDRU</b>	South African Labour and Development Research Unit
<b>SADHS</b>	South African Demographic and Health Surveys
<b>SASSA</b>	South African Social Security Agency
<b>SMG</b>	State Maintenance Grant
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

In contrast to most developing countries, South Africa has a well-established social welfare system and a large proportion of its social spending goes towards social grants (Dinbabo, 2011; Nino-Zarazua, et al., 2012; Tillin and Duckett, 2017). The country's historical legacy of segregation and the inequality of opportunities contributed to high levels of poverty and unemployment which has a considerable effect on many families. The emergence of the democratic era in South Africa came with policies acknowledging the importance of social security under the constitutional legislation. The social grants are used to improve standards of living and to redistribute wealth to create a more equitable society (Jorden, Patel and Hochfeld, 2014).

The child support grant is the only direct state service that targets young mothers, particularly poor mothers according to Jordan, Patel and Hochfeld (2014). The child support grant reduces substantially the financial and other forms of stress in the households in which young women live (Jordan, Patel and Hochfeld, 2014). This means the less expansive the welfare policies the more stress there can be in the household as a young mothers' pregnancy commonly is a burden on the family and it can change the relationship with the parents (Taplin, 2009).

The difficulties of young motherhood in the context of poverty show a strong relationship between teenage childbearing and social, psychological and economic disadvantages (Makiwane, 2010). Outcomes could include expulsion or exclusion from educational facilities or a lack of material and social support (Makiwane, 2010). The support that young women receive during pregnancy and after the birth of the child is critical to their own wellbeing and is an important factor in easing their transition to adulthood (Marteleteo et al., 2006). This research sheds light on the experiences and perspectives of young rural mothers who are

recipients of the child support grant and have more than one child in the Gcilima area of the Ugu district located in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

## **1.2. Background**

The State Maintenance Grant (SMG) was introduced in the 1930s to reduce inequality and poverty among women and children. It was introduced by the apartheid government to provide financial support for White, Coloured and Indian families, specifically mothers and children where the spouse was no longer present. It overlooked Black African children living in poverty, the rationale being that it was not fiscally viable to extend the programme to every citizen. The grant was divided into two parts, the first being a parental allowance of R430 per month, and the second a child allowance of R135 per month for a maximum of two children (Seekings 2016). Guardians and mothers receiving the SMG child allowances were required to live with a child under 18 years and should be either unmarried, separated, widowed or abandoned by their spouse for more than six months (Lund, 1999). These categories also included having a spouse who received the social grant or had been declared unfit to work for more than six months (Lund, 1999). The SMG parental allowance only accommodated a nuclear family with a formal marriage, whereby the fathers worked and were the main breadwinners, and their wives were responsible for homemaking and child-rearing.

According to Patel and Plagerson (2016), the SMG programme was criticised for its unequal racial and geographical distribution, as only 0.2% of African children received the grant, those living in rural areas often being excluded due to a lack of awareness of the grant, as well as transport and administrative barriers. After the transition to democracy in 1994 the child support grant in the form of a conditional cash transfer was introduced in 1998 as one of the solutions to reduce poverty, increase economic development and children's school enrolment. The child support grant is the largest social cash transfer programme on the continent, reaching 17 107 189 children in 2017 (Davis et al., 2012; South African Social Services, 2017).

After 1994, the democratic government in South Africa adopted several initiatives and policies to reduce discrimination, inequality and to ensure that special attention was given to child poverty. The policies were meant to reform existing financial assistance to poor households to alleviate poverty, promote income redistribution and to provide sustainable

essential social services. The South African government introduced the child support grant in 1998 to reduce child poverty and to ease the financial burden of parenthood (Aguero et al., 2006). The child support grant is a means-tested cash transfer and financial support system provided to poor households and children living in poverty that is paid monthly to the child's primary caregiver (Mubangizi, 2015). The age limit changed from a child younger than seven in 1998 to a child younger than 18 in 2018 (Beukes et al., 2017). The child support grant also prioritised a child living in poverty. The South African Social Security Agency (2017) reported that in 2015, approximately R11, 953,773 was paid to the child support grant beneficiaries. The child support grant value is R410 per month per child and is paid to the child's primary caregiver - who must be a South African citizen or have a permanent resident or refugee status. Furthermore, the applicants must reside in South Africa and meet the requirements of the means-tested annual income threshold.

The child support grant is designed to support children and to serve largely biological mothers and grandmothers (De Koker, De Waal and Vorster, 2006). For the majority of mothers the child support grant is their only source of monthly income (Zembe-Mkabile et al., 2012). Black African children aged 17 or younger are the most vulnerable to poverty, as well as people living in rural areas who often have little or no education (Engle et al., 2011). Investigating the perspectives and experiences of young mothers who are the child support grant recipients will not only provide clarity on the use of the grant but also show how the money is allocated to meet the needs of more than one child in the household.

The South Africa Social Assistance Agency (SASSA), as a public social service provider is responsible for ensuring that the government provides the money to the right person and at the location most convenient to that person. The Department of Home Affairs and Social Development work together to issue identity documents and birth certificates that enable caregivers and children to register for the child support grant. The service is available at the local or community level, specifically in poverty-stricken areas, where the Department of Home Affairs officials visit high schools to register qualifying students for an identity document, and SASSA officials visit clinics or community centers to register children for grants.

The intention of the child support grant is partly to ensure that children attend and complete schooling, and it is one of the requirements demanded when applying for the grant. However, failure to produce this certificate or to attend school does not result in the refusal to pay the child support grant (Grinspun, 2016). DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2016) have reported that four of the country's nine provinces, namely: Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, and Western Cape, had an 82.5% uptake and 17.5% of the potentially qualifying children were excluded, because of various reasons, including, missing documents, poor service and lack of knowledge.

The South African National Treasury (2014) claimed that 41% of children not receiving the child support grant were either not poor or not poor enough, and therefore did not meet the eligibility criteria. It could also be due to children not having the necessary identity documents or birth certificates, or the absence of supportive adults or social workers who could assist them with making the applications. Also, social workers are meant to sit with the recipient and draw up a budget as to how the grant should be used, but due to the shortage of social workers there is no formal traces or restrictions on the child support grant use. Babies can be registered within 30 days of birth to receive their birth certificates and the child support grant. According to SASSA (2017), 1.8 million people who live below the poverty line do not have access to the child support grant due to the lack of information on how to access grant applications, their location or lack of documentation.

The mismanagement of the child support grant and fraud can encourage society to disrespect government social services (Furnham, Ndlovu and Mkhize, 2009), which influences high rates of poverty, limited service delivery, and unemployment, as the service will fail to reach the broader society, particularly single or female-headed households with more than one child.

Young mothers are regarded as teenagers or adolescents who experience early childbearing (Watts, Liamputtong and Mcmichael, 2015). Adolescence is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood, with Watts, Liamputtong and Mcmichael (2015) regarding it as the time of physiological changes that occur with the progression from puberty to sexual and reproductive maturity. Young mothers' children are vulnerable and at risk of poor health consequences particularly because of socio-economic disadvantages (Mills et al., 2013).

Therefore, the study intends to explore the perspective and experiences of young mothers receiving the child support grant.

Other scholars have reported that young mothers are at an increased risk of psychosocial problems, such as depression and experience social isolation (Boden, Fergusson and Horwood, 2008; Reid and Meadows 2007). Consequently, these challenges affect the development of healthy parenting, which is also the study objective to explore the perspectives and experiences of young mothers with more than one child who are also recipients of the child support grant.

### **1.3. Significance of the research**

The study will contribute to the information available on the child support grant in KwaZuluNatal. There is extensive evidence that women from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to become young mothers in order to access the grant (Stewart, 2003). The media reports that most mothers abuse the child support grant and that fathers and grandmothers even assert that mothers abandon their children yet keep the child support grant for themselves (Goldblatt, 2003). Society also blames the child support grant for encouraging teenage pregnancy, with Spiker, Hebbeler and Mallik, (2005) asserting that it can influence action. While studies could not entirely prove the link between the child support grant and teenage pregnancy, a study based in KwaZulu-Natal revealed that 52% of participants indicated that there was such a relationship (Kubheka, 2013). There are limited studies on how young mothers with more than one child use the child support grant.. For this reason, the study was interested in the perspectives and experiences of young women with more than one child.

### **1.4. Aim and Objectives**

The objective is to shed light on the experiences and perspectives of young rural mothers who are recipients of the child support grant and have more than one child in the rural Gcilima area of Ugu district, KwaZulu-Natal Province.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To ascertain the perspectives and experiences of young mothers who receive the CSG.
- To determine the role of the CSG in improving the quality of life of the mother and child.

- To investigate the use of CSG by young mothers with more than one child.

### **1.5. Intersectional theoretical framework**

The study used the intersectional framework as it recognises the dynamics, relationships, and connections between different variables, such as age, race, gender, and occupation, which influence life changes and which affect social outcomes. Kimberle Crenshaw introduced the ‘intersectionality’ term in the late 1980s to address the marginalisation of Black women who were advocating for an anti-discrimination law. The theory highlights the different experiences of Black women on a broad spectrum, instead of by one trait. Carbado and Roithmayr (2014) and Gilkes (1996) noted that ‘intersectionality’ stresses the significance of Black women's experiences for generating new questions, issues, and interpretations. Crenshaw further expanded the framework to highlight ways that vulnerable women of colour, particularly socially disadvantaged communities, were ignored by advocacy groups around violence against women and other social movements (Carbado and Roithmayr 2014).

Collins (1998) further asserts that the framework gave direction to understanding Black women's poverty, and its links with work and family dynamics. Collins (2000) noted that Black women's disadvantaged labour market status, in turn, has important implications for patterns of Black family organisation and income, and consequently the higher rates of Black poverty. The framework recognises the multiple intersections, perspectives and experiences of young mothers who have more than one child and are the child support grant recipients. These multiple perspectives will explain the decisions that mothers make regarding the use of the child support grant, and how these factors influence decision-making and affect children's well-being.

Crenshaw (1989) highlights that introduced laws and movements mainly ignored violence against women, their marginalisation and racism, within the framework that advocates for transformation, anti-discrimination, and ways to sustain solidarity. Although the research does not focus on the issues of discrimination and racism, it notes that young, Black mothers are affected by various social issues, such as high unemployment, poverty, and dependency on the child support grant. The framework has been used in many disciplines over the years to engage a range of issues where forms of difference come together and are experienced,

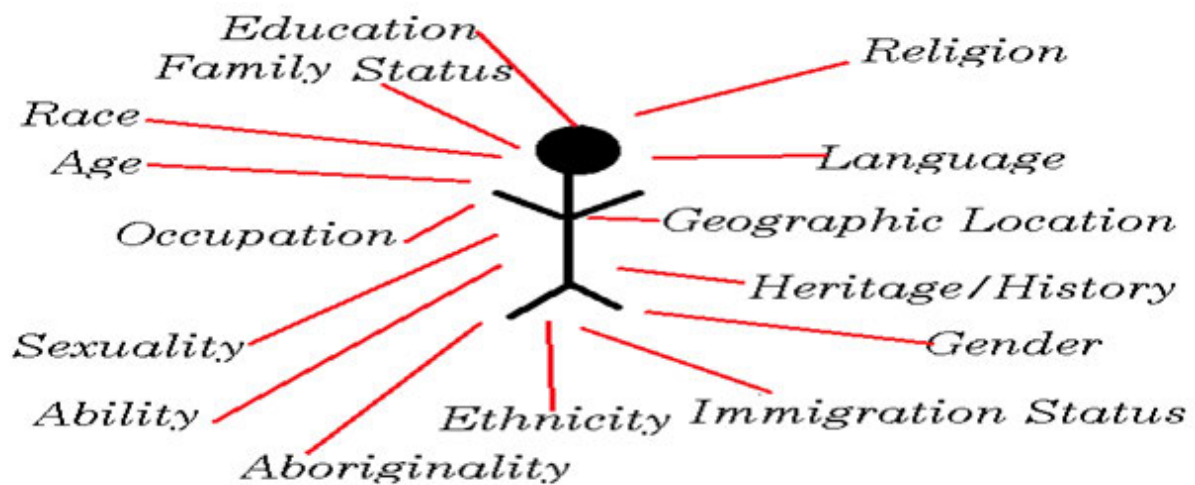
taking into consideration individual experiences and how power relations are reproduced via social practices, institutional formations, and ideologies (Davis, 2008).

The research intends to describe how receiving and using the child support grant can encourage positive social transformation, empowerment, and reconstruction. It offers the potential to look at how young mothers who have more than one child are affected by different experiences to ensure their children directly benefit from the child support grant. 'Intersectionality' was used to explore how experiences are constructed and lived, and a few studies about how it has been put into practice in social or education policies will be examined (Chow, 2016). 'Intersectionality' takes a broad approach and considers the intertwined economic, social, cultural and political contexts in which individual and external conditions interact (Hancock, 2007). For example, the child support grant cash transfer programme is designed to help families living in poverty to reduce child poverty and to promote social and economic development.

This research avoids assuming that all young mothers who have more than one child use the child support grant to cover their children's needs, thus increasing their expenses and therefore the grant money required. For example, Hancock (2007) assert that it is important to recognise that the traditionally used categories of social groups, such as income and health, are hardly separate entities operating independently of one another. The intersectional standpoint has enabled scholars to write on the experiences and voices of those who have been forgotten, ignored and excluded (Degnen and Tyler, 2017). Crenshaw's framework provides an intersectional explanation of Black women's experiences and related factors that contribute to their marginalisation, poverty and other life difficulties. The framework provides clear reasoning of factors associated with a younger mother's decision to use the child support grant, with Figure 1.1 indicating the 15 components that were identified as being potentially relevant to Black women's experiences.



Figure 1.1: The 'Intersectionality' Framework



Source: Crenshaw (1989)

For this research, the framework will review different social aspects of young mothers, including their decisions and attitudes toward their children's well-being. It highlights that a combination of variables shape the perspectives and experiences of women that are important in understanding the social challenges, advantages, and disadvantages encountered by the women and their children. The study uses the framework to tease out how young mothers with more than one child use the child support grant and how their different experiences influence their use. Carbado et al. (2014) assert that intersectional analysis can identify and emphasize commonalities (young Black mothers) and engage in topical inquiries. The framework is relevant to the study as it reviews or covers different social aspects of young mothers. Of the 15 aspects, the study will only focus on the following seven:

**Gender:** the study focuses on females as they are the main recipients of the child support grant and caregivers of their children. The study will also clarify the gender roles related to child support and how it affects the use of the child support grant. Previously, the grant had more male beneficiaries compared to female beneficiaries (Patel et al., 2012).

**Race:** the study focuses on Black African women as they are the main population group enrolled in the child support grant due to widespread poverty.

**Age:** the study focuses on young mothers aged 18-24, as having children at an early age is regarded as being exposed to many challenges, such as delayed education, and limited skills and opportunities for employment. The framework will, therefore, review the different

experiences of employed and unemployed young mothers. It will also examine how the type of occupation they have impacts on the use of the child support grant in the household and towards meeting children's needs and ensuring their well-being.

**Ability:** relates to young mother's skills and ability to take care of their children and to use the child support grant effectively regardless of socio-economic issues. The younger mothers' ability to combine different forms of education or training and motherhood is diminished by the costs of studying and childcare (Hanna, 2001).

**Language and geographic location:** the study investigates the perspectives and experiences of young mothers in rural KwaZulu Natal. As most rural areas are made up of a few ethnic groups, it is common for them to have only one or two dominant languages. Rural areas are also associated with high rates of poverty, unemployment and other social issues. South African poverty rate increased from 53.2% in 2011 to 55.5% in 2015, with Black children aged 17 or younger being the most vulnerable to poverty, including people living in rural areas, with little or no education (Statistics of South Africa, 2016). Studies such as the Australian women's health study showed that younger mothers who live in rural areas are likely to be unemployed (Lee and Gramotnev, 2006). Becoming a young mother commonly leads to adverse outcomes, such as disrupted education, unemployment, and poverty.

**Education:** the level of education can have an impact on the use of the child support grant, children's health and schooling.

**Family status:** relates to the ability of the family to support young mothers and their children financially, emotionally and in other ways.

## **1.6. Organization of chapters**

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter one provides the background of the study, and indicates its significance, as well as the aims and objectives. It presents the theoretical framework that informed this research. Chapter two is the literature review. The chapter reviews relevant national literature on the child support grant and its use, and international literature on factors and consequences of cash transfer programmes. Chapter three, the methodology chapter, discusses the methods used to conduct the study, and it includes the location and population, the methods and instruments used for data collection and the methods of data analysis and it details the ethical considerations and limitations. Chapter four

presents the results and summarises the main findings of the interviews that were conducted with the young women. Chapter five is the concluding chapter that provides a discussion of the main findings comparing it with findings from local and international studies. Finally, the chapters explores the study's implications and makes recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

Generally, governments in most low and middle-income countries have managed to commit to reaching populations in need, through creating policies and implementing projects and programmes, such as promoting human rights and introducing the child support grant (Glassman and Temin, 2016). The child support grant initially aims to enhance the child wellbeing by meeting basic needs in schooling, health and food as the means-tested child social protection system. This chapter reviews the literature on the child support grant as a social security cash transfer. The study further examines the use of the child support grant and the challenges young mothers' experience. In addition, the literature review provides a discussion of the negative and positive impacts of the child support grant.

#### **2.2. Cash transfers across the world**

By 2011, conditional and unconditional cash transfers were adopted in middle- and low income global south nations, including in-kind social assistance benefits and non-contributory pensions for most vulnerable citizens (Brooks, 2015). Cash transfers in middle-income countries are driven by rights-based social assistance systems, and in most colonised countries stem from systems established in the colonial era (Brooks, 2015).

The cash transfers across the world aim to protect and provide security to vulnerable and disadvantaged people. As Ellis (2012) asserts, cash transfers in sub-Saharan Africa are traditionally focused on responding to chronic food insecurity, thereby reducing the need for emergency food aid, that have increasingly been regarded as inadequate for the poor and vulnerable population. Banerjee et al., (2017) also observes that cash transfer programmes implemented in most developing countries are mainly to provide poor households with a regular income and to reduce poverty. The programmes are intended to assist individuals in poverty, to play a preventative and basic role in social protection, and to provide for a wide range of vulnerable groups. The introduction of cash transfer programmes in Latin America and other regions were primarily for development agendas, being designed to alleviate short-

term hardships due to indigence, while encouraging poor households to invest in human capital in order to decrease chronic poverty (Glewwe and Olinto, 2004).

With the increase of poverty and inequality, cash transfer programmes continue to be amended, for example, in Honduras the Program a de Asignacion Familiar (PRAF) was intended to compensate poor households for the hardship imposed by structural adjustment (Moore, 2008). The programme evolved to focus on human capital development to guarantee sustainable development and economic growth (Glewwe and Olinto, 2004). The programme evolved from alleviating the problem to trying to cure the problem, from keeping poor families from falling below critically low consumption levels to eradicating the root cause of poverty, lack of human capital among poor families. The PRAF originally distributed cash grants from health centres and schools, but due to widespread poverty, the programme changed to promoting and providing skills and education for economic development. Cash transfers in some countries not only alleviate poverty or child malnutrition, (Holmlund and Sohlman, 2016), but the money is also used to promote or empower human capital for the citizens to be able to utilise their skills, talents and experience to provide for their families. The Honduran structural adjustment programmes (macroeconomic adjustment) negatively affected their economy, its impact being similar to the South African inequality and poverty pattern, with unequal resource distribution and opportunity division that had its roots in the apartheid era.

In some countries cash transfers focus on providing short-term solutions or services for instance in Lesotho the cash transfer caters for children's needs, namely food, clothes, shoes, school uniforms and related expenses (Marshall and Hill, 2015; Pellerano and Barca 2014). In Ghana, caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) are required to register them and to ensure that they are enrolled in school; however, these conditions are not applied (Tiwari et al., 2016).

The benefits of social protection differ by country, however they share the similar outcome of poverty reduction and enhancing social well-being. For instance, in India, the government provides mid-day meals in schools and thus relieves stress for female-headed low income households, as they can work long hours on a less interrupted basis since they no longer have to hurry home and cook afternoon meals for their children (Afridi, 2010). In Brazil and South

Africa, social pensions for the elderly assist in financing young siblings and some part of the cost of job searching including migration in search of jobs (Posel and Rogan, 2012). The system reduces the risk of young people engaging in demeaning or illegal activities to earn a living, like transactional sex by young girls and women in countries like Malawi, Kenya and Namibia, (Baird et al., 2011; Onyango-Ouma and Samuels, 2012). The youth will be less likely to settle for casual agricultural or less desirable occupations that pay less in Malawi, (Covarrubias, Davis and Winters, 2012) and Namibia it reduced the number of people engaging in criminal activities and reduced reliance on demeaning patron client relations in India (Echeverri-Gent, 1988). Cash transfer grants can contribute to the reduction of disease, for instance, in Sub-Saharan Africa, studies show that it can reduce the risk of HIV infections and in Latin America and Africa it is linked with wider facets of well-being, (Haushofer and Fehr, 2014).

In Malawi, both unconditional and educational-conditioned cash transfers reduced HIV prevalence among girls (Baird et al, 2012). The transfer programme can reduce the risk of early sexual debut, early pregnancy, age-disparate sex and transactional sex, and HIV infection risks among adolescents particularly girls (Cluver et al., 2013). Because they can use the money to maintain their needs, to be less dependent on their partners and to seek employment.

In South Africa, social welfare grants, the school feeding scheme and parenting or teacher support (“cash plus care”) are shown to be more effective than cash transfers alone in reducing adolescent risk behaviour (Cluver et al., 2014). The combination of cash plus care is seen to accelerate the process of social protection, and as a tool to cumulatively reduce risky behaviour among adolescents (Cluver et al., 2015). In Uganda, programmes of economic support (matched savings), educational support and mentoring improved mental health and educational attainment and reduced sexual risk-taking intentions among younger children (Ssewamala et al., 2010). The most effective way to keep adolescents in school is to provide free schooling, to introduce a feeding scheme and to encourage supportive teachers and teaching, as the social protection strategy (Pettifor et al., 2013).

### **2.3. The Child Support Grant in South Africa**

South Africa continues to be a good example to other developing countries through having the largest cash transfer systems in Africa. The child support grant is a cash transfer programme providing money in hand for primary caregivers to meet basic needs of children born and living in poverty. At the dawn of South Africa's democracy in 1994, the majority of the people were disadvantaged from the legacy of apartheid, living in unhealthy conditions, subjected to meagre diets and were vulnerable to health problems. Glassman and Temin (2016) claim that the South African government used the child support grant programmes as the strategy to undo the legacy of the past. The child support grant was introduced in 1998 to reform the child protection system and to address abject poverty. South African social grants in 2014 were reported to have directly benefited an average of over 16 million people monthly (South African Social Security Agency, 2014).

The child support grant benefits children and families residing in low income households because as Mirugi-Mukundi (2010) explains, the majority of underprivileged families rely on the child support grant to meet their basic needs. The child support grant is a supplementary income to parents and families with low income and living in poverty. Nkosi (2011) agrees that the grant is essential for survival of poor families receiving the grant as their sole source of income. These scholars argue that the child support grant benefits the families living in poverty which shows that the child support grant also benefits the family of the children.

The child support grant is accessed by both married couples and single parents depending on their annual threshold income or standard of living, because their income has to meet the criteria. The child support grant accounts for a high proportion of total income for poorer households, asserts Beukes et al. (2017). Similarly, the income threshold for married couple and single mothers was different mainly because married couples can collectively contribute to the child's needs compared to the single parent. Van der Berg, Siebrits and Lekezwa, (2010) adds that in 2008 the means test criterion favoured the rural and informal settlement dwellers if they earned less than R13 200 per year, while urban dwellers received the grant if earning less than R9 600 per year. However, the income criterion was amended during the 2008/2009 fiscal year by removing the rural/urban distinction. The child support grant is currently accessed by everyone that qualifies and that meets the criteria and the income is the

same per child. The annual household income threshold has also increased over the years as the aim to increase the number of children enrolled for the child support grant.

Mutshaeni (2009) asserts that the child support grant's purpose is for those who cannot financially support their children to enable them to meet their basic needs. Several studies in South Africa, including (Zembe-Mkabile et al., 2016) extensive research on its use by mothers in rural and peri-urban settings in the country, point to the inadequacy of the grant to achieve its primary objectives, which are to alleviate food insecurity and improve health outcomes among children. So if the grant is failing to meet its basic mandate to ensure that no child goes hungry, or becomes malnourished, it questions the objectives of economic empowerment, that see it as a potential source of start-up capital that can enable the poor to start small businesses.

#### **2.4. Challenges experienced by young mothers**

The child support grant has increased over the years from R75 per month (Mthethwa, 2017) to R410 per child per month but young mothers continue to experience financial challenges and depression (Mathibedi, 2014). Young women face different challenges due to early childbearing. Young women are more likely to experience economic, personal and social adversity due to childbearing (Brace et al., 2008). The next section will discuss psychological, lack of support and lack of the father's involvement as challenges experienced by young women.

##### **2.4.1. Psychological challenges**

Young mothers experience different challenges in their lives. They become overwhelmed by guilt, anxiety and fear about the future. This constitutes a negative emotional experience as teenagers are still developing in maturity, and still learning coping skills and responsibility for positive parenting. Adelson (2012) also add that teenage mothers face the risk of not being accepted by their peers and their community. Young people often recall the negative responses they receive from family and friends and the trauma they face in trying to decide who to tell about the pregnancy. Society's opinions about young mothers can often focus on negative criticism and judgment which can negatively impact the individual and the child (WHO, 2012). (Koffman's, 2012) paper on Children having Children highlights different arguments by different scholars on how early childbearing is a psychological challenge for



young mothers. The paper reported that young mothers are incapable of becoming good mothers, they are unable to provide adequate care as they are psychologically immature. Therefore, their healthy development and that of the child are at risk. Due to social pressure and parental pressure young mothers sometime experience emotional breakdown and the study observed such experiences of young mothers with more than one child (Romagnoli and Wall, 2012).

#### **2.4.2. Lack of support**

Researchers also argued that adolescent mothers, who deliver a second child soon after a first child is born, often become overwhelmed and are considered more likely to lose any hope for personal achievement (Seitz and Apfel, 1993). Young mothers receiving the child support grant might gain self-esteem and dignity because they have the economic power to provide for their children and to meet their basic needs (Patel et al., 2012). Regardless of the financial support from the government, young mothers also need emotional and physical support to raise their children. This is because teenage motherhood has been shown to have negative consequences for both mother and child (Hobcraft and Kiernan, 2001).

Support for teenage mothers is very important, specifically family support (Leahy-Warren, McCarthy and Corcoran, 2012). Support such as increasing self-esteem for young mothers can lead to positive outcomes, improve mother's well-being, lower depression and decrease risk of child abuse. In general, support for young mothers is influential in raising their children and in displaying optimal parenting behaviour. Klaw, (2008) justifies the need for emotional support and encouragement provided by families and close friends or relatives as this seems to serve a key role in producing a sense of self-efficacy and optimism about achieving future goals. Investigating young mother's experiences should highlight the support they need to raise their children and to use the child support grant wisely.

#### **2.4.3. Support from the father**

Hogan and Kitigawa (1985) found that single mothers are less capable of monitoring their children's activities than other mothers. There is a need for fathers to be more supportive in raising their children. Some studies continue to state that approximately half of South African men are in daily contact with their children (Wight and Fullerton, 2013). This indicates a concern of father's involvement in their children's lives. The study explains the challenges of

young mothers with more than one child and who are single parents. The child support grant is suspected to encourage men to stop working hard to improve their circumstances and to provide for their children. Employed men from rural backgrounds do not buy groceries or send money home. They do not support the children medically nor do they buy clothes (Beernink, 2012).

## **2.5. Early childbearing**

The child support grant is believed to have a negative impact on early childbearing (Holmlund and Sohlman, 2016). However, studies did not find a relationship between the child support grant and early childbearing. Goldblatt (2005) states that there is no evidence to prove the association between high teenage pregnancy and the introduction of the child support grant. In 2008, it was estimated that 16 million births occurred to mothers aged 15-19 years worldwide, of which 95% occurred in low and middle-income countries (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2005) and one million were to girl's aged between 12-15 years every year (Neal et al., 2012). Out of these 36.4 million, almost half are living in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, which has the highest incidence of pregnancy among adolescent girls, which in turn accounts for 28 per cent amongst adolescent mothers compared to 15% and 13% in West and Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa respectively (Loaiza Liang and Snow, 2016). Globally, teenage pregnancy trends have decreased over the years, with the decline being very slow in African compared to western countries. Between 2007 and 2017, fertility declined from an average of 2.73 children per woman to 2.41 in South Africa (Holmlund and Sohlman, 2016).

The misconception about young mothers getting pregnant because of the child support grant is not substantiated, since in sub-Saharan Africa adolescent pregnancy is very high even in countries where there is no child support grant. For example, recent statistics indicate that almost one in five (36.4 million) women aged 20 to 24 had a live birth by the age of 18 and 5.6 million had a live birth before the age of 15 in 2010 (Loaiza, Liang and Snow, 2016). This means that 7.3 million girls are giving birth every year before the age of 18 years and about 20 000 are giving birth daily (Loaiza, Liang and Snow, 2016). There is a high rate of teenage pregnancy in other countries not receiving the child support grant, meaning that different factors contribute to early childbearing, for instance in Pakistan, early pregnancies occur in

young woman who are married at an early age (Chandra-Mouli, Camacho and Michaud, 2013). In Haiti, early pregnancies occur outside formal unions (Chandra-Mouli, Camacho and Michaud, 2013), indicating that circumstances of young women vary in different places. The study conducted in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia showed that cash transfers has no relationship to increasing youth pregnancy in different age groups, rather, it decreases the cases of stillbirth, miscarriage and abortion, with female youth aged 12-24 being more likely to delay first pregnancy in Kenya (Peterman, Yablonski and Daidone, 2017).

A study in the United States of America suggests that high teenage pregnancy rates are due to unfavourable socio-economic conditions (Penman et al., 2013). The prevalence of pregnancy increased with age, rising from 0.6% for females aged 14 years, to 10.7% for females aged 19 years, (Holmlund and Sohlman, 2016). It was reported that 25% of women aged 20 had given birth to a child when they were teenagers and 35% of children were born to teenage mothers; however teenage childbearing has declined especially the proportion of women who gave birth before they reached age 18 (Branson et al., 2013). Furthermore, currently the majority of teenage mothers are giving birth in their late teens and teenage childbearing has declined. Although teenage pregnancy is declining in South Africa, it is still considerably high and unacceptable (Willan, 2013).

South Africa's adolescent fertility rate is half the average for sub-Saharan Africa, but it is three times higher than the average rate in East Asia and four times higher than the average rate in Europe (Holborn and Eddy, 2011). Panday et al. (2009) assert that in the past five decades, the South African fertility rate has been declining compared to other sub-Saharan countries. The fertility rate of all population groups is influenced by the social conditions that young people grow up under, which can include fractured family structures, inequitable access to education and health service, poverty and unemployment (Panday et al., 2009; Hallman, 2004). This suggests that teenagers do not have children at the early age, because of the child support grant, but that it is due to other socio-economic factors. Nkwanyana (2011) asserts that in most cases adolescents become sexually active at a very young age and they become vulnerable to unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Hallman (2004) and Nkwanyana (2011) states that teenagers and young women in South Africa who are from impoverished families are often more exposed to risky sexual behaviours.

## **2.6. Factors contributing to early childbearing**

There are various factors that contribute to early childbearing. The next section will discuss unemployment, peer-knowledge and social pressure, attitudes of the healthcare provider, stigma and lack of sexual and reproductive health education as some of the factors that contribute to early childbearing.

### **2.6.1. Unemployment**

The high rate of unemployment in South Africa is believed to be one of the factors contributing to early pregnancy. According to the Gough, Langevang and Owusu, G (2013), young people experience high unemployment and underemployment rates, which affects not only them but also their families and society in general. The lack of employment is reported to result in idleness and frustration among young people, and this leads them to risky behaviour, and having sex in exchange for money (Garcia and Fares, 2008).

Although Leavy and Smith (2010) reports that young people are not interested in farming and are migrating to urban areas in the global South Hajdu et al. (2013) observe that despite this movement, some continue to rely mainly on agriculture for their livelihoods. There is high unemployment rate among individuals with less than secondary education, followed by the ones with completed secondary education, indicating that the highest number of the child support grant recipients come from caregivers with less than a secondary education. According to Statistics South Africa, (2019) there are 6.7 million unemployed persons, of whom the majority were youth. The child support grant assists mothers with children, who experience hardship raising their children, due to unemployment and other financial constraints and since South African youth experience a high rate of unemployment, young mothers are prone to experiencing financial hardship in raising their children.

In addition, the survey conducted by the Department of Trade and Industry on the South African employment rate in 2011 revealed that youth unemployment rates across all racial groups were very different. Almost 30% of black Africans were officially unemployed compared to 6% Whites (Horwitz and Jain, 2011). According to the statistics, young women aged 15-34 are most vulnerable to high unemployment rates, this being more than 10% higher than their male counterparts (Statistics South Africa, 2014). The reasons for the high

unemployment rates, particularly among young people, is because they lack the necessary skills for the jobs that are available (Department of Trade and Industry, 2014).

Cappelli (2012) noted that job seekers themselves argue that they do not look for jobs because they lack work experience, skills and networks, thus the probability of getting a job is very low. Some scholars assume that some young mothers have children because of the child support grant, although there is no relationship between the child support grant and early childbearing. The youth get bored sitting at home and they discover new hobbies, which might expose them to engaging in unprotected sex and early pregnancy.

### **2.6.2. Peer-knowledge and social pressure**

Young women are scared to inquire or to talk about contraceptives and their main source of information is their peers (Raj et al., 2010). Peer-pressure is reported as a major contributor to early childbearing, because peers feel more comfortable sharing information among themselves compared to sharing with adults. Mantell et al. (2009) reported that many teenage females admitted that they engaged in sexual intercourse because of pressure from their boyfriends who desired it. It was noted that one in three females aged 15 to 17 years felt pressured by men or boyfriends to have sex (Mantell et al., 2009). Some teenagers fear losing their boyfriends and they decide to engage in sexual activity to prove their love and seriousness. Most teenagers report that their first sexual intercourse just happened and that they did not plan to have sex at the time (Raj et al., 2010). In another study that was carried out by the Medical Research Council in Limpopo in 1997, out of 35 girls interviewed, about 20 felt that they would only be accepted as women once they had proved their fertility, and men therefore put pressure on them to fall pregnant (Wood and Jewkes, 2006).

There is also social pressure that makes females feel less of a woman if they do not have children, therefore giving birth ‘proves’ their womanhood and it shows that they are fertile. Many teenagers are not taught about methods of birth control or how to deal with peers who put pressure on them to have unwanted sex (Miller, 2002). Fox (2008) stated that being part of a teenage group that indulges in sexual behaviour would result in each member indulging in sex because they would feel that they have to conform to the accepted behaviour of this group. The research reveals that a person with low self-esteem is more likely to think that

using condoms may make their partner think they are dirty, or to make them feel embarrassed about using condoms and to have a negative attitude towards condoms (Perkel et al., 1991).

### **2.6.3. The attitude of the healthcare provider and stigma**

Young mothers experience humiliation for having children at an early age and when accessing health services, they are judged and discriminated against by healthcare providers. Often teenage girls who fall pregnant fail to access health facilities due to the embarrassment and discrimination that young women face within the health care facility (Morris and Rushwan, 2015). Some young mothers are reported to engage in sexual activity without the use of contraceptives methods due to the attitudes of the health provider (Ahanonu, 2014). Some young mothers are aware of contraceptive methods, however they do not use these, because they fear humiliation and harassment. Researchers have argued that teenage pregnancy will continue to be marked by stigma due to its relationship to sexuality, HIV/AIDS and contraceptive use. This stigma often leads to depression, social exclusions, low self-esteem and poor academic performance, which in turn affects prospects of employment in the future (Abe and Zane, 1990).

Panday et al. (2015) argue that young women who fall pregnant live in fear and silence, which prevents them from accessing necessary resources. A study by the Medical Research Council (2006) indicates that the attitude of nurses is seen as a major barrier to teenagers getting hold of contraception. This is partly because some nurses are uncomfortable with providing teenagers with contraceptives, particularly because they feel that teenagers should not be engaging in sexual intercourse (Wood and Jewkes, 2006; Morris and Rushwan, 2015). When nurses allow teenagers to use contraceptives, they force teenagers to use injectable contraceptives, which they perceive as the most reliable form of contraceptives (Wood and Jewkes, 2006). Young people using condoms are still quite low even when they have sex with people who are not their regular partners (Mchunu et al., 2012).

### **2.6.4. Education**

The numbers of young women who conceive and the rate of HIV infections in South Africa suggest that contraceptive use is erratic (Macleod and Tracey, 2010). Studies have shown that even though there is a high level of knowledge of contraceptive methods, gaps exist (Conover, Harrington and Bale, 2008). This is exacerbated by the fact that teenagers lack

knowledge of, or access to, conventional methods of preventing pregnancy, as they may be too embarrassed or frightened to seek such information (Palamuleni, Kalule-Sabiti and Makiwane, 2007).

If a young mother's education is compromised, the transition from child to adult is affected, with a high chance of producing a vulnerable future generation. Palamuleni, Kalule-Sabiti and Makiwane (2007) argues that teenage mothers have not been educated about sex prior to becoming pregnant, due in part to a lack of communication between parents and their children. In addition, the author states that many teenagers do not have any basic facts about sexuality. Studies have reported parents and adults are not willing to share information on sex and contraception because it is considered as culturally unethical (Hayes, 1987). Some African black cultures do not condone sexual talks between parents and children, because of their cultural beliefs and church teachings.

Recent studies in sub-Saharan Africa suggest that most rural teenage pregnancies occur among young school dropouts (Hallman, 2004). Such teenagers find no reason to delay pregnancy because they are no longer schooling. Africans and Coloureds from poor and mostly disadvantaged families are more likely to have a poor education and hence have a high teenage pregnancy rate in South Africa (Garcia and Fares, 2008). According to Conan (2009), pregnancy for Africans and Coloureds does not always result in loss of educational opportunities. According to Grant and Hallman (2004), although the policy of allowing young mothers to continue at school was not widely utilised, it is credited with a lack of gender differences in total educational attainment and is believed to contribute to the observed long delay before the birth of a second child to adolescent mothers in South Africa. In the case of South Africa, studies show that the pregnancy rate is high in schools located in poor areas and in schools that were poorly resourced (Conan, 2009). Poor resources in schools increases the chances of teenagers having a poor education, as they are more likely to have insufficient information about the prevention of early pregnancy (Cunningham and Boulton, 1996).

## **2.7. Positive impacts of the child support grant**

South Africa's social grants have been credited with a strong progressive social development strategy, through providing income to the poorest and reducing income inequality (Devereux,

2010). The child support grant has been praised as one of the government's most successful anti-poverty programmes that improves child nutrition, health and schooling outcomes (Devereux, 2010).

### **2.7.1. Nutrition and overall development**

The child support grant in rural areas generally has a positive impact on child nutrition (Kubheka, 2013). Studies suggest that the probability that a child would experience hunger in the past year has decreased by 8 to 14 per cent in households receiving the child support grant (DSD, SASSA and UNCF, 2011). Xu, Pirog and Vargas, (2016) asserts that children enrolled in the child support grant are 3.5 centimetres taller than other children who are not recipients. Agüero, Carter and Woolard (2006) and Coetzee (2013) assert that children that have access to the grant are more likely to have better growth, enrolled in school and are less likely to starve. The child support grant is used mainly for purchasing food (Delany et al., 2008; Neves et al., 2009; Patel et al., 2012) and the food that is bought benefits the household as a whole (Hochfeld, 2015). The child support grant directly enhances food security and improves nutritional intake for the children getting the grant and the households in which they live (Agüero, Carter, and Woolard, 2006; Delany et al., 2008; Eyal and Woolard, 2011; Hochfeld, 2015).

Parents are primarily responsible for their children's well-being, however, due to socioeconomic issues such as high unemployment and poverty, government intervenes through providing the child support grant and other social grants aiming to reduce poverty. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa guarantees the right of children to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services. The relationship between the child support grant and the children is observed through measuring the child's well-being before and after their enrolment in the grant. UNICEF (2008) states that children's well-being is the key to measure national development, determining school enrolment or literacy rate, nutrition and child labour. Studies showed that most children from households with an income are highly educated, healthy and successful (Hair et al., 2015).

Ford (2011) contends that children living below the poverty threshold performed less well than children living in a moderately deprived environment and are more likely to experience



learning disabilities and developmental delays. The child support grant also plays a critical role in birth recordings, analysing poverty rate, household income and employment rate, because grant applicant's income threshold must be below a certain income and a child must have a birth certificate. Grinspun (2016) adds that South African birth recordings have been impressive in the past two decades, 87% of births are registered during the first year of life and this increases to 97% before the child turns 5 years old.

### **2.7.2. Education and health**

Studies found a positive correlation between the child support grant and school enrolment of the children, especially children from the poorest families (Lund 2011; Potts 2012). The grant is used on school-related items such as uniforms and stationery for children and parents receiving the child support grant use the funds to pay for crèche and transport. The South African government provides free basic education, basic early development care and a school feeding scheme and this assists in increasing educational attainment and food security. The child support grant improves the household's ability to meet the educational needs of the children. Children receiving the child support grant are more likely to enrol in school compared to poor children of the same age (Khosa and Kaseke, 2017, and Case, Hosegood and Lund, 2005). Nkosi (2011) asserts that the recipients of the child support grant are able to afford school transport for children as well as meeting other school needs. This indicates that there is a positive link between the child support grant and access to education, as Nkosi (2011) continues to argue that the increase of school enrolment assists children to become economically independent and to not to experience poverty as adults. DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2011) asserts that mothers receiving the grant are better informed regarding early childhood development services and the process or requirement to register their children at such facilities. These facilities can have a positive effect on improving children's ability to develop social skills and to create a safer environment.

Research conducted by DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2011) evaluating the child support grant reported that primary caregivers use the grant on school-related expenses such as crèche fees, pens, bags, calculators, transport, pre-school fees, clothes and soccer trips. The majority further mentioned that buying school uniforms was a priority and giving school children pocket money. The households receiving the child support grant reduced schooling

postponements and absenteeism among male adolescents by 27% and increased grade attainment for early recipients of the grant (Delany and Jehoma, 2016).

Evidence of this outcome is that South Africa has high school enrolment, for both boys and girls, across all population groups (Grinspun, 2016). The child support grant has a positive impact on school enrolment and it further enables families or caregivers to invest in their children's future. It is common for a household receiving the child support grant to have all of its children enrolled in school, despite the number of children they have (DSD, SASSA and UNICEF and Grinspun, 2016). Children enrolled for the child support grant immediately after birth have 27% less chance of starting school late compared to child enrolled when they reach the compulsory age for schooling and early enrolled children can complete a quarter of a grade more by age 10 (DSD, SASSA and UNICEF and Grinspun, 2016).

The child support grant has a positive impact on improving children's health. Children are vulnerable to getting sick and receiving the grant will contribute to health expenses. Grinspun (2016) asserts that children who were enrolled later on for the child support grant had shown a higher likelihood of being ill compared to those enrolled at birth. Although children enrolled on the child support grant also use the public health service, clinic and hospitals, however the access to the grant will allow them to visit doctors if they not satisfied with public health services or if the child requires a specialist. Children enrolled at birth had less likelihood of being ill and those enrolled at age six had a higher likelihood of being ill (Jehoma, 2016). A survey conducted in South Africa found that 81.7% of households that attended public healthcare facilities were either very satisfied or satisfied with the service they received compared to 97.3% of households that attended private health-care facilities (UNICEF, 2013). Of the children receiving the child support grant 12% are more likely to be weighed before turning two and health impacts were higher among educated mothers (DSD, SASSA and UNICEF, 2011). Male children are most likely to be ill compared to female children, therefore the child support grant reduces incidence of illness among boys (Eyal and Woolard, 2011). The child support grant's impact on health is associated with the level of education of the caregivers, thus indicating that receiving the grant combined with low level education, can have a negative impact on children's health (Jehoma, 2016).

### **2.7.3. Household Expenses**

Fisher and Wiassmer (2015) highlights that international evidence suggests that child support schemes provide a small but significant contribution to the household income of single parents and have contributed to reducing child poverty. Evidence shows that the child support grant income is strongly pooled toward the improvement of the welfare of the entire household members rather than just towards the formally designated grant recipient (Lund, 1999). Sometimes the use of the child support grant is not fully controlled by the individual, but within the household one resides in and decisions about the child support grant can be influenced by the type of support one receives.

Households receiving the child support grant participate in Stokvels (informal mutual savings societies) (Neves et al., 2009; Holmlund and Sohlman, 2016). If receipt of the grant has a positive effect on the spending habits of the household, expenditure should be channelled toward items which are beneficial to the development of the children in the household such as food, healthcare and education (Eyal and Woolard, 2011). In most cases young mothers financially depend on their family and relatives. The child support grant may decrease the number of households living under the poverty line.

Some young mothers come from poverty-stricken families, which adds more frustration in finding means of survival, in this case the child support grant is used for both the child and household expenses (Mosoetsa, 2011; Kgawane-Swathe, 2014). Poor households receiving the child support grant develop solutions to complex social problems like poverty and unemployment, they are constantly navigating between a range of options to secure the well-being of their children and to address the needs of other household members (Neves et al., 2009).

Grinspun (2015) asserts that some caregivers report that the child support grant enables them to purchase a larger quantity of food and this type of food expenditure is common among households with grant recipients compared to poor household not receiving the grant. The child support grant is largely spent on school-related costs, because after purchasing food, then school fees, transport and uniforms are the foremost spending items in the households. In 2012 on average, households spent R9.30 on illness-related expenditure and if the child got

sick 30.9% of the money in the households was spent on medication, tests, fees, transport and other illness-related costs (Cleary et al., 2013).

#### **2.7.4. Women empowerment**

Patel et al. (2014) explain that empowerment pertains to having decision-making power and making choices in relation to resources which could be of a material or economic nature. According to gender constructed roles women roles revolve inside the house, mostly cooking and looking after children and the home, which makes sense then that the majority of caregivers or primary recipients of the child support grant are women.

Patel et al. (2012) assert that the child support grant gives women power over household decision-making in financial matters such as spending towards child wellbeing. This gives them a sense of empowerment and it has positive social effects. A study conducted in two South African provinces (Eastern Cape and Western Cape) which interviewed females between the ages 18-24 receiving the child support grant found mixed outcomes as some women assert that the grant provides protection and dignity, because they can provide for their children which is their role as caregivers (Wright et al., 2015). However, they further stated that the registration process, attitude of the government officials and the small grant income erodes their dignity (Wright et al., 2015). The child support grant can influence the power dynamics in the household, from dependents to breadwinners.

Posel and Rogan (2012) assert that poverty is higher among women and households headed by women, therefore the child support grant reduces the complexity of poverty for female caregivers and female headed households. This means single parents particularly female parents are less likely to experience poverty when receiving the child support grant.

Research on women's experiences in African countries in 2010 indicated that the cash transfers are used for meeting women's needs, for example in countries like Kenya (Kukrety and Mohanty, 2011). Similarly, in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Peru women's income promotes a stable consumption pattern, including household's expenditure on food, health, education and immediate needs, such as protection against seasonal vulnerability (Holmes et al., 2011).

Most of the child support grant beneficiaries spend most of their time on care activities such as care for children and household needs (Patel et al., 2012), which can limit them to realise

their human capabilities and care activities is a major factor in gender inequality. The majority of recipients are women and the power they gain from the child support grant can reduce women's experiences of violence, because of dependency on men and an expansion of women's autonomy (Haushofer and Shapiro, 2013). Gibbs et al. (2018) assert that the child support grant increases access to credit by raising an individual's creditworthiness, alleviates poverty in the household, and raises women's bargaining power in the household (Tanga and Gutura, 2013).

#### **2.7.5. Job seeking and labour force participation**

Eyal and Woolard (2011) found that the child support grant increases the probability of the recipients entering the labour force and of being employed, while decreasing unemployment. The child support grant beneficiaries stand high chances of participating in the labour market because they can use the grant income to submit their portfolios for jobs and pay for transport. Neves et al. (2009) adds that beneficiaries of the child support grant are more likely to secure employment compared to non-beneficiaries.

Households receiving the child support grant or other social grants have greater chances to secure employment, because they are able to use the available funds to travel around searching for employment and that results in a higher employment rate than households not receiving any grant. There is a high unemployment rate among females nationally and this is related to enormous domestic and care responsibilities of women with young children and unemployment is also high among the child support grant beneficiaries (Tanga and Gutura, 2013). Tiberti et al., (2018) contend that the child support grant gives women income consistency and power or capability to seek or be employed.

Research conducted in Doornkop in 2012 found that 12.5% of the child support grant beneficiaries were employed (Patel et al., 2012). The child support grant income might be small; however, the grant beneficiaries are more likely to be employed compared to nonbeneficiaries (Tanga and Gutura, 2013). The child support grant does not only have a positive effect on labour participation, it also impacts positively on the earnings of family members (DSD; SASSA and UNICEF, 2011). The child support grant increases the household income, especially in households with working people, because the money can be used collectively to meet necessary expenses. Eyal and Woolard (2011) found a positive

relationship between receipt of the child support grant and participation in the labour market, as well as on probability of being employed.

## **2.8. Negative impacts of the child support grant**

Some studies report that the reason why there are high rate of teenage pregnancy and inequality or dependency in the country is because of the child support grant, that encourages young women to become pregnant to access the grant (Tiberti et al., 2018). The next section will discuss dependency and laziness and early childbearing as some of the negative impacts of the child support grant.

### **2.8.1. Dependency and laziness**

Poverty alleviation is one of the primary objectives of social welfare policy. Van der Berg, Siebrits and lekezwa (2010) asserts that the impact of cash transfers in South Africa are unclear and complicated, due to the fact that taxpayers are charged onerous tax rates and it reduces the incentive for low-income earners to save for retirement (National Treasury, 2004). The impact of this disincentive on the savings decisions of lower-income workers behaviour remains unresolved (Tiberti et al., 2018). Some argue that the social grants undermine people living in poor areas, particularly in rural communities because they are able to support themselves with subsistence agriculture (Devereux, 2010). The child support grant is labelled as costing the pocket of the tax payer and increasing dependency on government, where people choose not to be economically active, because of the grant.

Although the child support grant is intended to alleviate poverty and income inequality, however, South Africa has a high poverty rate (Altman, Hart and Jacobs, 2009). Although some scholars disagree with the argument, they assert that social grants have been able to alter levels of inequality marginally and have reduced poverty among the poorest households in South Africa (OECD, 2010). Several studies in South Africa, including Surender, Noble and Wright (2010) published an article titled “Social assistance and dependency in South Africa: An analysis of attitudes to paid work and social grants”. The findings revealed that joblessness had not become ‘normalised’, and all categories of the unemployed were extremely motivated to get work. Grant recipients did not subscribe to a distinctive culture but to mainstream values and aspirations. More recently Ferguson (2015) published a book on the issue of social grants, in a book titled “Give a man a fish: Reflections on the new politics

of distribution”, with a substantial focus on the idea that cash transfers in South Africa and elsewhere lead to dependency and laziness.

### **2.8.2. The misuse of the child support grant**

Researchers such as Potts (2012) reported that the child support grant is misused and Mutshaeni (2009) adds that recipients know the purpose of the grant, however, continue to selfishly and carelessly use it. If the child support grant is shared among the other family members, it is sometimes misused because it is not spent specifically on children. Mutshaeni (2009) asserts that young women share the grant in their relationship with their boyfriends or partners. Young women living with their parents or still under their parent’s roof do not have full control over the use of the child support grant and Jordan, Patel and Hochfeld (2014) add that some young women might make decisions independently, but mostly the parents or their seniors in the household make decisions and sometimes their boyfriends. In South Africa it is commonly reported that the child support grant is used for purchasing alcohol, for paying for visits to hairdressers by caregivers, spending on boyfriends, gambling, cell phones, clothes for caregivers and fast food (DSD, SASSA and UNICEF, 2011).

### **2.9. Summary**

Cash transfers play an essential role in almost all countries, particularly developing regions with high poverty and other challenging socio-economic conditions. The use of the child support grant varies, and it depends on the circumstances or situation of the beneficiary. However, in poor households, the child support grant may not only benefit the child, but also their siblings and the parents. The child support grant can improve the family’s human capital, education, health status and economic growth. The child support grant is regarded as more effective and helpful in eradicating poverty than any other unconditional cash transfers. Previous studies have demonstrated that the use of the child support grant has positive and negative impacts. The positive impact relates to improving nutrition and overall development, promoting women empowerment and labour participation. The negative impact relates to early childbearing and dependency and idleness. The child support grant is reported to be used mostly on food, education and transport compared to other life expenses. Some scholars believe that young mothers misuse the child support grant but there is no evidence to support this assertion.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

There have been a number of studies on the child support grant since the introduction of this cash transfer programme. The objective of this study was to shed light on the experiences and perspectives of young mothers who are recipients of the child support grant and who have more than one child in rural Gcilima, an area of Ugu district, situated in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The research draws on the qualitative data from the in-depth interviews to understand the experiences of young mothers who have two and more children and are recipients of the child support grant. This chapter provides an outline of the research study setting. The chapter outlines the methods of data collection used and the techniques of data analysis to make sense of the data, highlighting the main ethical considerations as well as limitations of the study.

#### **3.2. Study Area**

This study was conducted in Gcilima (KwaXolo), a rural area of South Coast (Port Shepstone) of Kwa-Zulu Natal, under Ugu district. Gcilima is situated in Margate (see Figure 3.1.) and falls under Ray Nkonyeni Municipality of Ugu District Municipality. The district is made up of four local municipalities (see Figure 3.2): Umdoni, uMzumbe, Ray Nkonyeni and Umuziwabantu, and eight other towns including Harding, Hibberdene, Margate, Pennington, Port Edward, Port Shepstone, Scottburgh/Umzinto North, Southbroom.



**Figure 3.1. Map of South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal (Gcilima)**



**Figure 3.2. Ugu District local municipalities**



Source: Google Maps (2019)

According to the community survey conducted by Statistics of South Africa (2016) the population of Gcilima was 6,078 consisting of 3,180 females (52.40%) and 2,893 males (47.60%). The population is mixed but the Black African population constitutes the largest group (99.21%), followed by Indians (0.36%), Coloureds (0.20%), Whites (0.10%) and other

groups (0.13%). IsiZulu is the main language and is mostly used by the majority of the population (78.2%) followed by IsiXhosa (2.60%), English (1.56) and IsiNdebele (1.09), according to Statistics South Africa (2016).

The dependency rate in Ray Nkonyeni municipality is 54%, with the majority of the population depending on government grants and subsidies while few hold formal jobs. In the municipality, the gap between the rich and the poor is extremely wide. The majority of Black African families in rural areas still live below the poverty line, which is below R1500 monthly income (Statistics South Africa, 2016). A large number of females within the municipality are unemployed and had no source of income compared to males.

Gcilima is a tribal area consisting of six wards, and for the purposes of the study, participants were recruited from three wards, ward 7, 8 and 9. The researcher chose this study site because they are popular areas and it was accessible in terms of transport. The researcher resides in ward 7 therefore it is effective in terms of purposive sampling. Gcilima village is best known for political violence between the African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) which forced people to flee their homes and lived in fear of attack. The violence escalated crime in general and there were difficulties in distinguishing criminal and political violence (Louw, 1994). The study conducted by Geerts in 2014 agricultural production in Gcilima found that the majority of farmers are older than 45 years and had not completed their secondary education and In addition, most farmers received government grants and some received both the old age pension and the child support grant (Geerts, 2014).

The Gcilima area has six clinics that operate daily on a 24 hours basis. The village has several commercial and social activities limited to small local convenience shops, taverns as well as small scale manufacturing activities (block making) and personal services such as salons and subsidiary agricultural activities.

Further, there is a newly built stadium located at Thokothe accommodating different sporting activities including basketball, netball, soccer, tennis, and athletics with two fields and a multi-sport combination court. The village has a Sinekhono feeding scheme located at Kambokodisa (see Figure 3.3) near Ndlukulwane Primary School, focusing on children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The project tries to close the poverty gap, by supporting children who lost their parents at an early age because of HIV and AIDS and other related sicknesses.

The project feeds 3000 children with breakfast every-day and lunch three days a week and local farms donate bananas twice a week. The fruit is used when lunches are not available.

**Figure 3.3 Sinekhono Feeding scheme**



**Figure 3.4 Community Hall and Hannes Shelter**



The village has a community hall to hold meetings and to host community events (see Figure 3.4) as well as shelter accommodating people experiencing domestic violence and abuse. They take shelter here for six months or until they are fit enough to be independent and less vulnerable. The programme lacks mechanisms to monitor the progress of the victims outside the programme, for instance, those who do not have long-term accommodation and solutions

for those who cannot go back to their abusive partners or families. However, the Madikiza's outreach programme (see Figure 3.4) identifies abused individuals and tries to do follow ups on the patients after they leave in the shelter. Most children and community members walk a long distance to access schools and clinics and transport is not too effective. The children also use roads that are in poor condition to get to school.

### **3.3 Qualitative research**

The study used qualitative research methods to gain an in-depth view of the perspectives of young mothers with more than one child. Qualitative research permits researchers to determine how meanings are formed and to discover rather than to test variables (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Qualitative research allows the researcher to relate and interconnect analyses, (Wagner et al., 2012) and to guide individuals in sharing their perspectives on the phenomena of interest. The research method was suitable for the study because it involved understanding experiences and perspectives of the participants. The participants were required to share how they use the child support grant to raise more than one child. According to Creswell (1994; 22)

"a qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting".

This methodology was relevant to this study to investigate young mother's perceptions and experiences of the use of the child support grant. Heron and Reason (1997: 27) further point out that

"the rationale for qualitative methods relates to the researcher's beliefs and assumptions about science and explores what we view as sources of confusion in understanding qualitative approaches to inquire".

Therefore, better understanding and new information emerge through interaction between the researchers and the informants, constructed information which cannot be observed directly to avoid simple interpretation because participants' relationships may extend over time and it is crucial to achieving significant depth.

### **3.4 Process of data collection**

The population of interest in this study was young mothers with more than one child who are the recipient of the child support grant. In addition, to be eligible for the study they had to be aged 18 to 24 years. The child support grant beneficiary is the primary caregiver of the child, however the study focused only on biological mothers with more than one child to gain insights into their experiences and perspectives on the use of the child support grant.

Non-probability sampling methods do not attempt to select a random sample from the population of interest (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). It is a technique in which some units of the population have zero chance of selection or where the probability of selection cannot be accurately determined (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Since the selection is non-random, nonprobability sampling does not allow the estimation of sampling errors and may be subjected to a sampling bias. The disadvantage of this technique is that information from a sample cannot be generalised to the population (Warren, 2011). This type of sampling method is common in qualitative research and is advantageous as it is cost-effective and time-effective and it is possible to reflect on the descriptive comments about the sample (Warren, 2011). For this study, the sampling strategy selected is purposive sampling.

Patton and Cochran, (2002) suggest that purposive sampling is selecting participants with key demographic characteristics that are likely to be effective and useful for the purpose of investigating the research topic. This study employed the purposive sampling method to select participants because the study was based on a small geographical area and the researcher is from area where the study is based therefore the researcher already knew young mothers that meet the criteria. The study recruited 15 young black African mothers aged 18-24 and this meant that parental consent was not required. To be eligible for participation the prospective participants had to be a biological mother, aged between 18 and 24 years and a recipient of the child support grant. In addition, they had to have more than one child. Purposive sampling is also referred to as subjective sampling, as Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006) define purposive sampling as the researcher's judgment drawn from the characteristics that represent the sample. The researcher was familiar with the population of the study and the location of the study was a walkable distance when transport was not

available. The area is characterised by small agricultural population and for this reason, purposive sampling was used.

This research employed in-depth interviews to generate data as this method enabled the researcher to obtain rich descriptive data of the participant's experiences, views, beliefs and opinions. Blandford (2013) states that in-depth interviews involve observations that have some explicit structure to them, in terms of theory or method, but are not completely structured. This method allowed for a detailed understanding of the perspectives and experiences of young mothers who are child support grant recipients. In-depth interviews allowed participants to respond to questions in a manner that made them add their opinions. The research involved 15 participants and used an open-ended interview schedule with the research being based in the small area where the young women are resident. The standard of living in rural areas is not as diverse as urban areas.

The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews and participants were allowed to choose the venue for interviews that ensured maximum privacy. All interviews were conducted face-to-face at the homes of the young mothers and the participants specified that they were more comfortable in their homes which was also an advantage for the researcher. Due to the fact that the researcher did not have to book or organise a venue to conduct interviews this avoided transportation expenses. The interviews were conducted in private rooms as a way to ensure maximum privacy.

All the participants were approached individually in their households and the researcher outlined the purpose of the research. The researcher allowed the participants to ask questions and probe for clarifications, as well as addressing any concern with the research. For those who were interested in participating in the research, the researcher arranged appointments to conduct interviews. The selected participants were young mothers aged 18-24, with more than two children and recipients of the child support grant. Those who agreed to participate signed a consent form, agreeing that they can be recorded and understanding their rights as the interviewee. The interviews were recorded with the permission of young mothers and there were assured confidentiality.

The participants also signed consent forms indicating their understanding of what is expected from them, the purpose of the research and their inclination to participate in the research. The researcher explained to the participants that the recordings would be kept safe in the supervisor's office and no one would have access to them. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. The interview schedule consisted of open-ended questions and the questions covered themes of relevance to the research.

The questions were divided into sections. Firstly, the participants were asked about their socio-economic and demographic characteristics, followed by their experiences of having two and more children, their understanding of the purpose of the child support grant, their perceptions of young mothers with more than one child, the use of the child support grant. Lastly, they were asked about their children's health and education, future aspirations, and their family structure and finances (Appendix I). All the interviews were in the local language, however, before the commencement of the research, the researcher asked the participants to choose to be interviewed either in English or in isiZulu. All the interviews were recorded, but the researcher also took notes during the interviews.

Most interviews were conducted on Saturday because the participants were less busy and those who were working, and studying were available only on weekends. There were five interviews conducted during the weekdays with participants who were unemployed and not studying. The researcher did a minimum of one and maximum of three interviews on weekends depending on the number of participants who booked that date. All the participants that the researcher approached for the first time were willing and keen to participate.

### **3.5. Data analysis**

According to Seers (2012; 19)

“analysis inevitably involves subjective choices and it is important to document what you have done and why, so a clear audit trail is provided”.

The purpose of data analysis in qualitative research methods is to sort and organise information. During the interviews notes were taken and recordings transcribed. Transcriptions were employed as they were useful in analysing data. The interviews were transcribed and translated from isiZulu into English, although transcribing was time consuming and involved extensive work. Once data had been gathered from the in-depth interviews, thematic analysis

was then applied to this data. The researcher used the thematic method to analyse the data collected from young mothers who were recipients of the child support grant. This thematic method is used for identifying patterns in the information provided and then group themes together. Patton and Cochran (2002) add that thematic analysis works across all the data to identify frequent common issues and to label them into main themes that summarise all the responses collected. For example, if three young mothers provide similar answers, data should be placed in one category. Subsequently, the complete coded data will be gathered together to look at patterns that will form the basis for the report (Patton and Cochran, 2002). The researcher listened to all 15 recorded interviews and also reflected on the written notes when analysing the data. Using thematic analysis, the researcher identified the initial themes after the data had been sorted. Coding involves organising data into meaningful groups, tags, and labels. Once coding was completed, the data was then sorted into themes. Boyatzis (1998) notes that some initial codes form main themes and some form sub-themes.

### **3.6. Ethical considerations**

Ethical clearance to proceed with the study was obtained from the Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Appendix II). Once ethical approval for the study was obtained, the researcher met with the participants and explained the purpose of the study. The researcher first introduced herself and then explained the purpose of the study and also answered any questions from the participants. The participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point if they wished to do so. There was no stress or distressing emotions, or memories expected to be provoked, however, participants were briefed prior to the interview about not answering questions that made them feel uncomfortable and their right to withdraw from the study at any time they wished.

### **3.7. Limitations of the study**

This study is limited to the rural population whose experiences may be different from those of other rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal and might have been enriched by comparing people in Gcilima with those in other areas of KwaZulu-Natal. However, due to the proximity of the research and financial constraints, it was limited to Gcilima rural area of KwaZulu-Natal. The participants might not have been completely honest in the interviews. They may have



provided false information. The study's aim was to investigate the experiences and perspectives of the participants using qualitative research methodology but the sample does not represent the whole population of mothers with two or more children in KwaZulu-Natal who were recipients of the child support grant. The study would have gained more information from interviewing more participants, however the qualitative method requires time and resources to gather data. Transcribing and coding (labelling and mapping) are painstaking procedures that need resources. Qualitative research requires focus because sometimes participants interpret questions in their own way and all the interviews were conducted in IsiZulu. The use of the child support grant is a serious topic in South Africa and qualitative methods for the study required one-on-one interviews, which might have influenced participants not to disclose some information or some participant may have not been honest when answering some questions. The researcher is from the community and that can limit the data provided by the participants, however the researcher tried to find participants she was not familiar with to minimise such limitations.

### **3.8. Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the methods used to collect the data for the study. The study employed qualitative methods and this method was deemed suitable for exploring the perspectives and experiences of young mothers who are CSG recipients with two or more children. Ethical considerations were explained and the importance of not compromising the individual's identity was highlighted.

## **Chapter four**

### **Results**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the interviews conducted with 15 young mothers who have more than one child and are recipients of the child support grant. The overall aim of the study was to explore their perspectives and experiences with the child support grant. The study was interested in gaining greater insight into the impact of the grant on the lives of the recipients and their children. This chapter starts by presenting the sample characteristics and the reactions to pregnancy, reasons for pregnancy and the role of the child support grant.

#### **4.2. Sample Characteristics**

Table 4.1 presents the characteristics of the participants of the study. The study consisted of 15 Black women with more than one child. The majority of women had two children. Only one woman had four children while three women had three children. All participants were the recipients of the child support grant for all their children. The ages of the young women in the sample ranged between 18 to 24 years. The average age of the sample was 21 years and the average number of children of the participants was two.

There were only two married women among the fifteen mothers but only one woman was married to the father of the children. The women had completed their secondary schooling and were staying with their children. The findings from the women reveals that young women are less likely to get married and to marry the father of the children. This could also be because that most of the women were not in a relationship with the father of their children. The majority of the mothers resided at home with their parents. The findings from the interviews reveals that regardless of the number of children, most young mothers resided at home with their parents and they were unemployed. Only three women were single parents staying alone with their children. The unemployed, single parents were heavily dependent on the child support grant as the main or only source of income. The majority of the women were unemployed, with only four working mothers. The four employed women worked in low paying jobs as a cashier, domestic worker, advertising insurance and a cleaner. Because of their low level of education and lack of experience, most women reported that it is hard to

secure employment. The reports from the participants indicated that grant recipients with more than one child were unemployed because they do not have work experience, skills and qualifications that can place them in secure employment and they depend on the grant to survive.

The participant's level of education varied. Most of the women at least had a matric certificate. Two of the women had a degree, eight had completed their secondary education and five did not complete school. A few of the women (4) that did not complete school dropped out at Grade 11 and one at Grade 6. The majority of the young women became pregnant while in school and they were aged between 15 and 18 years. The reports from the women revealed that most young women with more than one child were able to complete their secondary education and they got pregnant with their second and the third child after completing school. The reports from the women revealed that most with more than one child were able to finish high school after their first child. However, others left school because they had no one to take care of their first child. The reports from the mothers revealed that there was a significant age difference between the first and the second child, because they had their second and third children after finishing high school. However, most women did not further their studies because they could not afford the fees and those that left school felt they had to find employment to support their first child and two were completing their degree.

**Table 4.1. Characteristics of the sample**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>No. of children</b>	<b>Highest level of education</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of children receiving the CSG</b>
1	24 years	Single	4	Matric	Unemployed	4
2	23 years	Single	3	Matric	Student	3
3	23 years	Married	2	Matric	Unemployed	2
4	21 years	Single	2	Matric	Unemployed	2
5	24 years	Single	2	Degree	Student	2
6	22 years	Single	2	Grade 11	Employed	2
7	20 years	Single	2	Grade 11	Unemployed	2
8	24 years	Single	3	Matric	Employed	3
9	22 years	Married	3	Matric	Unemployed	3
10	18 years	Single	3	Matric	Unemployed	2
11	19 years	Single	3	Grade 11	Employed	2
12	18 years	Single	2	Grade 6	Employed	2
13	21 years	Single	2	Grade 11	Unemployed	2
14	19 years	Single	2	Matric	Unemployed	2
15	20 years	Single	2	Degree	Unemployed	2

### 4.3. Limitations of the child support grant

The women reacted differently to the pregnancy considering that early childbearing is associated with different challenges. All the women felt that having more than one child demands more emotional, financial and physical support, such as having a babysitter, money for children's expenses and having an adviser or mentor to deal with depression and frustration. Some women stated that they do not have anyone to talk to and share their problems with and this sometimes creates regret of having children at an early age. As a result of the expenses and pressure of raising children and not having solutions to financial problems, some felt that their children were a mistake.

*"Sometimes when the stress overpowers me, I would breakdown and just wish my children were a mistake that never happened, even though when I look at them I know I love them dearly. So I get depressed and emotional"* (IDI#4, 21 year old)

The women reported that they experience depression, frustration and stress, because of motherhood and because having more than one child is not easy and as young mother it is hard to cope and deal with the pressure alone. However, they have no choice but to endure the pressure and move on with their lives, for the sake of their children's well-being.

*"I do have problems, especially as a single parent and raising two children is not a joke. I have so much stress and frustration, because I do not have anyone to talk to and share my problems with. I have no one to advise me"* (IDI#6, 22 year old)

The women also revealed that motherhood comes with a number of challenges. They reported experiencing emotional problems because they are still young and need guidance in raising more than one child and in dealing with other social challenges, such as unemployment or working in a low paying job and being a single parent.

Most women reported that the fathers of the children were not financially contributing to raising the children and this makes it hard to raise their children with only the money they receive from the child support grant. The women indicated that raising more than one child is not only a full-time job, but it involves a great deal of financial expenses and most

participants were unemployed. Some participants expressed anger when they were asked about their relationship with the father of the children, which resulted in cursing and name calling.

*“The father of the children is a dog, He ran away without looking back. He has neither love nor care for his children” (IDI#7, 20 year old)*

*“He does not exist, he is absent in my children’s life” (IDI#3, 23 year old)*

*“I do not know when last I saw him. There is absolutely no support coming from him, no relationship with his children and there is no communication” (IDI#13, 21 year old)*

The reports from the women indicated that the father’s lack of financial support was not because most of them were unemployed, but because they were not involved in their children lives. Most women did not communicate with the father of their children. In addition, they were not aware of their whereabouts. Most participants reported that they were not on good terms or had a bad relationship with the father of their children and this resulted in the father not being supportive in any way. The findings revealed that most fathers of the children do not provide any support for their children and the participants were mostly concerned about not receiving financial support. This is because most women are unemployed and have to stay at home to take care of the children. They wanted to try and find a job but was not in a position to do so because they had to take sole responsibility for their children.

*“I do not get financial support from the father of my children, I am not working, and we run out food and toiletries. It is difficult because my children are still young, and I need to feed them and it is not easy to find a job” (IDI#3, 23 year old)*

*“I do not receive financial support and I am unemployed young mother. The father of my children is irresponsible and unsupportive and I have to depend only on the child support grant” (IDI#1, 24 year old)*

*“The father of my children he does not financially support us, so sometimes I am forced to forget about my needs and concentrate on my children’s needs. So it is like my life is on standby” (IDI#14, 19 year old)*

The issue of not having a babysitter or someone to help with monitoring the children sometimes hinders participants from looking for employment, especially women with younger children. The findings from the interviews reveal many women depend only on the child support grant to raise their children and they are unable to meet their own needs as young mothers. Some women who were employed reported that it was hard to get someone to look after their children. The women indicated that although some children go to school and crèche, they also need someone to look after them after school and sometimes children were at risk when they leave them alone at home or ask the neighbour to keep an eye on them. They were particularly worried about the safety of their children if they were not around to take care of them.

*“When I am at school, I do not have anyone to take my children to the clinic. Therefore, I have to come back from school and take the child to the clinic. There are a lot of sacrifices young parents make for their children, for example dropping out of school so they could find a job to get money to raise the children” (IDI#2, 23 year old)*

*“I get stressed trying to figure out who I can ask to look after them when I am not around or at work. I have to ask my neighbours to keep an eye on them, because I leave early for work, so the older one has to walk the small one to crèche then go to the stop and wait for her transport to school, that is a lot of responsibility on the children, but I do not have a choice, I have to report to work, every day for them to have shelter, clothes and food, because the CSG is not enough. I cannot only depend on it” (IDI#12, 18 year old)*

The women reported that sometimes they have no choice but to risk leaving their children alone at home, when they are at work. In addition, they delay taking their children to the clinic, because they need to attend classes. The reports from the women revealed that some participants were not able to secure employment, because of lack of physical support. One participant that lived with her two children reported that she did not go searching for jobs because there was no one she could leave her children with and the grant money she received was not enough for both children to go to school and buy food, therefore, she stayed at home with her younger child and depended on the grant to feed them. The report from the mother revealed that some grant recipients with more than one child do not seek employment because they lacked a baby sitter, especially if the mother is not staying with her parents or other family members.

*“As a young single parent, sometimes I need to go job hunting, I would not find someone to take care of my kids, I cannot afford to take them to preschool, because there is no money. The money I get from the government is not enough to take both of them to the preschool and buy food and clothes for them” (IDI#4, 21 year old)*

#### **4.4 Reasons for lack of contraceptives use**

There are various reasons as to why some women are young mothers,. These may arise from individual, societal and familial factors, which are not limited to culture, religion, education, economic circumstances or to the lack of support structures. The women reported the factors that contribute to lack of contraceptive use at a young age. The next section discusses contraceptive use and the lack of health education and the impact of attitudes of health practitioners towards young mothers as some of the factors which contribute to having more than one child.

##### **4.4.1 Contraceptives use**

The lack of contraceptive use is reported to be one of the major factors contributing to pregnancy. Most women believe that young women get pregnant because they do not use contraceptives, like condoms and the injection. One participant reported that not using contraceptives is as ‘stupid’ decision made by some young women and its consequence is



unplanned pregnancy. The findings from the interviews with women revealed that contraceptive use would not only reduce unplanned pregnancy, but also they would be protected from exposure to pregnancy trauma.

*“I think it is because they do not care about themselves, there are careless and they do not use the contraceptives” (IDI#2, 23 year old)*

*“We make stupid decisions as people, as women, and we rely on men to be in charge of our reproductive health. I think that it is our downfall. We rely on men or expect them to have condoms when you have sex, like you get there without having condoms. At some point I had to change that when I had my second child, I had to change the whole mentality. I had to bring my own condoms, because I told myself I’m not going through that trauma again. It’s not just trauma giving birth, it’s trauma the whole process of pregnancy, afraid of diseases and not working” (IDI#5, 24 year old).*

The findings revealed that there were various reasons why young women do not use contraception, such as poverty, use of alcohol and relationships with many men. One participant reported that sometimes love and poverty are two factors leading young women to have more than one child. As a result, when one is in love, they feel comfortable and they stop using contraception. In some cases, they are reliant on their partners for money and they have unprotected sex with them as a demonstration of their love.

*“Women fall quickly in love and get quickly comfortable and believe that they found a husband, so they easily get pregnant. Sometimes poverty can drive one into the wrong arms and they end up doing anything to get money, including not using contraceptives” (IDI#3, 23 year old)*

*“Some partners when they are in love decide to be parents and do not consider the possibility of breaking up or fighting. So that is how women start having more than one child, because of new relationships and hoping there is future with their partners” (IDI#8, 24 year old)*

A few women reported lack of health education as another factor contributing to them not using contraception. The women reported that some young women fell pregnant because they did not get proper sex education. The reports from the women revealed that sexual education health would have played an important role in protecting young mothers from falling pregnant. The women said that they lack access to accurate information on safe and effective contraceptive methods. The findings from the interviews revealed lack of knowledge or education deprives young women of the power to have a better understanding of the types and use of contraceptives, how to practice safe sex or to be informed about abortion options. Further lack of education deprives women of the freedom to decide when and how often they can have children, including understanding the risks involved.

One woman revealed that it is hard to talk to or to seek advice from adults, as some of them find it disrespectful when they ask or talk about sex. The women reported that it is always embarrassing and scary to discuss sexual issues with the teacher because of their age and because of what they believe in.

*“For me, talking from experience I would say education, sexual education, sexual health education in schools, because if in schools we were sexually educated by people who are our age group, not by our Life Orientation teacher, old grannies, maybe we were going to open up. If we have problems, we would go to them and ask for advice, because in the African culture it is so difficult to go to your mother and talk about sex. It is quite impossible” (IDI#4, 21 year old)*

The reports from the women revealed that they feared to open up about their sexual and reproductive issues, especially in schools, because the teachers were not approachable, there is a stigma about sexual health education and teachers do not have the skills or proper training to educate about sexual and reproductive health. The women indicated that it is essential to have young educators in schools that are approachable and easy to talk to. One woman stated that parents need to be encouraged and informed about the importance of talking to their children about sex and reproductive health decisions. However young women should also take the initiative in informing themselves and seeking advice from healthcare facilities or

professional health providers. One woman stated that her mother never talked to her about sexual health. She goes on to argue that she had to learn from her mistakes, because she decided to educate herself about sexual and reproductive health. After the second child she promised herself to use contraceptives until marriage. The report from the women revealed that if parents educated their children about sexual and reproductive health, it will not only reduce the chances of having more than one child, but it would also protect them from being exposed to sexually transmitted infections. In addition, it indicated that young women with more than one child need information to protect themselves against sexual risks. They also need to be empowered to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

*“In reproductive health decisions, it is deciding for yourself. It is hard to use condoms all the time, so I think people should or young mothers should educate themselves before they start having sex. We need to have that conversation with our kids as parents, drawing from my experience, what my mum did wrong was to shut me off from sexual education. I had to learn it myself, even though we learnt it from life orientation, but it is different from personal experiences. I think we should just change our mentality and take the initiative to inform ourselves, go to the clinic and look around the clinic, whatever the nurses say, or go to the family planning clinic. Just inform yourself and just be safe” (IDI#5, 24 year old)*

#### **4.4.2. Attitudes of health practitioners**

Some women reported that healthcare providers are not youth friendly and are judgmental when young people seek health services in the clinics, and this hinders the youth from accessing contraceptives or health services. The women complained about the judgemental attitudes of healthcare providers regarding young mothers using contraceptives. Many hold the belief that young women just want to sleep around and lose their respectability.

*“The issue of youth friendly services at the clinics [is important]. You find that when you go to the clinic for contraceptives, you are judged by the nurses, because they are old. They ask you why do you want to prevent, you want to sleep around without protection. They will start lecturing you about HIV/AIDS, and then when you want to*

*do abortion they will start throwing around the Christianity card, that you want to kill an innocent human being. They are actually not giving you a choice to make your own decisions. They mother you, instead of being professional. The result for us as young mothers is not to go to the clinic at all, because we are scared and we also do not want that lecture. We get enough lectures from our parents” (IDI#4, 21 year old)*

The women reported that lack of contraceptive use is caused by the poor services provided in healthcare facilities. The women also expressed concern that there is an absence of friendly and effective services in healthcare facilities. Participants reported that healthcare providers do not respect patient’s privacy, they would shout and share personal information with their colleagues and also, other patients. The reports from the interviews revealed that young women have a right to access healthcare and their rights are being violated, because of the attitudes and treatment they received in the facilities. The women reported that it is not the job of the nurses to play a motherly role, however they have to be professional and provide necessary service. The women felt that health providers and health facilities need to be educated and encouraged to be youth friendly.

*The issue of confidentiality, when I go to the clinic for condoms and then, because we all know everyone in this small community, so they will come and tell my mother, that your child came in and collected condoms. And it is going to be a huge issue. They are going to say: she is sleeping around, why she is having condoms, so they are so many factors to that” (IDI#4, 21 year old)*

#### **4.5. The role of the child support grant**

Most women reported that the role of the child support grant is to assist in meeting children’s basic needs like food, clothing and improving their lives. Most women reported that the grant was provided to support single parents or parents not receiving support from the father of the children and its role is to financially support unemployed and poor parents. Some women indicated that the grant assists or supports poor families and households. The interviews with mothers suggest that the participants identified a number of purposes of the child support

grant. The women observed that the child support grant was introduced because of high unemployment and poverty rate among women.

*“It is because sometimes unemployed and poor people get pregnant and others choose to abandon their children, because they cannot afford [to look after their child]. So government introduced it to at least reduce the number of children abandoned. To alleviate food insecurity among the black masses” (IDI#2, 23 year old).*

*“The grant was meant for unemployed people who really need the CSG, for instance those living in poverty and orphans” (IDI#6, 22 year old).*

*“Government wanted to assist mothers with absent baby fathers, fathers that are not supporting their children, so they can survive with the money” (IDI#7, 20 year old).*

One woman indicated that the grant is a government strategy to eliminate people’s struggle, reduce caregivers’ financial constraints, particularly unemployed and poor caregivers. The interviews suggest that the government is providing support because there are too many people in the world, and it is the only way to ensure that others do not remain poor. The women indicated that they believe the grant is comparable to other South African government policies that respond in assisting people living in poverty such as the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) houses and pensions.

*“In my own opinion since there is a lot of people in this world, some of them are unemployed, I think government wanted to assist parents since not everyone can be employed, or he cannot employ each and every one, therefore CSG is another way of Government offering support for survival, to unemployed and poor people. Because in some households they survive on it” (IDI#8, 24 year old)*

#### **4.6. Benefits of the child support grant**

All women reported that the grant had a positive impact on children’s well-being. The mothers indicated that children’s school enrolment and educational attainment as well as health outcomes have improved because of the child support grant. The young mothers

observed that they were able to use the grant to cover their children's expenses. The majority of the women indicated that they failed to spend the grant on household groceries and personal expenses because it was not enough. Some participants reported that they spend some of the grant on submitting their curriculum vitae because they were unemployed, and it helped to improve their quality of life. The women admitted that the grant is helpful in meeting children's school and health expenses.

#### **4.6.1. Benefits of the child support grant for young mothers**

The majority of the women revealed that the grant had improved their lives. The grant had a positive influence on their lives and it had enabled them to seek employment. They reported that the child support grant enabled them to use the money toward transport when submitting their curriculum vitae. The interviews revealed that the child support grant affected young women's dependency, dignity and respect. As a result they did not have to ask for money from their parents or friends and they believe that being able to provide for your children, leads to society giving them respect. They are able to meet the needs of their children so they are not viewed as failures. It is clear that the child support grant positively impacted not only their children but also themselves.

*“It has improved a little bit, I do not look like a failure to my kids, if they need something, I am able to support them financially, it hides the fact that I do not have anything, it hides the fact I am unemployed. I get dignity and respect, from my kids and neighbours, because if the father is absent, they tend to look at the mother as a failure, not the father as the failure” (IDI#4, 21 year old)*

*“The child support grant has enabled me to print CVs and to hand in my CVs using the money I receive for transport. With the grant we have managed to get rid of poverty” (IDI#15, 20 year old)*

*“It has helped me in terms of always asking for help is uncomfortable. Even if someone does not have money, I do not have to beg them or find other means of making money. It filled in a gap. If I run out of deodorant or toiletries, I don't have to*

*go to my boyfriend or to my mother, it is degrading to go to your mother and ask for pads, deodorant or toiletries at this age. When I was pregnant with my second child, my mother was so upset with me, she was not helping me with anything, even with toiletries, she was like feed for yourself, and you do it for the second time” (IDI#5, 24 year old)*

The majority of the women reported that they were unemployed and identified the grant as an important source of income. They could use the grant to buy basic necessities not only for their children but also themselves. They were grateful that they did not have to go to close family and friends and ask for assistance. In this way, the grant gave them some dignity.

#### **4.6.2. Benefits of the child support grant for the children**

Most women reported that they use the grant on children’s expenses such as buying uniforms, lunch, stationery and paying for school transport and pocket money. Most young mothers had children that were in school and crèche and most of the grant income was spent on covering these expenses. Only one participant with more than one child reported that she was spending the grant income on pampers and baby formula. This woman indicated that she used the grant to purchase baby formula, medication and nappies. The reports from the grant recipients suggest that they prioritised and mostly use the grant money to cover their children’s school expenses.

*“I use the grant to pay for the crèche every month-end and I buy things they will carry to crèche, like shakes, I buy enough for the whole month. So, when I again I get it at month end, I again buy enough for the whole month” (IDI#1, 24 year old).*

*“I get R800, I use it for school transport, uniform, add on the school items like a new school bag, socks, and stationary” (IDI#12, 18 year old).*

*“I get R1200, I use it for school uniform, lunch, pocket money and clothes” (IDI#9, 22 year old).*

*“I get R800, I take R300 and buy baby formula, I buy nappies and medication if he is sick, and [with] the remaining I buy food” (IDI#14, 19 year old).*

One woman reported that she spoils her children with the grant occasionally by taking them out to play games and to eat at restaurants. The woman indicated that she believes that the children deserve to be taken out with their grant money because it is meant for them. The mother is working and she uses her salary to provide for her children’s expenses. One woman revealed that working young mothers are sometimes able to make their children happy and to take them out.

*“I get R1230 and last month we went out to shelly beach, they went to the kids rides, we spent a lot of money. I made it a habit to take them out every month end, at least to KFC. They get excited to eat at KFC. If I do not have enough money, we go to Shoprite and buy cooked meat and their school bag, slippers and other things and they get happy” (IDI#8, 24 year old)*

#### **4.7. Challenges of the child support grant**

The child support grant aims to reduce child poverty and to improve child well-being through providing financial support to low income households and families. However, the child support grant is reported to be promoting teenage pregnancy and the use of alcohol or substance abuse.

##### **4.7.1. The misuse of the child support grant**

Some women believe that grant recipients misuse the grant, and spend it on alcohol, ‘weaves’ for their hair and fancy clothes. These responses varied, some based on what they observed and other were based on general assumptions. This suggests that even recipients believe that there is a need to monitor use of the grant. However, some women expressed concern if their use of the child support grant will be monitored. The interviews did not find evidence of the misuse of the child support grant, although a few participants agree with the assumptions.

*“Some young mothers use the child support grant for their beauty, they buy weaves alcohol and sometimes it is because others are unemployed and school children. They*



*do not have pocket money or any monthly income to spend on themselves, so they use the money to pamper themselves” (IDI#2, 23 year old)*

*“There are incidences where people misuse the money, and it does not even get to the child. They use it for their personal wants, like nails, hair, weaves” (IDI#5, 24 year old)*

*“Most of these mothers spend the money in taverns drinking alcohol and forget about the purpose of the child support grant” (IDI#15, 20 year old)*

#### **4.8. The role of the fathers**

Most of the women reported that fathers of children was often not involved in their children's lives and those who were involved were mostly contributing or supporting only financially. The findings indicate that it is common for fathers to only play a financial role in their children lives. This was mostly because the children were staying with their mothers. The findings revealed that women were very appreciative of the father's financial support and was welcomed.

*“The father of my children is very supportive, he supports me financially and I am able to maintain my children's needs” (IDI#15, 20 year old)*

*“I get financial support from the fathers of my children and that helps me emotionally, I do not have stress” (IDI#5, 24 year old)*

*“The role of the father of my children is financial, because my children stay with me and his financial support enables me to save” (IDI#2, year old)*

Fathers can also assist in other ways as well. However, only one woman reported that the father of her children is unemployed and does not only play a financial role, but he assists in other ways like babysitting the children. This indicates the importance of being involved in the child's life regardless of their financial status.

*“The father of my children gives me money once in a while, however he does come and see his children and baby sits them. We are still dating and everything is going well, it’s just that he is unemployed but he does pitch in when he can” (IDI#12, 18 year old)*

#### **4. 9. Suggestions**

Toward the end of the interviews the participants were asked to provide further suggestions on improving their situation. Some of the participants reported that they would be happy if the government would increase the grant. One mother indicated that they felt that the society expects too much from the grant recipients. This is because as parents receiving the grant it is expected that all the children would and should be catered for. However sometimes it is not the case, because the grant is not enough to support one child let alone more than one child. Some young mothers who only depended on the grant are not able to afford all the children’s expenses, because the grant income is not relatively meagre, and not sufficient to cover all their expenses.

*“The society expects grant recipients to survive on the money, but the truth is they cannot survive on the money. It only helps them to [a] certain extent. A child cannot survive on the child support grant alone. In society if you get the grant, they expect you to be rich, but the truth is you still need more money, because the expenses of having a child are far, far more than R410. But it does help with a few things” (IDI#7, 20 year old)*

One woman suggested that sexual and reproductive health should be included more extensively in the school curriculum. The woman indicated that she believes that the integration of sexual and reproductive health in schools will not only reduce young mothers having more than one child, but also the risks of sexual transmitted diseases. In addition, it is also important for young men to be made aware of their responsibility towards their children. The mothers indicated that the increase of the grant will not stop young mothers from having more than one child, but educating them about sexual and reproductive health can change them and make them more responsible.

*“If maybe the government can increase the grant to R500 per child and regulate it. The government should also introduce reproductive classes in schools and invite nurses to inform and educate students about sexual and reproductive health. Sexual and reproductive health education should be adopted in the school curriculum”*  
(IDI#5, 24 year old)

#### **4.10. Summary**

This chapter presented the results from in-depth interviews conducted with young mothers with more than one child in a rural area. It is clear from the interviews that young women react differently to pregnancy. Many experience emotional shock at the physical reality. The reports from the women revealed that various factors contributed to the lack of contraceptive use including limited sexual health education. The interviews revealed that the child support grant benefits both the mother and the child. The mothers use the grant mainly on children's school expenses, such as school uniforms and lunch. However, the grant also gives the mother assistance in helping her in terms of seeking employment.

## **Chapter Five Conclusion**

### **5.1. Introduction**

There has been an increase in social protection in developing countries over the last decade and South Africa's social welfare system has and is continuing to play a role in reducing poverty. South Africa has a unique social grant system among other developing nations and it is increasingly promoting social grants. Glassman and Temin (2016) add that the South African government uses the child support grant programme as a strategy to address the legacy of the past. The grant was introduced in 1998 to reform the child protection system and to address extensive poverty. The overall aim of this study was to shed light on the experiences and perspectives of young mothers with two or more children who are recipients of the child support grant. The research further provides recommendations for future research based on the findings and limitations of this study, with conclusions on the overall research findings. The study draws on the theoretical framework developed by Crenshaw (1989).

### **5.2. Discussion**

The study found that women react differently to pregnancy and some participants reported the need for emotional support to deal with the impact of the pregnancy on their daily lives. Women did not receive emotional support from their parents or their peers including their boyfriends. The women reported that raising children is frustrating, depressing and stressful and this can result in regret for having their children. The emotional breakdown the women experience is a result of young women becoming mothers without adequate skills, resources, and networks to cope with the demands of parenthood (Grant and Hallman, 2006; Maseko, 2003; Panday et al., 2009). The findings are also relevant to the 'intersectionality' theoretical framework, because it states that Black women experience different problems and child birth traps them in the web of social underdevelopment, meaning that childbearing puts a young mother's life on hold, from achieving their goals and career objectives (Crenshaw, 1989). Studies suggest that young mothers are not viewed as youth with needs and desires of youth, but they are treated and viewed only as mothers and carers (Hassim, 2006; Razavi, 2011). Emotional support for young mothers is important, because it can reduce their risk of engaging in risky behaviour, as a technique of dealing with their stress and frustration. The women reported that they have to control the expression of their feelings and remain strong

for the sake of their children. The frustration of being a young mother also reduces access to future opportunities and the development of their capabilities to successfully make the transition to adulthood (Hutchinson, Spillet and Cronin, 2012). Studies among young mothers suggest that they are far from emotionally, cognitively and socially ready for the prospect of motherhood (Parekh and De La Ray, 1997). The study by Mills et al. (2013) suggests that young mothers often experience major difficulties because of their age, such as neglect and emotional abuse.

The interviews reveal that most young mothers were not receiving financial support from the father of their children and they were depending only on the child support grant to raise their children. The lack of financial support from the father of the child makes it hard for the young mothers to raise their children. This is relevant to the study because there is a common pattern in South Africa where fathers have little or no involvement in their children's lives, particularly if the relationship between both parents breaks down (Panday et al., 2009 and Van Bercum, 2013). Beernink (2012) further states that employed men do not buy groceries or send money home. They do not support the children medically nor do they buy clothes. Tanga and Gutura (2013) add that some fathers tell their wives or partners to make use of the grant when they demand financial support and they fight over the use and control of the child support grant. The 'intersectionality' theoretical framework adds that the patriarchal system in most societies puts men in power, even if they are not financially responsible and supportive of their children and families (Crenshaw, 1989).

The findings revealed that the mothers family and friends or relatives do not assist in looking after the children and they do not have anyone to take care of their children in their absence. The 'intersectionality' theoretical framework argues that Black females do not experience equal opportunities, particularly as their social and economic mobility is limited and that negatively impacts on their emotional and physical health (Clauset, Arbesman and Larremore, 2015). The results revealed that the older children were able to assist the women in taking care of their younger siblings, but that they are still young and not mature enough for the task. The findings suggest that most fathers did not assist with baby-sitting the children. This forces the women to be full-time parents and puts a brake on the search for employment. The

interviews revealed that some women with more than one child and staying alone needed someone to assist them with taking care of the children, especially for job seeking purposes. The results show that there is a need for less costly after-care centres in rural areas, for parents that finish work and school late and children who do not have anyone to stay with them at home after school or crèche. The ‘intersectionality’ theoretical framework talks about how women are underrepresented or misrepresented in almost every social arena (Kerby, 2012), and the women with more than one child struggle because there is no policy demanding the fathers to support them. The ‘intersectionality’ theoretical framework also promotes helping women to achieve equal treatment, through dismantling institutions and norms including lack of the father’s physical support.

Lack of education is one of the factors contributing to high levels of repeat pregnancy. The findings indicate the importance of integrating sexual and reproductive health into the school syllabus and having teachers that are approachable. The young women reported that there is a stigma associated with sexual and reproductive health. The children and the teachers either laugh or feel embarrassed during the discussions. The results showed that parents were not helpful in making sure their children know or learn about sexual and reproductive health.

The women reported that parents do not talk to their children about sex because they fear that they would be encouraging them to engage in sexual intercourse or promote disrespect. Studies indicate the extent to which parents are involved and the way they are involved in their children’s lives are critical factors in the prevention of high-risk sexual activity (Biglan et al., 1998; Blake et al., 2001; Varga, 2003). The interviews revealed that the parents do not speak to their children about puberty, sexual activity and pregnancy and when sex discussions are started, they are often avoided by their children because it is an ‘uncomfortable’ topic of discussion. According to McWhirter et al. (2007) studies have shown that parent’s sexual values, together with parent and child communication, have an important effect on adolescents’ experience of sexual intercourse.

“Children whose parents talk with them about sexual matters or provide sexuality education at home are more likely than others to delay sexual activity” (Blake et al., 2001: 52).

Most women reported that young women get pregnant because they do not use contraceptives, like condoms or the injection. The findings revealed that healthcare providers contribute to young mothers not using contraceptives because when they visit health facilities, they judge them. The women reported that the healthcare providers are not friendly toward youth accessing healthcare because of their age, beliefs and stereotypes. The findings showed that the healthcare providers believed that the participants want to use contraceptives because they intend to carelessly engage in sexual intercourse. The ‘intersectionality’ theoretical framework also argues that stereotypes and prejudices that permeate the culture often are reinforced through teacher-student and peer interactions in schools (DeFrancisco et al., 2013). The women also reported that poor services in health facilities also contribute to the young mother with more than one child not using contraceptives, because they wait long hours at the health facilities only for an injection.

The findings indicated that there is a need of friendly services and effective services in healthcare facilities. The results found that the attitudes of healthcare providers may act as a barrier for young people to access health facilities. According to Panday et al. (2009) family planning services are provided with the purpose of making available reproductive health services, providing contraceptives, including condoms and improving their knowledge and skills to use them, especially for young people. Some women reported that healthcare providers are mothering them instead of offering services and they believe peer services would be friendlier than older people’s services.

Studies have shown that many young women withdraw from seeking family planning services due to the health service providers’ attitudes (Panday et al., 2009; Wood, Maepa and Jewkes, 1998). As mentioned twice before, many health providers are reluctant to provide contraceptives to adolescents, believing that to do so would encourage early sexual activity (Presler-Marshall and Jones, 2012:39). The results also indicated that health providers and

health facilities need to be educated and encouraged to be youth friendly and to respect client's privacy. Other studies found similar results concerning client confidentiality and healthcare provider judgmental attitudes (Willan, 2013 and Panday et al., 2009). The findings revealed that some women do not use condoms because they always expect their partners to have them and that they are not responsible for their well-being. The women reported that is hard to use contraceptives and it is one of reasons that they have more than one child. The intersectionality' theoretical framework supports the notion that health providers should treat all clients equally, if not they are promoting labelling and stereotypes and that this serves only to perpetuate the stigma that is already in place (Carbone and Roithmayr, 2014)

The women reported that the child support grant improves their lives, as they are able to submit their curriculum vitae when job seeking, save and further their studies. The findings from other studies suggest that the grant yields positive effects by increasing job searches and employment and most beneficiaries of the child support grant tend to participate in the labour market (William, 2007). William (2007) believes that the grants enable poor households to participate in productive economic activity. The study suggest that the high unemployment rate is the result of young mother's unemployment, however the child support grant allows them to enrol children in a creche, whilst they can go in search for employment. Samson et al. (2010) concur that persons in households receiving social grants have a higher success rate in finding employment when compared to non-beneficiaries.

The interviews reveal that many women gained respect from their children and from the society because the child support grant gave them some financial independence. The participants reported that they were able to provide for their children and their own needs. The results revealed that the child support grant is increasingly being recognised for effectiveness in providing an economic safety net. The findings revealed that the child support grant had a positive impact on children's schooling and health, because it gives mothers the funds to pay for school uniforms, stationery and lunch. Nkosi (2011) confirms that the child support grant beneficiaries can afford transport to school for children and also to meet other school needs. The findings revealed that most of these women rely on and use government schools and health facilities for their children and they use the child support grant



to cover school expenses. Potts (2012) also found a positive correlation between grant recipients and enrolment in school amongst the poorest families. The Child Support Grant Evaluation Report by the DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2011) found that child support grant recipients frequently mentioned using the grant for school-related expenses and it has been found to have had a positive impact on children's schooling (Lund, 2011). The 'intersectionality' theoretical framework is supportive of the goals of the child support grant reducing child poverty and the framework emphasises the importance of advocating for the removal of obstacles for those who are unfairly judged by society and it will not only uplift them, but automatically uplift those indirectly affected (Crenshaw, 1989).

DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2011) observe that the child support grant is used to access health care, since children are prone to childhood illnesses and injuries. This emphasises the role of the grant in protecting the health of poor children (DSD, SASSA and UNICEF, 2011). Findings from other studies revealed that the child support grant has a positive effect in improving child nutrition and school attendance (Adato and Bassett, 2008; Agüero, Carter and Woolard, 2006; Case, Hosegood and Lund 2005; Delany et al., 2008).

Some participants reported that they believe some young mother misuse the child support grant. They use the grant money for alcohol, pampering themselves, and other personal needs and wants. The study conducted by Surender et al. (2007) also established that some of the caregivers spent the money on alcohol or clothing for themselves. In South Africa DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2011) reported that the grant is sometimes utilised to purchase alcohol, pay for visits to hairdressers by caregivers, spending on boyfriends, gambling, cell phones, clothes for caregivers and food. In the study conducted by Niehaus and Shapiro (2010) on the effects of cash transfers on low-income households in developing countries they found that in Western Zambia less than 0.5 percent of the transfers were misspent on alcohol and tobacco. It was established that only 1.8 per cent of the cash transfer to Mexican households was spent on alcohol. This confirms the assertion that the receipt of grants by women leads to improvements in children's wellbeing (Samson et al., 2010). The 'intersectionality' theoretical framework argues that a vicious cycle is perpetuated because young black females see few role models in prominent positions and, thus, are less likely to believe that they are

capable of success at school and beyond (Crenshaw, 1989). The ‘intersectionality’ theoretical framework

“calls on us to consider women as whole beings; to recognize that not all women experience their womanhood in the same ways; many women face multiple forms of oppression, and not all women are rendered powerless. In fact, many women manage their multiple identities and challenges well and lead fulfilling lives” (Samuels and Ross-Sheriff 2008:4).

This, means that women with more than one child, with or without the child support were able to raise their children, regardless of the challenges they face.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

The findings revealed that some women with more than one child were lacking sexual and reproductive health education and it is the factor contributing to young mothers having multiple children. The gap in sexual education exist in primary and secondary school, resulting in high levels of unplanned pregnancy which affects a young woman’s progress in education (Dehlendorf et al., 2010). Early childbearing is a controversial issue; therefore it is essential to tackle pregnancy among young women. Sex education should be emphasised at an early age, with detailed and informative sex education incorporated into the school syllabus. This would allow the youth to engage and identify the challenges and factors that expose them to having more than one child. Schools should incorporate into the syllabus an explanation of the different types of contraceptives available, for pregnancy prevention, family planning and the prevention of risky sexual diseases. The intervention should also include a support system that reduces discrimination and stigma that fuels the reactions of students and teachers. These interventions include school-based sex education, peer education programmes, adolescent friendly clinic initiatives, mass media interventions as well as community level programmes (Panday et al., 2009: 108). Success in preventing early childbearing requires substantial commitment to overcome challenges. Government should also add clinic facilities within primary and secondary school, just like in some tertiary institutions. This will not only promote contraceptive use among school-going young women, but it will also reduce absenteeism and the dropout rate due to health challenges, and it will

increase healthcare visits of young women. Teachers need to be given training on how to provide adequate support to pregnant school girls (Willan, 2013).

There is lack of parent-child sexual communication with the results showing that participants with more than one child lack adequate information which increases their reliance on self-information or personal experience and the internet. Interventions should encourage parents to educate their children about sex, to open a platform for their children to communicate with them and to share their challenges with them, without being judged, punished and viewed as disrespectful. Cultural practices like virginity testing and circumcision should involve parents and educate parents about the importance of conversing with their children about sensitive topics like sex. Culturally it is sometimes seen as a taboo to communicate with parents regarding sex challenges and experiences. Thus, this influences the youth to be secretive, to seek for outside advice and to make unwise decisions.

Often young boys are overlooked when talking about teenage pregnancy. Involving young men in such initiatives is important in attempting to alleviate early childbearing. Outreach and edutainment projects should be designed to target young people; both boys and girls at a young age. Policy needs to mainstream male involvement in women's reproductive health (Mangeni et al., 2013). Programmes need to encourage males to become more involved and supportive of women's needs, choices, and rights in sexual and reproductive health. The findings revealed that there is lack of father involvement in the child and mother's life. Therefore, it is important to address men's own sexual and reproductive health needs and behaviour at a young age (Panday et al., 2009 and WHO, 2007). Family strengthening programmes that are community based could improve family functioning.

Developmental social workers could act as brokers and facilitators to link young women with resources, accessing training, skills development programmes and opportunities to complete secondary education or post-schooling and higher education to improve young mother's life chances and social mobility. This could take the form of a referral to a service, or through facilitating client access to resources such as an application for a grant, participating in programmes to promote youth employability, for example, public works or youth service and

volunteering, as well as positive youth development and mentoring programmes (Keller and Pryce, 2010). Engaging communities in combating early childbearing will assist to eliminate high levels of risky sexual behaviour (Willan, 2013). Developmental social workers need to develop interventions to engage fathers in the provision of support, in the care of children and in being involved in the lives of the child even if they are non-resident fathers. Additionally, young women could be supported in challenging gender stereotypes and beliefs. It is vital that social workers do not ignore men in working with young women experiencing early motherhood. In this way, they will be challenging structural inequality and socio-cultural systems that are at the root of gender inequality in our society.

The findings revealed that mothers with more than one child experience challenges in raising their children, such as lack of financial, emotional and physical support. Therefore, there is a need to introduce counselling support or support groups for young mothers with more than one child to assist with psycho-social issues, reducing tensions in partner and family relations and in the development of a sense of self and personal empowerment. Social workers may also act as educators by sharing information, by transferring skills, by coaching and mentoring and in building parenting capabilities. A critical role for the developmental social worker is to facilitate access to services such as reproductive health, access to contraception and the right of women to freedom of choice in whether to have children or not, in choice of family size and in increasing sexual health and empowerment in sexual relations. Access to social networks and social support is critical for those women who do not have family support or who have low levels of social capital. The study suggests that most young mothers lack skills and experience required for the labour market and therefore facilitating access to social networks might be a more sustainable way of providing social support for this group of young women. Growing their financial capabilities through promoting financial literacy and a savings culture could lower indebtedness and encourage both banking and savings (Ssewamala et al., 2010).

#### **5.4. Summary**

The interviews with young mothers with two or more children suggests that the grant is mostly used for satisfying children's needs but that it was not enough to cover parent's and other household needs. The young women argue that child support demands higher levels of

funding and the child support grant is not enough. It would seem from the interviews that employment would have helped to alleviate some of their suffering. The money from the child support grant is necessary for their survival but not enough. The child support grant plays an important role in making sure the child enrolls in school, has a school uniform and stationery and that they do not go to bed on an empty stomach. The child support grant does not promote sustainability, and the findings showed that most participants depend on it. The results suggest that employment opportunities and women empowerment would result in sustainability, because parents could then afford to satisfy their children's basic needs.

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## Appendix 1



18 June 2018

Ms Nowkanda Pretty Mqadi (213543771)  
School of Built Environment & Community Development  
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Mqadi,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0483/018M

Project Title: Perspectives and experiences of young mothers who are recipients of the Child Support Grant (CSG): A case study in rural KwaZulu-Natal

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 16 May 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has 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

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor Pranitha Maharaj  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Oliver Mtapuri  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Angeline Msomi

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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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## **APPENDIX 2**

### **UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)**

#### **APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL**

##### **For research with human participants**

##### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM/ Ifomu lesivumelwano**

Mhlanganyeli othandekayo

Igama lami ngingu Nokwanda Pretty Mqadi. Ngingumfundi osethweniwe iziqu eNyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natal (ikolishi yaseHoward) ngenza izifundo zobuNgcweti kwezenani labantu (iMaster's degree kwi-Population studies). Njengengxenywe yezifundo zami, kulindeleke ukuba ngenze ucwaningo. Ucwaningo engizobe ngilwenza luzobe lugxile "kwimibono neziPiliyoni zoMama abasebancane abathola imali yesondlo sezingane sikhahulumeni: ucwaningo lwesigameko somama abasebancane endaweni yesemakhaya KwaZulu-Natali". Abazohlanganyela kulolucwaningo kumele kube omama abasebancane abaneminyaka eyishumi nesishiyaga lombili kuya kweyamashumi amabili nanye (eyi-18-24) abanezingane ezimbili kuyaphezulu abahlala KwaZulu-Natali esigodini saseGcilima abathola imali yesondlo sabantwana sikhahulumeni. Uhlelo lokuphendula imibuzo luzothatha isikhathi esiyimizuzu engamashumi ayisithupha(60 min?hour). Uhlelo lemibuzo nezimpendulo luzogcinwa luyimfihlo. Ukuba yinxenywe yalolucwaningo kuwukuzinikela angeke kubekhona inzuzo ezotholakalayo. Ungahoxa kulolucwaningo nanoma isiphi isikhathi uma ufisa ukwenza njalo. Imiphumela yocwaningo ebhaliwe izogcinwa endaweni ephephile iminyaka eyisihlanu egumbini lika meluleki wecwaningo (supervisor) umasekudlulile iminyaka eyisihlanu imiphumela yocwaningi ebhaliwe izodatshulwa ilahlwe.

Uma ufisa ukuthola ulwazi mayelana nemiphumela yocwaningo noma unemibuzo, ungashayela umcwaningi noma umeluleki kamcwaningi uleminigwane elandelayo

Researcher/ umcwanigi: Nokwanda Pretty Mqadi      Supervisor/ meluleki kamcwaningi:

Professor P. Maharaj

Unyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natali

Unyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natali

Ikolishi yaseHoward

Ikolishi yaseHoward

Isikole seBuilt Environment

Isikole seBuilt Environment    and

Development Studies

and Development Studies    Inombolo

yocingo: 0789735793

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uma ufisa ukuthola ulwazi ngamalungelo akho okubandakaleny kucwaningo ungashayela inyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natali ehovisi locwaningo kuleminigwane elandelayo.

#### **HUMANITIES and SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Ihovisi locwaningo, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

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Durban			
4000			

KwaZulu-Natali, SOUTH AFRICA

Nombolo yasehovisi: 27 31 2604557- Isikhahamezi: 27 31 2604609

Imayili: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Isitatimende

Mina .....(Amagama      aphelele abahlanganyelayo  
kucwaningo endaweni yase: Gcilima) ngokuzithandela ngiyavuma ukuhlanganyela  
kucwaningo.

Nginyaqinisekisa ukuba ngichazelwe ngokucacile ngalolucwaningo futhi ngiyakuqonda okuqukethwe kumbhalo nemvelo yalolucwaningo. Ngichazelwe ngokucacile ukuthi ngingahoxa nanoma isiphi isikhathi engifisa ngaso ukuhlanganyela kulolucwaningo. Ngiyazi ukuthi ulwazi oluthathwe kumina luzogcinwa luyimfihlo futhi lizosebetshenziswa ucwaningo kuphela. Ngazisiwe ukuthi inqubo yokuxoxisana izoqoshwa ngakhoke:

Mina ..... ngiyavuma ukuba lengxoxiswano iqoshwe.

Mina ..... angivumi ukuba lengxoxiswano iqoshwe.

Isignisha yomhlanganyeli .....

Isayinwe ku.....ngalolu  
suku.....

Ngiyabonga ngokubambisana nokuzoni nikela kwakho kulolucwaningo

My name is Nokwanda Pretty Mqadi. I am a postgraduate student pursuing my Master's Degree in Population Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College). As part of my course I am required to conduct a research study. The study I will be conducting is titled "Perspectives and experiences of young mothers who are Child Support Grant recipients: A case study of young women in rural area of KwaZulu-Natal". The participants in this study must be young mothers aged 18 to 24 years with two and more children residing at KwaZulu-Natal in Gcilima Village who are currently receiving the CSG. The interview process will take approximately an hour. However, the interview process will be kept confidential and anonymity will be maintained. Your participation is voluntary and there will be no incentives that would be given to you for your participation in this project. You may withdraw from this study at any time you wish to do so. The research data will be secured for at least five years in a steel cabinet in my supervisor's office and once the five years has elapsed the transcripts will be shredded.

If you wish to obtain information regarding the outcome of the study or have any queries, you may contact the researcher and/or the supervisor at the contacts provided below.

Researcher: Nokwanda Pretty Mqadi

Supervisor: Professor P. Maharaj

University of KwaZulu-Natal

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Howard College Campus

Howard College Campus

School of Built Environment

School of Built Environment

and Development Studies

and Development Studies

Contact numbers: 0789735793

Tel: (031) 2602243

mqadipretty@gmail.com

maharajp7@ukzn.ac.za

Should you wish to obtain information on your rights as a participant, you may contact the University of Kwazulu-Natal's Research Office at the contacts below.

#### **HUMANITIES and SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

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#### **Declaration**

I..... (Full names of the participant from: Gcilima)  
have willingly agreed to participate in this research study.

I confirm that the aim of this research study has been clearly explained to me and that I understand the content of this document and the nature of this research project. It has been clearly explained to me that I can withdraw from participating in this study at any time I wish to do so. I am aware that the information obtained from me will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study. I have been informed that the interview process will be recorded; therefore:

I .....hereby consent to have this interview recorded

I ..... hereby do not consent to have this interview recorded.

Signature of participant .....

Signed at.....on this  
date.....

Thank you for your co-operation and contribution to this study.

## **Appendix 3**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

#### **Section A**

##### **Demographics**

- How old are you?
- Are you married?
- How many children do you have?
- What is your highest level of education?
- Are you employed? What is your employment status?
- Do you get a grant for all your children?
- How long have you been receiving the CSG?

#### **Section B**

##### **Perspective and experiences of CSG**

- What do you think is the main purpose of Child Support Grant?
- Does CSG allow you to meet your children basic or daily needs? If yes or no please explain.
- What are the problems you encounter as a young mother in raising your children?
- In what ways has the grant enabled you to meet your basic human needs and other household expenses?
- In what ways has your quality of life been improved by the grant?
- How does CSG help in children schooling and health?
- What is your main source of income?



- How do you support your children?
- Do you get financial support in raising your children? If yes, what type of support do you get?
- How much do you receive from the grant monthly and how do you make use of this money?
- On estimation how much would you spend on raising your children?
- Do you think young mothers have two children because of CSG?
- With the money you receive for the CSG what expenses are you able to cover? Is the money enough to cover all the children expenses at once?

### **Section C**

#### **General questions**

- What is the relationship with the father of your children?
- Can you please explain the factor that you think contribute to young mothers having two and more children?

How do you think other people receiving CSG make use of the