

# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT POLICY

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## ABSTRACT

Child poverty is a substantial societal problem. This article argues the shortcomings in the implementation of the Child Support Grant in South Africa. The focus is mainly that of Public Administration and policy implementation. The Child Support policy started out in 1998, and the study highlights critical aspects in terms of the implementation. Unintended outcomes of the Child Support Grant, such as administrative shortcomings or a lack of institutional collaboration or even the unexpected adaptation to the Child Support Grant by beneficiaries, created some concern. Addressing the problem of child poverty through the Child Support Grant should at least result in effective implementation practice. The implementation of the Child Support Grant was then compared with the critical variables of policy implementation. This was done to indicate the possible reasons for the obstacles in the implementation of the Child Support Grant. The suggested remedies cannot be seen as a panacea, but would at least contribute to more successful implementation.

## INTRODUCTION

*It was once said that the moral test of Government is how that Government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped.*

*Hubert H. Humphrey*

Policy students would need to spend much time on policy implementation if governmental institutions had not often used their own discretion in carrying out the policies under their jurisdiction. It is generally accepted that policies are automatically applied, whatever the policy adopters decide, and at a certain stage it was widely assumed that this was

what they did. In fact, frequently uncertainty about the consequences of public policies occurs. Once we have a policy to address, like child poverty issues in society, it does not necessarily mean that the purpose of the policy will be realised.

Poverty, and more specifically child poverty, is one of the South African Government's priorities. Research on the issue of child poverty in the South African context has thus far been addressed by different disciplines, causing different approaches to the issue. The purpose of this article is to add a perspective from Public Administration and public policy implementation to the issue of child poverty and specifically the implementation of the Child Support Grant policy. Up to now, disciplines like law, social work and human rights have been dominating in the field of the Child Support Grant. The policy domain of children is somehow under-researched in the global body of knowledge on policy implementation (May, Sapotcihne and Workman 2006, 388, 392). This article illustrates that implementation studies are still relevant. Representative governments' translation of policies into practice, still remains a challenge and a legitimate concern.

The depth and extent of child poverty in developing countries such as South Africa require appropriate policy response. The South African Government is addressing this problem through the Child Support Grant, published in 1998. It manifests itself primarily as a monetary transfer that is paid to the caregivers of poor children. The grant is targeted at the very poor, especially the African population living in rural areas.

The Child Support Grant (CSG) is a South African policy instrument aimed at alleviating child poverty, an objective which is indeed attained successfully. Despite this remarkable achievement, not all poor children manage to access the grant. However, the adaptation to the CSG also provides for interesting outcomes. These outcomes can even raise the question as to whether the original intention of the CSG policy is still intact. One of the outcomes, for instance, is speculation that it contributes to teenage pregnancies.

Children's rights were included in the Constitution (1996) to ensure that all children live a decent life, and that their basic needs are met. These needs with respect to impoverished children should be factored into how successful the CSG is implemented. Child poverty continues to be extensive and severe. The realisation of the CSG is critical, because this policy instrument is only one of a few efforts to address the rights and needs of poor children. In addressing poverty, it is important that Government take cognisance of the inter-dependence between children's needs and adult socio-economic needs.

The article will focus firstly on the policy context of the Child Support Grant, highlighting the benefits as well as the shortcomings. The background to poverty, as well as the reason for the Child Support Grant is therefore outlined at the beginning of the article. This is followed by the actual programmes aimed at social assistance to alleviate child poverty. The financial resources as well as the funding patterns will provide an indication of the extent of the Child Support Grant. The article concludes by indicating the problems and obstacles in implementing the Child Support Grant by the service providers, as well as the clients of the grant. Remedies for the successful implementation are vital for addressing the Child Support Grant. The critical variables that will support the successful implementation of the Child Support Grant will also be discussed.

One of the most frequently debated issues currently is the question of successful implementation of policies. The CSG policy is not an exception to the rule. The need to investigate several policies and provide meaningful remedies is a challenge for all researchers and practitioners alike. In this article, the research problem resolves around the issue of implementing the CSG. The societal problem to be address is indeed poverty, and in this instance child poverty, but the nature and processes of implementation could easily be another obstacle on the way to alleviate child poverty.

### THE REASON FOR THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

As a particular facet of poverty, child poverty is one of the most serious societal problems facing many developing countries, including South Africa (Biyase, 2005, 1). The UNICEF report on the state of the world's children (UNICEF 2005) explains something about the extent of child poverty in the world by providing the following statistics:

- 640 million children in developing countries live without adequate shelter: one in three;
- 400 million children have no access to safe water; one in five;
- 270 million children have no access to health services: one in seven; and
- more than 12,1 million primary school-age children are out of school; the majority of them are girls.

The South African experience of child poverty is consistent with the UNICEF report (UNICEF 2005) and is summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1: The extent of child poverty in South Africa**

Analysis base on OHS 1999 dataset	Using relative poverty measure of lowest two quintiles in 1999 terms	Using absolute poverty measures of R490 in 2002 terms	Using absolute poverty measure of R245 in 2002 terms (ultra-poor)
% of 0-17 yr olds living in poverty	59,2%	75%	57%
No of 0-17 yr olds living in poverty	10,5 million	14,3 million	11 million
% of 0-6 yr olds living in poverty	59,3%	75%	57%
No of 0-6 yr olds living in poverty	3,8 million	5,2 million	3,9 million

Source: (Biyase, 2005, 2)

Table 1 shows a very high level of child poverty, irrespective of the poverty measure. Poverty affects children by reducing their chances of living beyond their first five years; by stunting their growth; rendering them vulnerable to infectious diseases and disabling injury; reducing their confidence and hope in the future; and limiting their educational capacity to develop to their full intellectual potential.

## THE CHILD POVERTY CRISIS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

In a recent study by IDASA (Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 4), the two child poverty indicators used, are income and food insecurity (hunger). The income indicator analysis is based on the 2000 Income and Expenditure Survey, and the food insecurity analysis on the 1999 National Food Consumption Survey.

When a high poverty line of R430/month per capita is applied to measure child poverty, 74,8% of South Africa's children are shown to be income poor. Of these income poor children, 60% are concentrated in three provinces, namely KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Limpopo (Coetzee and Streak 2004, 4). When a lower poverty line of R215/month per capita is used, 54,2% of children emerge as being income poor.

Due to known under-reporting of income in the 2000 Income and Expenditure Survey, the estimates presented in the study may be slightly over-inflated. Other money-metric-based measurements of child poverty in the recent past have found that between 28% and 75,8% of children are poor, depending on the poverty line and household survey data used in the analysis. IDASA reports the following data on poor children experiencing food insecurity:

- At the national level, 52% of children aged 1 to 9 years (4.6 million children) experienced hunger in 1999. A further 23% were at risk of hunger.
- Therefore, if poor children are classified as those experiencing hunger, or at the risk of hunger, the food insecurity analysis suggests that 75% of South Africa's children are poor. Using Census 2001 estimates of children age 0 to 17 in South Africa, this implies 13 million poor children (Coetzee and Streak, 2004: 4).

While the above aspects of poverty remain significant, it is important to note that South African children experiencing poverty also frequently experience discriminatory practices, social exclusion and vulnerability associated with their economic situation (Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 5). Therefore, any policy addressing child poverty cannot have a simple definition of poverty, nor will the situations encompassed by the reach of the CSG be homogeneous.

From a policy perspective, it is critically important to understand that most children experience their situation as being closely linked to the precarious economic situation of their parents or caregivers. This, in turn, is directly related to limited job opportunities and high unemployment. Linked to this is the inability of many poor children to access particular services and meet basic needs such as education. The non-realisation of one basic socio-economic right is linked to the failure to realise another. After 12 years of democracy, there is still an urgent need for Government to enhance the success of its policy to eradicate child poverty.

## SERVICE DELIVERY AND THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

The Constitution affords every child the right to social services (Constitution 1996, Section 28(1)). In addition, everyone has the right to social security, including those who are unable to support themselves and their dependants (Constitution 1996: Section 27(1)). It is, therefore, critical that the South African Government provides for social assistance to poor children and their parents or alternative caregivers, especially in the light of high levels of child poverty. According to the findings of the Taylor Committee, 18 million people live on less than R450 per month, and children make up roughly 70% of this group (Department of Social Development 2002).

The South African Government uses its social security programmes as a means to address poverty. South Africa has seven statutory social security grants. These are the State Old Age Pension, War Veteran's Grant, Disability Grant, Grant in Aid, Foster Care Grant, Care Dependency Grant and the Child Support Grant. As March 2003, five and a half million people in South Africa were receiving a social grant. Of these beneficiaries, 45% were receiving a Child Support Grant. This represents the highest percentage share of the total number of social security beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries of social grant policies are not only determined by eligibility for social security grants, but also by the ability to access the grants; and are thus a product of the design (policy design and formulation) and implementation of social security policies. The nature of the policy problem is complicated by factors such as the high prevalence of child poverty and HIV/AIDS infection, as well as increasing numbers of orphans. Government is, therefore, challenged to investigate different practices to respond to social security better and, in turn, the needs of the vulnerable groups (Coetzee and Streak 2004, 174).

## THE POLICY CONTEXT OF THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO SOCIAL SERVICES AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Constitution (Republic of South Africa 1996) as well as the Grootboom case explicitly affords every child the right to social services (Constitution 1996, Sections 28 (1), 28 (1) (b) and 27 (1) (c)). In the same instance every child has the right to family and parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment. The state is also obliged to take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights.

On a larger scale, the right to social assistance for children in South Africa is also entrenched in the African *Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. However, it is not always clear what children can specifically claim in terms of these rights. The evolving jurisprudence of the Constitutional Court, and the government's specific social services programmes are in place to afford children specific benefits. In South Africa social security is provided for in the following context:

*"... wide range of public and private measures that provide cash or in-kind benefits, or both, first, in the event of an individual's earning power*

*permanently ceasing, being interrupted, never developing, or being exercised only at acceptable social cost and such person being able to avoid poverty. And secondly, in order to maintain children" (White Paper for Social Welfare 1997, Chap. 7, par. 1).*

It is important to note that Government specifically highlights the maintenance of children.

## **PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES AIMED AT ADVANCING THE CHILD'S SOCIAL SERVICES AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**T**he Department of Social Development has adopted specific measures to advance social services and social assistance of the child. Table 2 comprises a list of the main programmes offered by social services and social assistance.

**Table 2: Main programmes aimed at advancing the child's social services and social assistance**

No	Programme
1	Child Support Grant Programme
2	Care Dependency Grant Programme
3	Foster Care Grant Programme
4	Social Relief of Distress Programme
5	The HIV/AIDS Programme (Home/Community-based Care Programme)
6	Poverty Relief Programme`
7	Transformation of the Child and Youth Care Programme
8	Secure Care Programme
9	Child and Youth Justice Diversion Programme
10	State Old Age Pension Programme

*Source: Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 182*

The responsibility for the implementation of these programmes lies primarily with the Department of Social Development. This National Department is responsible for designing, formulating, implementing and monitoring of the social security programmes. Provincial Social Development Departments take responsibility for implementation of the social assistance programmes and service delivery through private agencies who deliver the payment of the grants.

The Child Support Grant Programme is targeted at children who pass a means test. The parent or the care-giver applying for the grant on the child's behalf must supply identity documents and the child's birth certificate. The Child Support Grant consists of a monthly payment of R190 (currently), claimed by the care-giver on behalf of the child.

The Child Support Grant was extended to all eligible children under 9 years of age on 1 April 2003. From 1 April 2004, it was extended to all eligible children under 11 years old and was extended again in April 2005 to all eligible children under the age of 14 (Coetzee and Streak 2004, 183). However, the current Child Support Grant excludes all children over the age of 14 years. It also excludes children living in the streets, as applications must be brought by an adult caregiver. The means-testing for the CSG also fails to take child-headed households into consideration, and there is no grant available for those with chronic illnesses associated with HIV/AIDS.

The successful implementation of the CSG policy will be determined in relation to the other child support grants policies, amongst other things. This includes the direct cash transfers (the CSG, for example) and indirect benefits (community-based care, for example). The value of the CSG can therefore not be assessed in isolation, but will depend to a large extent on the bigger picture of similar child grants.

### PHASING-IN THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

From the beginning of April 1998, the CSG was phased in with support from a Child Support Implementation Grant (CSIG), totaling R75 million to be used between 1998/99 and 2000/01 (National Treasury 2003, 422). This amount was appropriated for the establishment and introduction of the CSG. This conditional grant would later be managed within the equitable share of the CSG, because they both served a simultaneous function – that is, for the improvement of social security and securing a basic income for the most impoverished children in South Africa (Coetzee and Streak 2004, 188).

Since the introduction of the CSG in April 1998, the value of the grant has changed four times. The initial R100 remained unchanged until July 2001, when the grant was increased to R110. It was again increased to R130 in April 2002, to R140 in October 2002 and to R160 as from April 2003 and currently R190. Table 3 shows the value of the grant and how it has changed over time, both in real and nominal terms.

**Table 3: Nominal and real value of the CSG (1998-2003), in Rand**

CSG	1998	1999	2000	2001	April 2002	Oct 2002	2003
Nominal	100	100	100	110	130	140	160
Real	100	94.25	87.49	89.5	96.16	103.56	109.89

*Source: (Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 188).*

In 2003, the CSG programme was affected by a policy change. This must be seen in the context of extensive lobbying and advocacy by civil society and the recommendations made by the Taylor Committee.

The phasing-in of the CSG is only for ages 0-14. However, any policy implementation should also take into account the relationship between different related policies (policy

networks). The Taylor Committee challenged the age policy of the CSG and recommended an 'extension of the CSG to all children 0-18 years' (Department of Social Development 2002, 81). According to the Fourth Annual Economic and Social Rights Report, released by the South African Human Rights Commission (2003, 215), 'it is unconstitutional for children between the ages of 8 and 18 to be denied access to social security'.

## FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE CSG PROGRAMME

The primary responsibility for estimating the budget for the programme on an annual basis and allocating funds from the total provincial budget to the CSG programme lies with the provincial social development departments. A large share of provincial budgets is made up of their equitable share revenue. Hence most of the money allocated to and spent on the CSG programme comes from the equitable shares of provincial governments. The provinces allocate their equitable share at their discretion. Through monitoring of the CSG, attention has been drawn to the question of whether the amount allocated to the CSG through the equitable share formula is sufficient to finance the implementation of the grant in the provinces. It was argued that the equitable share formula took insufficient account of the cost of implementation to all eligible children, and this led to an adjustment in weighting for social welfare from 17% to 18% in budget 2002 (National Treasury 2002)

## UNDER- AND OVER-EXPENDITURE ON THE CSG PROGRAMMES

Actual expenditure on a programme is not always the same as the expenditure that was budgeted for (budget allocations). As can be seen in Table 4, there has been a marked improvement of provincial departments' expenditure of their allocated CSG budgets. While the most recent results show no drastic under-spending, over-spending can also send signals of inadequate budgeting.

It is of concern that the Eastern Cape and the North West province – two of the poorer provinces – as well as KwaZulu-Natal remain poor spenders in comparison to other provinces.

**Table 4: Consolidated CSG allocated budget versus actual expenditure (1998/99-2002/03)**

Year	Initial budget	Estimated expenditure of initial budget allocation	Estimated expenditure as %
1998/99	363 918 901	160 398 822	44%
1999/00	413 035 026	364 157 685	88%
2000/01	692 678 385	777 267 385	112%
2001/02	1 895 338 846	1 618 915 315	85%
2002/03	3 472 816 197	3 436 613 240	99%

Source: (Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 197)



The availability of resources and the optimally creative, pragmatic, coordinated use thereof in the public, private and voluntary sectors of society (Cloete and Wissink, 2000, 185) is imperative for successfully addressing the issue of child poverty.

## **NETWORKS OF DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED WITH THE CSG**

**A**part from the involvement of the primary institutions, that is the Department of Social Development and the provincial social development departments, a network of other departments are involved with the CSG. The understanding of as well as the management of these networks is critical for successful implementation of the SCG. Policy-making involves the efforts by governments to solve public problems, and in the instance of this article the issue of child poverty. Effective problem-solving requires the cooperative efforts of a variety of individuals and organizations. Often, no institution of government possesses sufficient authority, resources and knowledge to enact – let alone achieve – policy intentions. Instead, policies (CSG policy) require concerted efforts of multiple actors to solidify policy intention and to seek its conversion into action (Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan, 1997, 137). The networks of actors in the CSG are therefore critical for the successful implementation.

### **South African Police Service**

A social security official at each social security office should be a designated commissioner of oaths to certify documents and attest affidavits.

### **Home Affairs**

It is desirable that offices or mobile units of the Department of Home Affairs should be located close to Department of Social Development offices. The collaboration between these two departments is crucial for the applicants of the CSG and the *Batho Pele* principles of service delivery (Goldblatt, Rosa and Hall, 2006, 2).

### **Department of Health**

In some instances the applicants are required to obtain a clinic card for the purpose of identification of the child where there is no birth certificate. The practice should not place an unnecessary burden on the application of the CSG (Goldblatt, Rosa, and Hall, 2006, 2).

### **Department of Education**

In some instances, applicants of the CSG are requested to prove the relationship between the care-giver and the child. This could result in requesting a letter from schools to prove the relationship. However, as pointed out by Goldblatt, *et al.* (2006, 2) the is not necessarily a prescribed policy imperative.

## Department of Justice

The failure to institute private maintenance claims also prove to be a barrier to the processing of applications of the CSG. Again, as Goldblatt, *et al.* (2006, 2) indicated, the application for a CSG should proceed as normal, without putting on hold because of a lengthy court process.

## Traditional authorities

In some instances chiefs are involved for the proof of residency or proof of customary marriage for the application of a CSG.

## THE CLIENTS OF THE CSG PROGRAMME

Problems in reaching the most vulnerable and poor children in the CSG implementation process are experienced due to a lack of accessibility, as well as lack of infrastructure and means for the distribution of the CSG to those most in need. Children living in child headed households cannot access the CSG, mainly because a lack of identification documents and the procedural requirements related to fostering. The question is whether the policy reaches its clients successfully. According to Coetzee and Streak (2004, 203) in the fifth year of the grant, it was reaching a full third of age-eligible children in the remote rural areas, half of whom received a grant within three months. Further, it should be questioned whether the CSG is really geared towards an impoverish environment.

## PROBLEMS CONSTRAINING THE ROLL-OUT OF THE CSG

Government has made substantial progress towards advancing children's access to social assistance through the CSG in the most provinces. However, the eligibility criteria need be re-considered so that all children in need are included. The rate of the implementation is also in need of improvement, particularly in the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Limpopo Provinces (Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 204).

## Mistargeting of the child support grant

Assuming the funds from the Child Support Grant reach the eligible recipient, there is the possibility of some caregivers will use the funds for their own purposes rather than for the health, nutrition and security of the children it is intended for. In numerous developing countries, all household income is controlled by the male head of the household, and this is often associated with higher expenditure on alcohol and tobacco, and lower levels of expenditure on child health care, food and education (Black, 2004, 432). Black (2004, 432) suggests that subsidies of food, education and health would be a better option in these cases, since the people in the household most in need of these services (i.e. children) will then benefit from them.

## Obstacles by service providers

Since 1997 the management and administration of the social assistance has been designated to provincial social development departments. The current system is beset by a number of deficiencies, like poor management, weaknesses in the distribution and development of human resources, inadequate infrastructure and information technology support systems.

According to Coetzee and Streak (2004, 205) the following appear to be the main obstacles experienced by service providers:

- there seem to be different interpretations of the relevant legislation;
- there is a lack of uniformity in the application of the means test within and across provinces;
- there is a lack of clarity regarding the execution of the new CSG policy of adding an additional age cohort for registration annually on 1 April;
- implementation is also constrained by a lack of uniformity in administrative procedures;
- there is an administrative overload in the processing of the CSG; and
- any single grant application can take anywhere between 20 to 90 days to process.

## OBSTACLES RAISED BY BENEFICIARIES, POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES AND CARE-GIVERS

Those who apply to the CSG must provide a whole range of documentation that is not always readily available from the potential beneficiaries. Married parents should for instance supply their marriage certificates, but in some instances they do not possess an official marriage certificate. Unmarried mothers are expected to come to the application office with the father of the child. However, in rural areas many men are working in Johannesburg or elsewhere on farms and are only home for the December holidays (Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 206). Children often lack identity documents and birth certificates. Transport is also cited as an obstacle in applying for the CSG.

## REMEDIES TO OVERCOME THE IMPLEMENTATION OBSTACLES

The implementation issues, if addressed, would go a long way in improving the conditions for applicants and beneficiaries of the CSG. Beyond the implementation of the policy, significant improvements in the nature of grants and their implementation could be achieved through particular changes to the legislation and regulations. This article does not set out to make policy recommendations, but focuses more on the issue of implementation.

Since 2003, Government focused on improving information systems and human capacity for the implementation and service delivery of the CSG. With the help of a conditional grant of over R200 million, provinces have been purchasing computers and upgrading their information systems to improve administration and take-up. Training of

officials will ensure uniformity in the government process. The National Department of Social Development has embarked on a marketing strategy to encourage people to apply for identity documents and to register the births of their children (Coetzee and Streak, 2004, 208).

A successful application for the CSG is, in part, dependent on the primary caregiver establishing that she and her spouse comply with a means test that is linked to her/their personal income. An affidavit is the main source of evidence of the income of applicants for the CSG (Goldblatt, Rosa, and Hall, 2006, 41).

Alternative proof of identification should be accepted by the Department of Social Development where inability to do so would prevent poor children from receiving a CSG, pending the furnishing of IDs and birth certificates by the Department of Home Affairs. Improvements to the CSG should form part of a comprehensive social security system in South Africa. This implies that the relevant groups of stakeholders should manage the network of social assistance policies. As indicated in this article, policy implementation is a multifaceted concept, attempted at various levels of government and pursued in conjunction with the private sector, civil society and NGOs. Therefore, the successful delivery of the CSG is only one factor in the whole picture of child poverty. The successful delivery of the CSG would, therefore, not completely eradicate child poverty, but the networks in government, as well as those outside government should provide a coherent effort (Cloete and Wissink, 2000, 180). Child-headed households should also benefit from the CSG, especially those heading these kinds of households.

Recently, there has been particular emphasis on the integration of service delivery among departments. This challenge has proven difficult to achieve, as departments and other governmental units tend to favour line functions and a 'silo' approach. Policy coherence and the integration of services is an emerging issue internationally and in South Africa, the cluster approach has been adopted to address improved coordination. It is therefore suggested that in terms of the CSG, that besides the Department of Social Development and the provincial social development departments, the other relevant departments should have a conscious coherent effort and strategy to address the successful implementation of the CSG. The other pertinent departments involved with the CSG are the South African Police Service, Home Affairs, Health, Education, Justice and even the traditional authorities.

Although the policy on CSG is in essence effective in addressing the whole issue of child poverty, it does not necessarily provide guidance to translate the CSG into practice. The clients of the particular policies are indeed those very impoverished people who do not have easy access to all government policies, services and grants. Therefore, it is somehow obvious that there are several shortcomings with the implementation of the CSG.

- National and provincial planning for the successful delivery of the CSG is essential. Meaningful planning is also essential at the operational level of the CSG. The evidence in terms of the implementation of the CSG is clear, that once a policy is determined, it is not necessarily a pure administrative process that will follow by itself. The complexity inherent in the implementation of CSG has been amply demonstrated in

this article. One needs to look at the critical variables for the implementation of the CSG. However, implementation is never static and the implementation of the CSG should be reviewed from time to time. The following critical variables for the CSG could be suggested:

- Review the content of the CSG policy. This might include aspects like the maximum age that could be raised to 18 in order to align it with other similar policies. Further, the means test could be revisited to include alternative sources to obtain the required documents.
- The nature of the institutional context, that is the prominent institutions and departments that should collaborate for the sake of the beneficiaries of the CSG.
- The commitment and administrative capacity of those entrusted with the carrying out of the CSG. Aspects like time lag, assistance to potential applicants and the effective roll-out of the CSG could be important.
- The support of the clients (beneficiaries) whose interest (poverty) are enhanced or threatened by the CSG.

The desired results of the CSG are indeed attained, but it is important to realise that not all possible beneficiaries, especially in the rural areas, are reached. The suggested policy implementation interventions should therefore contribute to a more successful implementation of the CSG.

## CONCLUSION

The mere fact that South Africa has a CSG policy does not mean that child poverty will suddenly disappear, nor does it mean that the policy will automatically be successfully implemented. The article indicated that for both instances, in the case of child poverty, as well as the execution of the policy, offer major challenges. It is clear that although the CSG achieved its goals, a whole range of shortcomings occur. These shortcomings stem from the lack of proper implementation to unintended outcomes of the CSG. One attempt to address the challenges of the CSG is to do proper research on the implementation and provide meaningful remedial actions.

Policy research and more specifically policy implementation research is of the utmost importance. South Africa has now come to the crossroads to analyse all the policies, including the CSG policy, and try to streamline these policies for successful implementation. The ramifications of successful outcomes will indeed address issues like poverty. It is noteworthy to realise that the conventional way of the implementation of policies, or in this instance the CSG, requires new approaches to policy implementation. In the exposition of the background to child poverty as well as the development and implementation of the CSG since 1998, it is critical to realise that the responsibility has been mainly with the Department of Social Development and the social development departments in the respective provinces. The typical *silo* approach to implementation should make room for the networks approach to policy implementation. The different departments and other institutions as indicated in the article should work together

as networks to enhance the outcomes of the CSG. This implies that not only related institutions should collaborate, but also the networks of policies that relate to the CSG.

As indicated in the article, research on child poverty and the CSG has mostly been done by disciplines like social work, law, and human rights. Public Administration and specifically policy implementation, as argued in this article, should also play a role. The needs for policies are always changing and so should the policies. This implies that more research about the implementation of the CSG should be undertaken from time to time. The outcomes of this research will be valuable for policy-makers and policy implementers alike.

The remedies to achieve successful implementation of the CSG should serve as a starting point in rectifying the desired outcomes. Besides the instances of correct spending and administrative efficiency in terms of the CSG budget, several critical variables have been identified as noteworthy for the successful implementation of the CSG. These variables like the correct policy content, nature and collaboration of the institutional context and policy context (networks of stakeholders and policies), commitment, skills, and support of the clients (beneficiaries) are of key importance for the successful implementation of the CSG policy.

The adaptation to the CSG policy also raises the question whether the policy still addresses the original client. The examining of the client or clients of the CSG policy might reveal a need to revise the CSG policy. The realisation of the CSG in the near future will depend not only on the successful implementation of the CSG, but also on the assistance to the poor and unemployed parents. In this regard, Government's new emphasis on stepping up investing in job creation is noted and encouraging.

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