



**Evaluating the impact of social grants on food security and poverty alleviation  
in South Africa**

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## **DECLARATION**

This is to declare that this mini-thesis is my own work. This work has never been used or submitted for any examination or any degree at any other institution of higher learning. Furthermore, I declare that in this min-thesis all sources of information are acknowledged in this work in both in-text and in the bibliography.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The relationship between social welfare policies and food security across the world remains a significant challenge that has raised intense scholarly debate. A number of suggestions have been offered on how to measure social welfare policies in terms of addressing the household level food security and poverty reduction. Accordingly, a variety of hypotheses and different modalities of measurements have been developed. In line with Rawls' theory of justice, this research study seeks to analyse the extent to which social welfare policies address food security and poverty in South Africa. A quantitative method of research was applied and secondary data was used throughout the study to understand the variation of poverty within the provinces of South Africa, by population group and household income. This was accentuated through a social grants review intervention on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa. For the purpose of this study, the fifth round of the South African National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) (Wave V) was used for data analysis. In general, data entry and analysis was done using statistical software STATA version 15.1. The study found that provincially, Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal are in serious crisis in poverty and food security and social grants are also in demand especially in rural areas. Secondly, social grants are a crucial component of South Africa's battle against food security and poverty. They are not sufficient to alleviate poverty and food insecurity and the high inflation rate supersedes the slow increase of social grants, especially regarding food prices. The money received from social grants is not spent exclusively on food but on numerous needs of the household such as transport costs, medical care, clothes, etc. Within the context of the abovementioned analysis, the study brings into focus general observations gained from the investigation and makes recommendations to policy-makers and other stakeholders.

## **KEY WORDS**

Economic  
Empowerment  
Food  
Grants  
Policies  
Poor  
Poverty  
Security  
Social-welfare  
South Africa and



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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

BEE	:	Black Economic Empowerment
CSG	:	Child Support Grant
DSD	:	Department of Social Development
GEAR	:	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
ILO	:	International Labour Organisation
LCS	:	Living Conditions Survey
NIDS	:	National Income Dynamics Study
RDP	:	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SASSA	:	South African Social Security Agency
Stats SA	:	Statistics South Africa

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Food security and poverty continue to be among the major issues confronting the African continent in general and South Africa in particular (Sithole and Dinbabo, 2016; Dinbabo, Belebema, & Mensah, 2019; Majee, Dinbabo, Ile & Belebema, 2019;). About one of every seven South Africans (13.4%) is in unstable food poverty. About 15.8% of the South African population lack essential commodities for survival, for example, housing with clean water and food, clothes, electricity and medical care (Stats SA, 2017: 14). The first problem to a rational approach to poverty and food security in South Africa is the conflict over the definition of the problem. The fact that there is an increase in social government grants for social welfare programmes, frequently leads to high estimates of the number and percentage of the population that is poor. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2015), about 30.4 million South Africans are living below the poverty line and suffer from hunger, malnutrition, remedial illness, and some have lost hope in government. This highlights the fact that there are fundamental problems around social welfare policy implications in South Africa around the issue of poverty and food security measures. Leaders of government in South Africa have been confronted by undernourished, malnourished and economically helpless citizens whose daily staple foods have become increasingly elusive. The continuation of such misery mandated the fast intervention and expansion of a wide variety of public welfare programmes such of social grants and food security-intense programmes (Stats SA, 2015: 78).

The government of South Africa as a developing country has invested more time and resources on social development policies in post-apartheid South Africa, prioritising human needs in the growth and progression of society. Programmes such as social grants, health care, basic education, and access to clean water and sanitation were a few of the burning social development matters in the new South Africa. These were some strategic moves to redress the imbalances of the past where the rich became richer and the poor remained poor because of race and class standards, hence documents such as the White Paper on Social Welfare (RSA, 1997). Furthermore, the White Paper on Development Welfare is one of the strategic moves towards social development by the democratic government of South Africa, to alleviate poverty among South African communities

(Dinbabo, 2011; Dinbabo, et. al, 2018; Dinbabo, Belebema, & Mensah, 2017). Such guiding documents enable the South African government to support a number of poor people in South Africa under the office of South African Social Security Agency (SASSA).

In the following sections, the researcher presents, (i) the background and relevance of the study to development; (ii) the literature review and theoretical/conceptual framework of the study; (iii) the problem statement, research questions and the specific objectives of the study; (iv) the research methodology for the study; and (v) the chapter outline.

## **1.2 Background and contextualisation**

South Africa is considered one of the African countries with the best developing economy with promising potential (World Bank, 2018a). The South African economy, despite its strong past growth and future potential, is currently stagnating as it experiences a high rate of unemployment especially among the youth. At the local level, however, within communities and local organisations, multi-racial cooperative efforts with potentially far-reaching consequences have taken place. Community groups are more organised and committed to liberating themselves from the thorns of poverty and poor development (World Bank, 2018b; Beyene, & Dinbabo, 2019; Adeniyi, & Dinbabo, 2019). Over a million people are currently unemployed and the rand value keeps dropping with unattractive attention on investments from abroad. The country's trade is not widely diversified but instead is heavily dependent upon minerals, which accounts for 50 percent of exports. Through political, social and economic relationships in trade and labour migration, South Africa became dominant in the Southern African region during the post-apartheid era. Unfortunately this does not filter down to the majority of lives of the marginalised South Africans in redressing the imbalances of the past and creating a better future for all (Burger and Jafta, 2006).

Poverty within South Africa is far more severe and widespread than is commonly appreciated. The myth put forth by the government of South Africa that black standards of living are higher than during the years of apartheid has been believed in spite of ever-increasing evidence to the contrary. The unequal distribution of government resources to the masses of people has created massive inequality and an escalating poverty line (World Bank, 2016). The sad reality yields evidence that even post-apartheid, the majority of black South Africans are poorer without basic needs such as food and water while the white minority continues to enjoy a luxurious life. Hunger is pervasive

throughout all nine provinces. It affects many families in underdeveloped parts of the country, with the incidence of malnutrition greatest among the rural poor, children under six, crippled miners, and the elderly (Timmer, 2010). If the official government poverty line is used as an arbitrary yardstick, there are about 25 million poor people in South Africa, or about 12 percent of the population. This indicates that South Africa is indeed in a crisis of hunger and poverty with social welfare policy disputes, and the fruits of democracy are still not visible after 25 years of democracy (Timmer, 2010).

In addressing many societal challenges, which include poverty and food insecurity, the government of the new South Africa introduced several socio-economic policies for economic growth, redistribution and sustainability. These policies include the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1995, the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) plan of 1996 and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) of 2003, to create employment opportunities and strategies for economic growth and to alleviate poverty (May, 1998?). These programmes were intended to deliver social services such as housing, clean water, electricity, land reform, healthcare, and public works to the millions of South Africans (Gray, 2006). This highlights the importance of implementing the government's social welfare policies in response to the existing grievances of communities and monitoring if key objectives such as poverty alleviation and food security are met. This paper evaluates the impact of social grants on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa and analyses the effectiveness of the country's social welfare policies post-1994.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

The transformation of South Africa from a society rooted in discrimination and inequality to a constitutional democracy founded upon freedom, dignity and equality posed, and continues to pose particularly profound challenges in moving forward. The acute imbalances in personal wealth, physical infrastructure and the provision of services show that South Africa is indeed a welfare state. The burning issues of food insecurity and poverty in South Africa need the serious intervention of proper policy measures to relieve the misery of the suffering masses. The government needs to appoint suitable officials in monitoring and evaluation positions to ensure that there are not poorly designed policies and the continuation of wasteful expenditure of

government resources. This research explores the existing knowledge and literature and makes recommendations to government officials and policy-makers on policy formulation, policy review, implementation and evaluation of issues pertaining to social welfare. Social welfare policies must in practice for the liberation of the marginalised and the poor, rural poor communities and informal settlements must benefit through accessible programs created by government in this regard. It is through the review and relevant amendments of existing policies which scholars can contribute in assisting our government especially in monitoring and evaluation of the existing programs.

#### **1.4 Statement of the problem**

Despite the fact that the relevance of social welfare policies in poverty reduction are indicated in the international and national human rights instruments, the social welfare policy implementation has been a lot more challenging in terms of alleviating deep-rooted social problems in South Africa (Adeniyi, & Dinbabo, 2019; Beyene, & Dinbabo, 2019; Dinbabo, 2011). The South African government has implemented many policies to reduce widespread poverty, significant levels of income disparity, high levels of unemployment and crime, as well as HIV/AIDS (Niekerk, 2003; September and Dinbabo, 2008). The South African government also introduced the 1997 White Paper for Social Welfare, the Financing Policy for Developmental Social Welfare Services of 1999, the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers of 2004, and the Service Delivery Model for Developmental Social Services (Dinbabo, 2011; Ile and Dinbabo, 2014; Callistus and Dinbabo, 2014).

In 2015, one out of three South Africans lived on less than R797 every month, or half of the nation's 2015 mean yearly family unit salary of R19,120. A larger number of women were affected, compared to men, children and older persons, while racial imbalances continued to characterise poverty and food security as a black South African issue (Stats SA, 2017). Since 1994 various government policy strategies have been created to address the imbalances of the past, poverty, and issues of hunger alleviation. The Growth Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) project, Affirmative Action, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), and the Land Reform system are the most vital policy frameworks of the democratic South Africa post-apartheid, yet the alleviation of poverty and food security is moving at a slow pace (Stats SA, 2017).

South Africa as a developing country has faced many disputes related to social welfare, such as food insecurity and poverty. Poverty and food insecurity have escalated to the extent that the majority of black people in South Africa are left feeling pessimistic about the socio-economic stability of this country. The transition from apartheid to a democratic state brought many systematic changes in the South African government, clearly aimed at addressing socio-economic issues, through social welfare policies. The problems of hunger and poverty alleviation, together with policy dilemmas in the search for food security have presented critical challenges to the South African government for the past two decades. Yet these problems are part of the same subject of social development standards for the poor and the vulnerable, embedded as they are in how this country is tied to its present and future. According to Dinbabo (2011), one of the main objectives of social welfare policies in South Africa is aimed at alleviating poverty and ensuring access to basic social services for the previously disadvantaged. Yet, the issues of poverty alleviation and food insecurity are still major challenges facing South Africa.

What is of greater concern, is that if the divergence between the wealthy and the poor continues for an extended period of time, it could cause social unrest (May, 1998). This could thus taint the accomplishment of the tranquil change to democracy with its potential social welfare state balance. Given the previously mentioned circumstances, this research examines South Africa's poverty and food security alleviation techniques, drawing on research on other progressive nations. It is therefore suitable to use mixed research methods to investigate the relationship between poverty, food security and social grants under social welfare policies in South Africa. The outcome of this rigorous academic research is expected to add more value to the academic literature and policy formation in South Africa.

## **1.5 Case study area**

This research focuses on all nine provinces of South Africa and analyses the issues of food security, poverty and social grants as primary resolutions to the key fundamental problem. In the case of South Africa, the democratic government has focused on poverty alleviation for more than 20 years. Accomplishing food security per household is one of the critical challenges the government is faced with (Stats SA, 2015: 34). Access to basic needs like food and water is a primary

component of the service delivery required from the government, since these needs are fundamental for survival and human advancement

While South Africa might be food secure as a country as a whole, extensive numbers of families in the country are not food secure. To comprehend the concepts of food security and poverty in South African households, it is important to explore the operational links between food distribution, the poverty alleviation framework and service delivery in this country (Hendriks and Msaki, 2005: 4). Programmes such as social grants, health care, basic education, access to clean water and sanitation are few of the burning social development matters in the new South Africa. Therefore, this research evaluates the impact of social grants on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa and also analyses the effectiveness of our social welfare policies post-1994.

### **1.6 Aim of the study**

The main purpose of this study is to understand the different types of social grants in place to alleviate food insecurity and poverty in South Africa. It through this study that social grants are evaluated to what extent they can alleviate poverty and food insecurity in South Africa. The study will therefore, argue that the fundamental gap between social welfare policies in addressing social welfare issues such as poverty, inequality and food insecurity. Furthermore, the study aim at using NIDS Wave 5, with Stats-SA content based on a sample and census figures.

### **1.7 Specific objectives**

Below are the objectives selected on the basis of the general objective of the study:

- To broaden the current knowledge on social welfare policies and to provide an adequate theoretical and conceptual framework for the research.
- To assess the various perspectives presented in the literature on the current knowledge on social grants on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa.
- To identify the different types of social grants and assess the variation of poverty within provinces of South Africa, by population group and household income.

- To identify different social grants distribution and trends of food security by provinces and population groups.
- To provide recommendations regarding policy implications resulting from the research analysis.

## 1.8 Research questions

This paper attempts to answer the following questions:

- What is the percentage of people living in poverty within the provinces of South Africa, by population group and household income?
- How are social grants distributed and what are the trends of food security by provinces and population groups?
- What contribution have social grants assured in food security and poverty by provinces and population groups?

## 1.9 Chapter outline

This study is organised into five chapters. *Chapter One* is the introductory chapter and includes the background and contextualisation for the study, the research problem, research question, research objectives, research hypothesis, as well as the methodological approach to the study.

*Chapter Two* provides a comprehensive review of the literature on the development impact evaluation which includes welfare development projects. It also sets out the relevant theoretical framework, concepts and conceptual linkages underpinning the research analysis. The chapter reviews the Rawls and Cosmopolitan theories of Justice, which constitute the theoretical base of this chapter. The chapter also provide the definitions of poverty, food security and social welfare policy. It then reviews of literature of different scholars on poverty, food security and social welfare policy, from both a country and global perspective. Lastly, the chapter elaborates on the social welfare policy in South Africa, highlighting the social welfare programmes aimed at alleviating poverty and food security through the implementation of social grants.

**Chapter Three** outlines the research methods employed in the data analysis. The main aim of this chapter is to provide answers to the research questions through the discussion of the research methodology. The study uses quantitative research methods to examine the social grants impact on food security and poverty alleviation, using the South African National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) (Wave V) data sets. The methodology of the study includes both descriptive and inferential statistics methods to examine the significant relationship explained in the sampling frame.

**Chapter Four** focuses on the empirical research, with the presentation and discussion of findings. The chapter explains the findings in relation to the reviewed literature, and the theoretical and conceptual framework adopted for the study. Furthermore, it presents the analyses of results in according to the study. The study consists of descriptive statistics analysis in evaluating the impact of social grants on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa.

**Chapter Five** presents the researcher's suggestions and recommendations on the study subject, pointing out that social grants are a crucial segment of South Africa's battle against food security and poverty but they are not sufficient for the overall alleviation of poverty and food insecurity. The chapter also provides the conclusion to the thesis. This consists of the overview summary and conclusions according to the findings of this research, as well as the recommendations.

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## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conceptual and theoretical framework of the thesis, highlighting definitions and interpreting theoretical concepts relevant to the research area. The concepts such as poverty, food security, social grants and theories of justice are discussed in detail to clarify the relationship between these concepts.

### **2.2 Welfare economics**

A fundamental theorem of welfare economics states that the market system allocates resources in accordance with the Pareto<sup>1</sup> principle. This allocation, however, will also meet the intuitive norms of economic justice and fairness only if the initial allocation of the means of production is just and fair. Otherwise, as Amartya Sen once remarked, the economy can be Pareto optimal and yet be perfectly disgusting (Sen, 2000). According to the World Bank (2017), the present state of the world food and poverty problem makes it painfully clear that, in many developing countries the food security and poverty problem cannot possibly be alleviated without the massive support of the more affluent countries. The rapidly growing population demand in many developing countries further frustrates efforts of the governments to raise the standard of living and, as a result people are exposed to undernutrition and escalating poverty (World Bank, 2017). In the United States, Australia, and Argentina (the main exporters of food grains), substantial capacity exists to further increase grain production, and their governments must invest considerable efforts and financial resources to curb the growth in food production and to prevent the collapse of world grain prices to avoid poverty. Even in the developing countries as a group, food production has increased faster than the population through most of the agricultural investment and monitoring. From a strictly technical standpoint, these countries still have a significant agricultural potential on which to capitalise if appropriate incentives and required inputs, such as fertilisers, are provided (World Bank, 2017).

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<sup>1</sup> The Pareto principle is a theory of distribution that maintains about 80 percent wealth of Italy focused only in 20 percent of a population, which therefore mean in life mostly things are not fairly distributed.

The food security issue has further historical roots in historically colonised and developing nations than usually analysed. The colonisers were more focused on land for raw materials such as minerals and fishing and less for food production and the colonial policy was centred on that (Kalibwani, 2005). History highlights more hunger and food insecurity in developing countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa. For instance, Eicher (1982), Hansen (1984) and Dinham et al. (1984, referred to in Kalibwani, 2005) all concur that, most colonised countries' governments did not prioritise capital investment through food production. Land, labour and different assets of the country were occupied far from generating food but into raw industrial material such as mining, fishing, and oil harvest. The infrastructural improvement that occurred amid this period, was for the transportation of imports and exports, for example, cotton, tobacco, cocoa and raw minerals (Kalibwani, 2005). Agricultural policy objectives should in future add to the economic growth of the country, contribute to food security stability and poverty alleviation and create jobs for welfare in households (Stats SA, 1998, 2000, referred to in Hendriks and Lyne, 2003).

Dinbabbo (2011) argues that a great diversity of literature contributed to the development of social welfare theories and policy implementation modalities. On the basis of these diverse approaches, different arguments have been provided and different methodological perspectives developed. In the context of this research, the Rawls (1971) theory of justice is relevant and will act as the basis of the theoretical framework. The following section presents analyses of the main understandings of the Rawls theory of justice, distributive justice and theory of relative deprivation, traces their main characteristics and practical applications, and indicates the relationship between social welfare policies and child poverty.

### **2.3 Justice**

Justice is yet another one of those political concepts that is difficult to define. Very basically, justice requires us to give to others what they are due or entitled to. This contrasts with charity. It may be morally good for us to contribute to a charity but we are under no obligation to do so. In the modern world, justice is a distributional concept, that is, it is concerned with how different resources, wealth, income, educational opportunities, and so on ought to be distributed legitimately to people (Rawls, 1971). It is a concept, then that implies that resources are scarce, for if we had

more than enough resources to go around, there would be no need to wrestle over who should have them. A distinction can be made between procedural justice and social justice. In the former case, justice involves the following of rules, irrespective of the outcomes, whereas the latter is more concerned about outcomes. Modern theories of social or distributive justice have identified a number of criteria that we might consider as guides to the distribution of resources in government (Dinbabo, 2011; Miller, 1976).

We could say that resources ought to be distributed according to need, or a principle of equality. All theories of justice must involve equality, not in the sense that resources ought to be distributed equally, but that there ought to be consistency of treatment. For instance, we might decide that since some people work harder than others, or are more talented than others, they ought to have more of the resources available for distribution. A theory of justice based on need is particularly associated with socialism, as in the slogan ‘from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs’. Even in the modern liberal democracy, however, the existence of a welfare state amounts to recognition that meeting needs is just, although such societies also adopt these as the criteria for the distribution of resources once basic needs are met (Dinbabo, 2011; Miller, 1976).

## 2.4 The Rawls theory of justice

John Rawls's theory of justice is regarded as the most important work of political philosophy since the end of the Second World War. Rawls (1971) seeks to devise a method for arriving at principles of justice to which everyone can consent. Rawls advocates the widest possible freedom for people to pursue different conceptions of the good life. The problem with the competing theories of justice is that they rest on judgements about values that are objectively irresolvable. Thus, how do we choose between theories of justice emphasizing merit from one emphasizing needs? Does it not depend upon pre-existing normative arguments about, for example, whether one favours a more equal society or a freer one, or one which places greater store on individual efforts and achievements? Rawls's answer to this is to devise a hypothetical situation in which, he argues, there will be unanimous support for particular principles of justice (Rawls, 1971: 302). Imagine a so-called original position in which individuals are asked to meet and decide how they want their society to be organised. In this original position, the members will be under a ‘veil of ignorance’, that is, they will have no idea what their own position in society will turn out to be. They do not

know if they will be rich or poor, black or white, male or female, disabled or able-bodied (Rawls, 1971: 302).

Rawls also assumes that individuals in the original position will be self-interested, wanting the best for themselves. Finally, he also suggests that they will desire what he calls primary goods such as wealth, good health, education, water, food and so on. In the second part of the theory, Rawls outlines the principles he thinks will derive from individuals in the original position. There are two: “Firstly, each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all. Secondly, social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both: to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged and; attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity” (Rawls, 1971: 266).

Rawls adds that, (i) which is the liberty principle has priority over (ii); and ii (b) which is the fair opportunity principle and has priority over ii (a) which is the difference principle. This means, for example, that one cannot sacrifice liberty in order to achieve economic improvement, thereby ruling out slavery, where it is conceivable that individuals could have a relatively high degree of welfare but no liberty (Rawls, 1971).

Rawls’s work has generated a huge literature (Daniels, 1975; Wolff, 1977; Kukathas and Pettit, 1990). It is useful to distinguish between criticisms of his method, on the one hand, and his principles, on the other. In the former case, it has been questioned whether people in the original position would have produced the principles of justice at which Rawls arrives. His central claim is that, because they do not know where they will end up in the social strata, individuals behind the veil of ignorance will be conservative, in the sense of being unwilling to take risks. It is not clear, however, that people in the original position would choose the kind of risk-averse strategy he suggests (Wolff, 1996: 177-86). Rawls calls it the ‘maximin’ strategy (maximising to minimum) where we try to ensure that the worst possible scenario is as good as possible. It would clearly be extremely risky to adopt the other extreme whereby we seek to create a society where the rich are very rich and the poor are very poor; but, against Rawls, it can be argued that there is a middle way between these two extremes. We could, for example, opt for a society that has a great deal of inequality but which also protects the worst-off so they have basic protection.

In this scenario, the average position in society would be considerably improved, but at the same time, if you did end up at the bottom of the social pile, it would not be totally catastrophic. Rawls's reluctance to sanction the middle way option leads some to suggest that he has merely created a method that will produce the outcomes he desires. There is some evidence for this. Rawls admits that he is not totally reliant on the heuristic device of the contract to derive his principles of justice. Rather, he adopts a procedure described as reflective equilibrium, whereby the principles derived from the original position are checked for consistency with our moral intuitions (Rawls, 1971: 20). Inevitably, then, the principles of justice arrived at will be, at the very least, influenced by already existing moral conventions.

## **2.5 Cosmopolitan theories of justice**

Cosmopolitan theories of justice seek to impose a duty on individuals and state either to act positively to end injustices in the world or, at the very least, to refrain from acting so as to cause harm (Dobson, 1998). Both practices feature in the politics of climate change. Cosmopolitans insist that rich industrialised countries should desist from continuing to burn fossil fuels at the rate that they are currently doing it. Equally, since these countries are held responsible for climate change, they are also obliged, it is argued, to assist those states in the developing world which have not been responsible for causing climate change but which are least able to deal with its consequences. Despite intensive international negotiations over the past two decades or so, neither outcome has materialised to the degree that many cosmopolitan theories of justice would advocate.

The growing inter-connectedness in the world of peoples and sovereign states has provided a fillip for extending justice beyond national boundaries. Limiting a discussion of justice to the internal affairs of wealthy Western states seems trivial, given the staggering inequalities between different parts of the world, particularly given the often-made claim that the rich Northern states are at least partly responsible for the poverty in the South (Linklater and Suganami, 2006). This has led political theorists to develop theories of justice that are global in scope. This so-called cosmopolitan approach to justice is based on the principle that our loyalties ought to be with human beings as a whole, rather than only those who happen to live within the boundaries of the state within which we reside. This idea, that human beings are equal members of a global citizenry, has a long history in political thought but the growing inequality between the North and the South in

recent decades, and the greater recognition of this inequality, has made questions surrounding global justice ‘one of the great moral challenges of our age’ (Linklater, 2008: 555). There is little agreement on what our moral obligations should be to those outsiders who do not belong to our community. At the extreme end, Singer (2002) puts forward the principle of unlimited obligation whereby we are obliged to help others even to the point of seriously eroding our own standards of living. A less extreme position is to apply Rawls’s principles on a global scale, thereby justifying a greater degree of redistribution between the rich and the poor parts of the world (Beitz, 1979; Pogge, 1989).

An examination of freedom and justice has revealed how inter-connected political concepts are. We cannot properly evaluate freedom, for instance, without considering how it relates to conceptions of justice. Such an exercise also involves considering the respective merits of freedom and equality, which for most, if not all, are seen as conflicting objectives. What we have seen too, is that the essentially contested nature of political concepts makes it difficult to go beyond an exercise in semantics (Dower, 1998). For example, freedom has been regarded as a source of inequality, on the one hand, and as necessary for equality that will liberate people from poverty and food insecurity, on the other. There is no doubt that theorists of freedom and justice now have to engage with the impact of globalisation in resolving the inequality which strapped many people under extreme poverty and food insecurity. Our greater knowledge of different cultures enabled by technological developments which now give us a clearer picture of how different societies operate, and by increasing mobility leading to the emergence of multicultural communities makes us more circumspect about the value of freedom and what practices should be regarded as legitimate restrictions on freedom that is beneficial for all (Berlin, 1969). Likewise, there are increasing calls for the principle of justice to be applied globally to address the shocking inequalities between different parts of the world affecting millions of vulnerable people. These developments provide important challenges to political theorists, challenges which they will have to grapple with for some time to come.

## **2.6 Conceptualisation of key terms**

### ***2.6.1 Food insecurity***

Access to food depends on the purchasing power of the money that people earn, their access to land to grow food crops, foraging, such as occurring in rural areas and the support in kind received from other members of communities. The coping strategies of households may include migration to places perceived to offer jobs (mainly urban areas) and obtaining various grants for the indigent and vulnerable (children, disabled and the elderly) provided by governments (Sithole and Dinbabo, 2016: 517). In the absence of food security, too little food and food of low nutritional value forms the diet of poor people. Balanced nutritious meals are important for the cognitive development (perception, thinking and learning) of children and adults. Even before birth, nutrition affects the development of a child. Undernutrition of the mother affects brain development negatively and may cause permanent and irreversible damage to the baby (Sithole and Dinbabo, 2016). Breast-feeding of babies leads to higher IQ development, and fewer cases of rashes and bacterial infections (Sommer and Davidson, 2002). Iron deficiency during the early years of a child can cause permanent damage to the brain. Iodine deficiency in the early years is associated with reduced cognition and achievement in school-age children. Poorly nourished children are more prone to infections, may be sick more often and are likely to be frequently absent from school. The lack of food security and under- and malnourishment experienced by the poor (and especially their children) contribute to physical weakness. Physical weakness makes people vulnerable; it may keep them from finding well-paid jobs and generally makes them powerless (Sithole and Dinbabo, 2016).

Temporary food shortages and chronic low consumption remain persistent problems in developing countries. With highly variable production, and without the capacity to meet whatever shortfalls may arise by imports, considerable variability in food consumption is the likely and commonplace result (Sommer and Davidson, 2002). The food security problem is more pronounced for the vulnerable low-income groups, who may consume inadequate diets even in normal years and who are less able to maintain consumption levels at times when low production and imports lead to aggregate food scarcity, low rural incomes, and high food prices. According to Crush (2012), the urban food insecurity crisis in urban areas is more of food accessibility, not scarcity, for there are

many people who cannot afford food consumption per households. In order to analyse the specific measures pursued by public grain agencies, one must first identify the important sources of instability in food consumption and then understand how alternative interventions may work (FAO, 1983). Factors which potentially lead to market and consumption instability include: production shortfalls; variations in import capacity, due to either world price fluctuations, export imports earnings; distribution or high transportation costs, which impede the movement of grain to where it is needed; and weak and variable demand, due to income fluctuations (possibly due to varying harvest levels).

Production shortfalls are recognised as the most prevalent and probably least controllable source of instability. Agricultural output is dependent on the weather, which is capable of varying dramatically from season to season. While irrigation may be used to reduce production variability, a country's capacity to expand irrigation in the short term is likely to be limited like the recent water shortage in South Africa (Riely et al., 1999). A portion of its agriculture will always be subject to fluctuations in rainfall especially if production is to expand, and that expansion must come in part through increasing the cultivated area onto lower quality land. Production variability may also be in part the result of policy-induced price fluctuations as droughts result in price increase in food crops. It is clear from the literature that agricultural production is likely to respond to price incentives (Askari and Cummings, 1976). If policies to achieve food security (or to protect certain segments of society, such as urban workers or government employees) lower or destabilise rural prices, they will also affect grain production.

Domestic price variability may also arise due to external factors. The share of most developing countries in the international grain market is small so that their actions have little impact on the world price of grain like in South Africa and other Southern African countries (HSRC, 2007). However, actions of the major grain trading countries' production variations worldwide can and do result in varying international grain prices. These fluctuations in international prices can lead to substantial variations in the import bill required to meet a country's import gap, even in years when it does not face major shortfalls in its own production. If the capacity to import is limited, international price instability would also be reflected in domestic price instability and, consequently, would be absorbed by adjustments in consumption (HSRC, 2007). To the extent that

a country follows an open trade policy regime, its domestic market will also reflect world market instability.

An important factor constraining the capacity to import grain to stabilise the domestic price is foreign exchange availability. While food imports represent typically only a fraction of a country's total import bill, there are often competing demands for the available foreign exchange, which may have higher priority (HSRC, 2007). Furthermore, the financial plight of many developing countries in recent years has made financing for imports both more difficult to obtain and more expensive. Often this has resulted in rationing of foreign exchange, particularly for food imports. Distribution problems represent another potential source of instability. If there are disruptions in the transportation system, resulting in increased costs to move grain to needed locations, or if the food needs are in remote locations, then movement of grain to such locations is constrained. Also, grain flows typically from rural to urban areas (HSRC, 2007). However, when there are extreme shortfalls in rural areas and the flow originating from imports must go the other way, high transportation costs and lack of an established distribution network lead to much higher prices in the more remote rural areas (Shisana et al., 2013).

Effective demand is often the most important factor preventing adequate and stable food consumption. While it may be desirable to lower the domestic food price to protect urban consumers (who have a relatively stable income), protection of rural consumers is more difficult through price adjustments (De Schutter, 2012). Rural consumers at times lack effective demand especially when agricultural production is low, so is rural income. This emphasizes the importance of considering income distributional questions when evaluating food security options (Shisana et al., 2013). The public agency intervenes in the context of these unstable market factors. Constraints which limit that intervention can contribute to the extent of market instability realised and foreign exchange constraints can restrict market stabilising imports, both public and private. Efforts to stabilise and support the domestic market can also be constrained when domestic budget allocations are binding (De Schutter, 2012).

### ***2.6.2 Food security***

The issue of access and availability of food on a global basis, known as food security has been making headway on the political and media agenda since the start of the twenty-first century. Food

security is primarily a phenomenon relating to individuals and is determined by three sets of factors concerned with supply, access, and guarantees to food (World Food Security, 1983). In this broadest sense, food security refers to the availability of enough food in order to sustain life and good health of the entire world population at all times, across all countries and regions, across all income groups, and across all members of individual households. The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action (FAO, 1996: 3) outlined that, “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” Food security requires the supply of an adequate amount of food to meet the nutritional needs of all the people at all times. Food insecure states are those where both production and trade entitlements are problematic, were the agricultural means of production and trade purposes are inadequate to the full supply of food (Smith et al., 1993). Therefore, the ability of food deficit countries, or regions within countries, to meet target consumption levels on a year-to-year basis is a clear base of food security.

The World Bank (1986: 1) issued a food security policy on poverty and hunger in which food security was defined as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life.” Two essential elements are, “the availability of food and the ability to acquire it.” The World Bank’s definition is likely to gain wide international acceptance because it is simple but comprehensive and it reminds one that there are two interacting parts of the food security agenda generally: (1) food availability through domestic production, storage and/or trade and, (2) access to food through home production, the market, or food transfers. Building self-sufficiency in food is important not only as a defence against the political uses of food, but as a necessity in sustaining a viable economic base (World Bank, 1986: 1). The issue of food is of increasing concern to the international community as a whole because of the need to feed the world’s population adequately, to eliminate starvation in so many parts of the world, and to prevent socio-political upheavals and disruptions that endanger world peace and security.

## **2.7 Global analyses of food security**

The ongoing research from 2016 show that, as things stand, the volume of the undernourished population globally expanded to an expected 815 million, up from 777 million in 2015 yet down

from about 900 million in the year 2000. So also, while the predominance of undernourishment is anticipated to have expanded to an expected 11 percent in 2017-18, this is still well underneath the dimension of 10 years prior. In any case, the ongoing increment is cause for incredible concern and represents a critical test for global duties to end hunger by 2030 (World Health Organization, 2018). More states have a high extensive problem of more than one type of malnutrition. Access to healthy and enough food for the whole population must be the key focus from the policy-makers in insuring food security is not a myth (Kunzimana et al., 2016).

Currently, promising findings state that the increasing trend on the food insecurity pattern had not yet reflected a high rate on children's trends; this looks promising to keep on being a positive trend in future. In any case, the concerning area is in South Asia and sub-Saharan African countries, where about 200 million children under five had hindered development, and on the other side 50 million children are affected by wasting worldwide (Richter et al., 2007). Research has shown that the mortality health of these children is at risk of growth and health development. A global approach on this issue of undernourishment of children is expected to decrease the load of obstructing and washing, and to find suitable resolutions on mortality and morbidity in childhood. Furthermore, the struggle and conflict in numerous places of the world on efforts to increase food security is influenced by the lack of rainfall which leads to drought in many affected areas. Hunger is more prevalent in areas with farming systems that are fully dependent on rainfall and are sensitive to climate change, and this has a serious impact especially on the majority of the population that depends on farming to secure food (Kunzimana et al., 2016).

Currently, the food security crisis crumbled strongly in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the Southern African region, South-Eastern Asia, and Western Asia (Ghattas, 2014: 3). This is one of the most outstanding challenges in the world of food security, specifically where the food security is mostly affected by drought, plants diseases and floods, with no international intervention. The negative fluctuating food price has been one of critical challenges to the poor and marginalised people, influencing both food accessibility and limited food availability through the scaled down financial burden that ensures poor families afford basic food as means of survival (Ghattas, 2014: 12).

## **2.8 Food security in South Africa**

In 1984 the White Paper on Agricultural Policy (RSA, 1984: 8–9) stipulated that: “For any country, the provision of sufficient food for its people is a vital priority and for this reason it is regarded as one of the primary objectives of agricultural policy. Adequate provision in this basic need of humans not only promotes, but is also an essential prerequisite for an acceptable economic, political and social order and for stability.” For this reason, the 1951 formation of Bantu ‘homelands’ prompted further imbalances with respect to access to developed land and adequate assets for agricultural purposes in ensuring food security in underdeveloped areas of South Africa such as rural and townships areas (Kirsten et al., 2007). The intervention of the 1994 government sought to redress the imbalances of the past through policies and programmes meant for underdeveloped areas to ensure sufficient food for every household at a standardised commercial price. It is still difficult to redress the agricultural sector in South Africa as it has been dominated by white people for many years (Kirsten et al., 2007).

South Africans are among the 204 million people living in sub-Saharan Africa living under circumstances of food insecurity (FAO, 2004). It is necessary to examine the political economy of food in South Africa because of the importance of agriculture’s total output, the large numbers employed in the sector, the role of agriculture in contributing to export earnings, and the growing importance of food as a political weapon. Building self-sufficiency in food is important not only as a defence against the political uses of food, but as a necessity in sustaining a viable economic base. The issue of food is of increasing concern to the country at large because of the need to feed the whole population adequately, to eliminate starvation in so many parts of communities, and to prevent socio-political disruptions that endanger South African peace and security (FAO, 2004).

Before beginning an analysis of the general economic situation in South Africa and the prospects for development, it is necessary to highlight the importance of food and agriculture in all provinces, especially within the context of the FAO, (2004). Despite the country’s rich endowment in land and surface water, there has been a disturbing trend of declining production of food per capita. Food production is estimated to have grown at an average of 2 percent per year over the past decade, while the population has increased at a rate of over 3 percent a year. These two trends have forced the country to supplement production with imported grain, which diverts scarce foreign

exchange from general development (Faber and Wenhold, 2007). South Africa has committed to prioritise the development of the food and agriculture sector. Major constraints to achieve this goal include the persistent droughts, inadequate research, shortages of skilled manpower, the prevalence of animal and crop diseases, inadequate linkages with the local manufacturing sector, and shortage of inputs arising, in part, from the dependence on imported inputs. In recognition of these constraints, the focus of development efforts since 1994 has been on increasing food security, agricultural research and training, livestock production and animal disease control, soil and water conservation, forestry, fishery, and wildlife projects, to ensure that there is enough food for the whole population (Faber and Wenhold, 2007).

## **2.9 Poverty**

Poverty is the deprivation and insufficiency of food, housing, clothing, medical care and other items required to maintain a decent standard of living. It is clear that there is a standard of living below which individuals and families can be considered deprived (Cohen, 2009). This standard is admittedly arbitrary; no one knows for certain what level of material well-being is necessary to avoid deprivation. According to Sen (2000), poverty is the lack of access to the basic capability to function, hence Sen believes that “well-being comes from a capability to function in society”.

Furthermore, various scholars have concurred that the definition of poverty is more than just personal income and its periodic expenditure but without assets and credit, exclusive society and equal opportunities, those are components of pure poverty (Dinbabo, 2011). Each year, the South African Revenue Services (SARS) estimates the cash income required for families to maintain minimum food, housing, clothing and medical care needs. Families are classified by size, sex and age of the family head and by urban or rural residence. A poverty line in cash income is estimated for each classification of family, as well as for individuals living alone. The rand amounts rise each year to take into account the effects of inflation. For example, the poverty line in 2015 for an urban family of four was approximately R120. According to this definition, there are about 30.4 million poor people in South Africa. This is approximately 13.8 percent of the population (Stats SA, 2017: 14).

### **2.9.1 Poverty line**

The poverty line is a significant device that takes into account the statistical detail analysis of poverty level and cases, and it includes arranging tools of monitoring the implemented programmes in reducing poverty (Ravallion and Lokshin, 2005). Determining the number of people in a household setting with income and expenditure less than the 'poverty line' has assisted and triggered consideration around the high rate of poverty, and it has assisted policy-makers in alleviating poverty (Ravallion, 1998). The poverty line anticipated for a specific person can be characterised as the income the person needs to accomplish the minimum level of 'welfare' not to be considered 'poor', given its conditions (Ravallion, 1998). In determining the poverty line everyone is examined to an equal measure, and each one of those below the line is poorer than all above it. The poverty line can be described in terms of Sen's (1985) opinion that well-being must be understood in terms of an individual's capabilities, which means, the ability to work and earn an income or to produce the means of survival that an individual can accomplish welfare and poverty line enrichment. Therefore, this means that the poverty line indicates a clear-cut line of not meeting the minimum income adequate to help with an explicit standardised minimum means of living. In setting poverty lines, you have to consider two main ways, which consist of relative poverty and absolute lines. In many countries different poverty lines are utilised for monetary and non-monetary measures of the poverty line, and how income in both individual and household settings in the poverty line is distributed, thus the affirmation of relative poverty and absolute poverty (Townsend et al., 2006).

In South Africa, the poverty line is frequently set at the dimension that incorporates people living beneath 40% of the national level income, and people with less than 20% as being extremely poor (Budlender and Hirschowitz, 2000). In international review, however, poverty lines are more regularly characterised as people or households that are below the standardised income in median or means determined setting. Following the National Poverty Lines (NPLs) statistics, South Africa has a standardised view of "poverty lines" as significant tools that consider the statistics report of poverty levels and models, just as the planning, implementing and monitoring of poverty alleviating projects and policy formulation. In South Africa constructing the national poverty lines, Stats SA utilised a globally perceived methodology, in particular the cost-of-basic needs method, which detects welfare to the utilisation of available goods and services (Hirschowitz et al., 2000).

According to Statistics SA 2018, there are three poverty lines in South Africa: the upper-bound poverty line (UPL), the lower-bound poverty line (LPL), and the food poverty line (FPL). The upper-bound poverty line (UPL) consists of the sum of money acquired from non-food stuff in each household where the consumption of food is equivalent to the food poverty line (Statistics SA, 2018: 44). As per the April 2018 review, the upper-bound poverty line was R1183 per individual in every month. The lower-bound poverty line (LBP) consists of a sum of money acquired from non-food stuff in each household, and this food poverty line by its setting is the overall expenditure of households that matches the food poverty line. As per the April 2018 review, the lower-bound poverty line was R785 per individual every month. The food poverty line consists of the measured consumption point that a person needs in order to acquire the minimum requirement for a daily meal. This is also usually known as the extraordinary poverty line. As per the April 2018 review, the food poverty line was R547 per individual in every month (Statistics SA, 2018).

### ***2.9.2 Poverty indicators***

In poverty determination there are indicators of poverty, which are monetary and non-monetary indicators according to different scholars' analyses (Baulch and Masset 2002). These indicators assist to determine the multi-dimensional poverty demonstration to recognise and resolve the different aspects of poverty. Monetary indicators consist of either income or consumption, and Coudouel et al. (2002:30) argue that, "Consumption better reflects a household's actual standard of living and the ability to meet basic needs". This is because monetary indicators easily analyse the income and expenditure per household into detail. Most quantitative exploration of perpetual poverty have concentrated on following monetary indicators in poverty determination, for example, to examine whether income or consumption is below the confirmed poverty line and food poverty line. However, it is currently acknowledged that poverty is confounded and multi-dimensional, and that the customary poverty lines approach misses a large number of the more extensive parts of poverty (Martins, 2011). While thinking about continuous poverty, whose characterising feature is its long term, the multi-dimensionality and seriousness of poverty are probably going to strengthen one another (Hulme, Moore, and Shepherd, 2001).

While it is beyond the realm of reality to capture the majority of the diverse components of poverty in ordinary household surveys, data on a portion of the key monetary indicators, non-monetary seems to be of upper hand. According to Roser and Ortiz-Ospina (2017), the act of estimating poverty by income and consumption has been used more often in economics analyses. As indicated by Gounder and Prasad (2013), endeavours to quantify poverty will in general become subjective and biased, driven by a thin data base on selected households. Nolan and Whelan (2010) concur that there has been a take-up in enthusiasm for utilising non-monetary related data to improve the estimation and comprehension of poverty. The idea of non-monetary poverty indicators consist of health, education, well-being in terms of standard of living, and deficient physical security (Nolan and Whelan, 2010). Prasad (2013) encourages that policy-makers should move far from the income and consumption approach in determining both poverty line and food poverty line but rather use more of non-monetary information measures for consistent analysis. Historical studies have shown, that statistically in many developing countries the monetary and non-monetary indicators of poverty are ineffectively related in clarifying the core of the poverty line (UNDP, 1998; Sahn and Stiffel, 2000). However, it is not clear whether this is because statistically monetary poverty indicators turn out to be poor indicators of long-term poverty or on account of differences upon non-monetary indicators for interminable poverty and the food poverty line. Nevertheless, with the objectives of this study, monthly consumption per household is used as an indicator for poverty and food poverty line determination.

### ***2.9.3 Global analyses on poverty***

A number of studies on the issue of poverty have been conducted globally. Phipps (1999:493) did a review study conducted in Canada, United States of America and Norway, the first comparison study that has been done on children's well-being from new-born to the age of eleven years. In Phipps' study, the standardised income per household key focus areas were low birth weight, anxiety, behaviour at school, bullyism and lack of concentration. Findings indicate that children functioned well given proper income in households, which clearly indicated that there must be a standardised income in households for children to grow and function well in all aspects of life (Phipps, 1999:493).

Martinetti (2000:219) embarked on a study of functioning in social interaction, education quality, health standard, power of knowledge and psychological circumstances. A strict mathematical context was constructed through an Italian household study of 1994 as a source of measure to well-being (Martinetti, 2000). The study findings illustrate that women living alone, professional workers and housewives' social interaction is poorer and affected by income they receive.

Laderchi (1997: 348) critically analysed the extent to which some of the most critical operational areas such as child nutrition, quality of education and health systems with income measure using Chilean data of 1992. The findings illustrate that the income variable has not influenced the stability and quality of three chosen critical operational areas. This study states that poverty investigation is deeply rooted on these indicators chosen in Norway and other European countries (Laderchi, 1997). The findings of the study further indicate that in confronting poverty, analysis needs to be kept as wide as conceivable in light of a legitimate concern in outlining the multi-faceted idea of poverty completely.

These global analyses of the period 1981 to 2005 and upwards have seen noteworthy decreases in income and seriousness of life-threatening poverty in the global sphere. In outright terms, outrageous income poverty has dropped significantly, with a magnitude of people having survived on under \$1.25 a day, which dropped from a high \$1.9 billion in 1981 into a lower \$1.4 billion in 2005. In actual terms, the extent of people living in outrageous poverty decreased from 52.0% to 25.7% particularly during this period (Chen and Ravallion, 2008).

According to Economic Commission for Africa (2008) the study analysis directs us back to poverty at local level, for to analyse poverty at global level and policy reduction we have to deal with poverty at local level which requires a country-by-country analysis. For this reason, determinations to diminish poverty remain a priority of government officials of all global states, being enthusiastic in alleviating poverty above all circumstances in every country. Examining poverty at regional level can accordingly uncover extensive classified examples and patterns in poverty rates worldwide and reveal programmes that help to encourage states and their advancement accomplices to action (Trygged, 2010). It is in global poverty analysis that the present and historical literature will give a point of reference of poverty, inclined by income at intra-regional levels. Such discussions will help lighten the discourse and comprehension of

poverty, with examples and patterns pursued by a World Bank report (Chen and Ravallion, 2008). It is for this reason that analysing poverty at the global level consists of a demonstration of the existing information which informs the world that "the developing world is poorer than we thought, but no less successful in the fight against poverty" according to Chen and Ravallion (2008: 4703).

#### ***2.9.4 Poverty in South Africa***

The very first obstacle to a rational approach to poverty in South Africa lies in the conflict over the definition of the problem. Defining poverty is a political activity. Proponents of increased governmental support for social welfare programmes frequently make high estimates of the number and percentage of the population affected by poverty. They view the problem of poverty as a persistent one, even in a generally affluent society. The argument is that many millions of South Africans suffer from hunger, malnutrition, remedial illness, hopelessness, and despair. As a result, the definition of the problem practically mandates the continuation and expansion of a wide variety of public welfare programmes in redressing the fundamental issue of poverty (Bradshaw, 2006).

In spite of interventions by global key strategic role players, currently about one billion people overall worldwide experience outrageous poverty (Cohen, 2009:8). In South Africa, research outlines that, 10.2 million people (around 20.2% of the populace) lived beneath the breadline of R321.00 every month in 2015. Accordingly, the South African government sees the test of destitution lightening of this tragedy as a key need. This is apparent when one considers that nearly 60% of government income is allocated to social grants and that consumption identified with social wages has dramatically increased over the previous decade outlining that South Africans are indeed in extreme poverty (Cohen, 2009:8).

Furthermore, the privileged minority still trivialise the number of poor people in South Africa today. According to Bradshaw (2006), they see poverty as diminishing over time. They view the poor in South Africa today as considerably better off than the middle class of fifty years ago. In fact, they even regard them as being 'wealthy' by the standards of most societies in the world. They deny that anyone needs to suffer from hunger, malnutrition, or remedial illness, if they make use of the public services already available to them. They believe that there are many opportunities for upward mobility in South Africa and that none should suffer from hopelessness or despair

(Bradshaw, 2006). This definition of the problem minimises the need for public welfare programmes and encourages policy-makers to reduce the number and size of these programmes. However, political engagement on poverty, then begins with contending definitions of the problem of poverty. In an attempt to influence policy-making, various political interests try to win acceptance for their own definitions of the problem.

Poverty has only been a political issue for the last twenty-five years. Prior to the democratic South Africa, the problems of the poor were generally segmented into areas such as old age, disability, widows and orphans, unemployment, medical indigence, delinquency, slum housing, and illiteracy (Bradshaw, 2006). The definition of poverty has therefore become a political activity, rather than a rational exercise. Society cannot agree on one best approach for defining poverty, and it cannot agree on solutions for alleviating poverty. However, if we count in-kind welfare benefits as well as cash benefits, the number of poor people has not declined (Van der Berg, 2006). Poverty is most frequently found in black households and households headed by women and the elderly. Children also comprise a large number of the poor. Poverty has many causes. Some people are poor because they lack the resources and opportunities of the rich and some, such as the elderly, children, and the disabled, are not able to work. Discrimination is another source of poverty. Even with the same number of school years completed, black people and some other minorities earn less than white people, with women currently still earning less than men in many companies. Equality of opportunity remains a major obstacle to the elimination of poverty in South Africa. The way in which poverty is defined has important implications for strategies to alleviate the problem. Human service professionals have a commitment to increasing opportunities for poor persons as a means of reducing poverty. These professionals strive to maximise human potential whenever possible and believe that the disadvantaged will make use of opportunities to overcome poverty (Van der Berg, 2006).

## **2.10 Social welfare policy**

Daniel Beland (2010: 19) defines social policy as “programmes that aim to support the poor, fight inequality and promote citizenship solidarity, reduce market dependency (i.e., de-commodification), and to protect workers and their families against specific economic risks”. It is through social policy that governments have an effect on the majority of the population particularly

when the economy is experiencing tough instances, such as food insecurity, poverty, inequality, poor services, crime, natural disasters, etc. (Mkandawire, 2004). Generally, the welfare of the state is affected by such instances for a state not to reflect as a social welfare state and the role of social policy is to guard against becoming a social welfare state (Mkandawire, 2004). It is also social policy strategy to implement key fundamental strategies that support poor people, e.g. to enhance economic development programmes, social and political stability and review current policies which never fulfilled the mandate of its original mission and objectives.

In simplest terms, social welfare policy is anything that a government chooses to do, or not to do, that affects the quality of life of its people. Broadly conceived, social welfare policy includes nearly everything a government does from taxation, national defense, and energy conservation, to health, housing, and public assistance. As political scientists Eulau and Prewitt (1973: 26) assert, "Policy is defined as standing decision characterised by behavioural consistency and repetitiveness on the part of those who make it and those who abide by it". Furthermore, policy-making is frequently portrayed as a rational process, in which policy-makers identify social problems, explore all the alternative solutions, and forecast all the benefits and costs of each alternative solution, compare benefits to costs for each solution, and select the best ratio of benefits to costs (Eulau and Prewitt, 1973: 26).

Social welfare policy is 'political' because of disagreements about the nature of the problems confronting society, the likely consequences of alternative policies, and the ability of government to do anything rationally. Social welfare policy involves a series of political issues about what should be done about poverty and food insecurity (RSA, 1997). The real problems in social welfare are not problems of organisation, administration, or service delivery. Rather, they are political conflicts over the nature and causes of poverty and inequality, the role of government in society, the burdens to be carried by taxpayers, the appropriate strategies for coping with poverty, the issues posed by specific social insurance and public assistance programmes, and the nature of decision-making process itself. Therefore, social welfare policy is a continuing political struggle over the issues posed by poverty, inequality and food insecurity in society (Van der Berg, 2006).

### ***2.10.1 Global perspective on social welfare policy***

Social welfare policy as we know it today dates back to the beginning of the seventeenth century in Elizabethan England (Federico, 1980). English welfare traditions were adopted by colonists who settled in the New World. At first, families, friends, and churches were the major sources of welfare aid for the destitute; state and local governments came to intervene only as a last resort. However, the twentieth century brought an increasing number of social welfare problems globally and the structure of society became more complex, as did the system of providing welfare assistance (Federico, 1980). Changes in the structure of society eventually forced many European governments to intervene in providing welfare. Government became more centralised and played a stronger role in many aspects of society, including social welfare, while the role of the church in welfare has diminished. Then the law or social welfare policy had to adopt some strict rules and regulations such as government's role of providing social welfare benefits. The law has been passed in many countries as a means of controlling the means of collection and providing for the poor. Taxes were and continue to be levied to finance the new welfare system, but rules are harsh in most countries on this. Distinguishing the deserving from the non-deserving beneficiaries is a challenge. However, in many countries this remains the government official's job, and in many cases, there are instances of corruption, favouritism, mismanagement of funds, etc. (Federico, 1980).

One of the top priorities on the development agenda of international aid is poverty, and social welfare policy arrangement has been highlighted as one of the real advancement global strategic tools to alleviate poverty (Cichon, 2014). However, the updated stance of social welfare policy according to Lu and Yu (2015) consists of a neoliberal adaptation of social welfare policies. For example, privatising social bases of social policy, as an arrangement plan and execution expected to serve neoliberal ambitions, as well as non-influenced market components by the state, the privatisation of social public services, income based on global exchange and investments, etc. (Lu and Yu, 2015).

Since the mid-1980s the developed states' practical agenda has been dominated by the theory of neoliberalism. The government's role to cultivate economic stability and social advancement was deliberately supplanted by new standards dependent on the global notion (Barrientos, 2013). This

remain as an approach to deal with social welfare, which was and still segregated from socio-economic development but more neoliberal economy and served for the most part as a tool to social welfare policy approach that promote free market capitalism. This leaves public social cohesion neglected, making it difficult to address more extensive bases of social welfare grievances, seeking linkages among economic and social matters, as well as environmental parts of advancement (Lu and Yu, 2015).

Without a framework to cultivate human natural abilities for self-advancement that are progressively significant as new developments and association to social welfare reaction are presented, that is a clear regressive act in global social welfare policy enhancement especially in underdeveloped states (Bartels et al., 2009). In underdeveloped states the economy is frequently confronted with social welfare development abilities, low skills and high unemployment rates, which often lead to poverty and extreme food insecurity (Legrain, 2002). The social welfare policy's main objective of the redistribution of the state's resources, especially to the poor, is expected to be closely monitored. The other main issue in underdeveloped states is the negative human capital growth and this portrays a negative impact on productive jobs and good infrastructure that contribute to the economic growth of any developing state, deducting more social welfare expenditure (Legrain, 2002). These issues pertaining to the change of human capital have exceptional effects in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) states whose populations, in contrast to other developing countries, are moving at a slow pace in terms of economic structural advancement. In 2015 the youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa was over 75% and this figure was predicted to remain steady for the next 20 years or more. This will impact on the economic development of a welfare state on the continent. On the other hand, the youth unemployment rate of more than 65% in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2015, continues to be one of the main threats to African countries' development and advanced social welfare efforts that were evident in 2010 (Bartels et al., 2009).

### ***2.10.2 Social welfare policy in South Africa***

Since 1994, South Africa as a developing country had experienced many significant changes. One of the key fundamental objectives from the new democratic country under President Nelson Mandela was to redress the imbalances of the past through political, economic and social reforms (Hirsch and Hines, 2005). This was done through different progressive policies and government

strategic programmes to dismantle poverty and other social problems such as food insecurity in South Africa. The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) is one of the major bodies under the Department of Social Development (DSD) that is positioned to ensure food security among many South Africans to alleviate poverty in many households. During the period 2005 to 2017 SASSA had assisted more than 17 million people through Child support grants, Old age grants, Disability grants, War veterans' grants, Care dependency grants, Foster child grants and Social relief of distress grants. The clear mandate for this programme is to assist in reducing poverty and sustaining livelihoods through social security and partaking in socio-economic development of the neglected and vulnerable people of this country (RSA, 2017).

According to Patel and Hochfeld (2013:692), "the social development approach is pro-poor; transformative, redistributive, and inclusive; and may be distinguished from the inequitable apartheid welfare model which was based on Western European institutional policies for Whites and a residual system for Blacks in South Africa". Patel and Hochfeld (2013: 694) assert that the pro-poor social improvement approach should be recognised from the post apartheid models to the present progressive democratic welfare display, which does not depend on Western European institutional strategies for Whites but should remain inclusive of frameworks for Blacks as well (Patel and Hochfeld, 2013: 694). Key components injected into the social welfare policies in the democratic South African approach to overcoming any social issues in bridging the gap between the poor and the rich in redressing the imbalances of the past are still moving at a slow pace (Patel, 2015). The majority of poor South Africans are not exposed, as participants or organisations, to matters such as social and financial strategies; enforcing human rights; civil investment; empowerment; and the cooperation of socially prohibited networks (Patel, 2015). Notwithstanding the execution of the improved ways of dealing with social welfare policy in South Africa, one needs to consider the different changes that have happened in South Africa following 25 years of democratic governance and evaluate the efforts at upliftment of the poor through social welfare policies.

Imperialism and politically sanctioned racial segregation from apartheid directed South Africa's social welfare approach and benefits into inequality and with neglected poor people faced with food insecurity (Hoefer and Midgley, 2013; Patel, 2015). Professionals such as social workers, the individual turned into the essential concentration for mediation with negligible reference to social

culture components in restoring what we lost. Regardless of this focus, the historical backdrop of South Africa is inseparably implanted of gatherings, which applied both negative and positive impacts (Becker and Schwartz, 2005). From a negative viewpoint, legislation, for example, the Group Areas Act found individuals from various racial gatherings regarded to have a typical semantic, ethnic, and social legacy in separated places of living (Becker and Schwartz, 2005). From a positive point of view, casual mass movements gave a progressive move to the improvement of freedom developments that at last prompted the destroying of the politically sanctioned racial segregation framework called ‘apartheid’ (Patel, 2015).

## **2.11 Social security programmes in South Africa**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, states that every South African citizen has a right to social security (Brokerhoff, 2013). This came at a right time to many Black South Africans who never benefited from social security programmes, which were reserved primarily for Whites in this country (Van der Berg, 2006). The democratic South African government offered the right to social security to those who are most vulnerable and marginalised such as the elderly citizens, war veterans, the disabled, and children (RSA, 2008). Furthermore, South Africa is now perceived as having a progressive and extensive social security programme for a developing middle-income country. The government objective in social security programmes is to alleviate poverty, accelerate economic growth and invest in health, food security and education with programmes that aim at social cohesion and redistribution of wealth among the vulnerable people such as the elderly, children and people with disabilities (RSA, 2008).

### ***2.11.1 South African social grants***

According to the Social Assistance Act of 2004 South Africa makes provision for seven social grants: a) Old age grant (people over the age of 60); b) Child support grant (children under 18 years living in households with low-income); c) the Disability grant (people unable to work because of temporary or permanent disability or health condition); d) the War veteran’s grant (people over the age of 60 who fought in a world war); e) the Foster child grant (children under foster parents and recognised by a court of law); f) the Care dependency Grant (children under the age of 18 with a disability and with parents under low income category); and g) the Grant in aid (Payment for the people who take care of those who receive grants in a case where they can’t take

care of themselves). South Africa is one of the developing countries that spends most of its social proportion on social grants and currently it spends more than 17 million rand per month on social grants. According to the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) which administers social grants, the Agency must “ensure the provision of comprehensive social security services against vulnerability and poverty within the constitutional legislative framework” (RSA, 2008). This study focuses on the Old age grant, the Child support grant and the Disability grant.

#### *2.11.1.1 Old age grant*

The Old age grant is worth R1,780 per month, effective April 2019, is paid to persons between the ages of 60 to 75 years and older, while people over the age of 75 are eligible to receive R1,790 per month. Recipients may not be a beneficiary of any other grant, and should not be under the care of any government establishment (RSA, 2019). The means test is applied to check if persons qualify for the Old age grant. All single elders’ salaries should not exceed R78,120 per year (R6,510 per month) and the worth of their assets should not exceed R1,115,400 per year. A married couple’s income should not exceed R156,240 (R13,020 per month) while combined assets should not exceed R2,230,800 per year (RSA, 2019).

#### *2.11.1.2 Child support grant*

Currently the Child support grant is R420 per month, effective April 2019 and an increase of R10 per month is expected on 1 October 2019, to all eligible children under the age of 18. Since the establishment of the Child support grant in April 1998, the primary care givers of children who are also residents of South Africa are the only eligible people to receive the grant on behalf of children. In a situation where a child receives this grant through a legal guardian, the proof of being the primary care giver must be provided (RSA, 2019). Furthermore, the single primary care givers must earn R4,000 or less per month to qualify for the Child support grant and R8,000 or less on a joined income. According to the 2018 Treasury Report0, the Child support grant had been expected to reach 13.1 million children by 2018 (RSA, 2019).

#### *2.11.1.3 Disability grant*

The Disability grant value is R1,780 per month, effective April 2019, paid to all eligible applicants aged 18-59 years. All applicants must be medically unfit and this must be confirmed by a medical

officer's report that an applicant is indeed physically or mentally disabled. Single applicants must earn up to R78,120 per year, and married persons should earn up to R156,240 per year. The total value of their resources or assets should not exceed R1,115,400 per annum as a single person and R2,230,800 as married persons. The medical examination of applicants is compulsory and the medical practitioner is selected by the state (RSA, 2019). Since 2000, more than 611,325 beneficiaries have received Disability grants and the number has grown to 1.24 million eligible people in 2015 (RSA, 2019).

According to Stats SA (2014), most of the household income of poor families comes from social grants support. This sends a very strong message to the government, that people are poorer than before and that social grants are a source of survival for many poor South Africans. It is therefore important to put strong mechanisms in place to support the Department of Social Development (DSD) with policy implementation and an effective monitoring and evaluation process to sustain this important office. Furthermore, according to Stats SA (2014), it is evident that households that receive social grants are more balanced in terms of food security and poverty alleviation, especially households receiving income from the three major social grants, namely the Old age grant, the Child support grant and the Disability grant.

## **2.12 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the theoretical and conceptual framework guiding the research analysis. It reviewed the Rawls and Cosmopolitan theories of justice, which provide the theoretical base of this thesis. The chapter also provided the definitions of poverty, food security and social welfare policy. It reviewed the literature of different scholars on poverty, food security and social welfare policy, from both country and global perspective. Lastly, the chapter elaborated on social welfare policy in South Africa, highlighting the social welfare programmes in alleviating poverty and food security by implementing social grants. The following chapter discusses the research design and methodology used in this study.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter contains a discussion of the research design and methodology of this study. It illustrates the data sources and the sample design. This consists of a discussion of the research design, research methodology, data sources, sampling frame, weights, survey coverage, and data analysis. Lastly, this chapter reviews the study limitations and provides clarification for the betterment of the study.

### **3.2 Research design**

Research design is a blueprint of how one intends conducting the research. The research design or strategy alternatives are many (Mouton, 2011). A research design can include action research, case studies, ethnography, experiments, grounded theory, modelling, operational research, simulation, surveys, and other forms of research (Neuman, 2000). In social research, research design is the most imperative part. Parahoo (2014) argues that methodology design is “a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analysed” (as cited in Langen, 2009: 51). In this study, the research design reviews the research methodology, data analysis and data source of the study.

### **3.3 Research methodology**

Social science methodology has two methods of conducting research: quantitative and qualitative. According to Brynard et al (2014), methodology is a systematic and methodological enquiry, which applies certain methods and techniques in pursuit of valid knowledge. In this study an evaluation will be conducted with its design. Burns and Grover (2003) defined the latter as “a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that interfere with the validity of the findings” (as cited in Langen, 2009: 51). Furthermore, according to Parahoo (2014), Denzin and Lincoln (1994, cited in Anderson, 1998: 130) qualitative research is “a multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Thus, it studies things in their natural setting attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them. It also involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials such as case study, personal experiences and introspection, life story and interview,

observational, historical, interactional and visual texts". According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), in order to understand quantitative research, there should be number-related themes involved.

Applied research, according to Anderson (1998) is concerned with addressing problems of the world as they are perceived by participants, organisations or groups of people. Applied research is action-oriented and aims to assess, describe, document or inform people concerned about a phenomenon under investigation (Anderson, 1998). Findings are intended to have an immediate and practical value, as contrasted with basic research aimed at adding to existing knowledge bases. Anderson (1998) further stated that applied research is used in fields like education, policy evaluation and contracts. Hence, applied research is relevant to this study. For the purpose of this dissertation, the quantitative as well as applied research methods were used to evaluate the impact of social grants, food security and poverty. In the context of this study, the quantitative method is used in evaluating the relationship between social grants, food security and poverty in South Africa.

### **3.4 Secondary data source**

For the purpose of this study, the fifth round of the South African National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) (Wave V) was used. The study/survey started out in 2008 with a national sample consultant pattern of over 28,000 individuals in 7,300 families throughout the country. The survey remains repeated with those same family members every two years. NIDS examines the livelihoods of people and families through the years. It additionally affords approximate data on how families cope with wonderful or negative shocks, consisting of either a death in the own family or an unemployed relative obtaining an activity (Finn and Leibbrandt, 2013). NIDS consists of four data sets of questionnaires, which are Child, Adult, Household and Proxy questionnaires. The First Wave (Wave I) was conducted in 2008, while the second round (Wave II) was carried out in 2010 and the third round (Wave III) was collected in 2012. Furthermore, the fourth round (Wave IV) was conducted in 2014, with the final round, Wave V being constructed in 2017. Therefore, the study used the fifth round of the NIDS data set, Wave 5 (Leibbrandt et al, 2009:4).

### **3.4.1 Sampling frame**

The sampling frame of NIDS is based on all private households in all nine provinces of South Africa. This includes workers residing in government flats and workers' hostels and monasteries. The sampling framework excludes only the group of people living in old-age homes, hospitals, military barracks, student hostels and prisons (Leibbrandt et al, 2009:9).

### **3.4.2 Survey Coverage**

The social survey, however, provides a feasible and relatively economical alternative means of collecting social data. Probability sampling is at the heart of survey procedures, for they enable inferences to be made from a small sample (from whom data are collected) to a much larger population (whose characteristics are unknown or inadequately known) and the development of sampling is one of the major intellectual achievements of the study (NIDS, 2017). The coverage of the NIDS survey consists of four types of questionnaires: the Adult questionnaire; Child questionnaire; Household questionnaire; and Proxy questionnaire. All respondents have responded accordingly on data collected on demographic and socio-economic characteristics (Leibbrandt et al., 2009). Other indicators covered by the survey include child anthropometry, health, labour, household enterprises and characteristics, agricultural holdings and transfers. Lastly, data collection on household food consumption is included which consists of a variety of food sets bought on a weekly scale.

## **3.5 Data analysis**

According to Glesne and Peshkin, data analysis involves “organising what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learnt” (1992: 127). This process essentially involves the creation of explanations, the development of theories, and the linking of the information with present information for evidence-based knowledge (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). This study uses both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies are used to describe the demographics, income and expenditure of the selected sample.

*Data processing and presentation:* According to Braun and Clarke (2006:78), “the thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns and themes within data”.

Conducting a thematic analysis in the study is useful as it facilitates identifying, analysing and reporting patterns and themes elicited within the data. In addition, it allows for the interpretation of certain aspects of the research topic. Computer software was used to place, into categories, the correlation and examination of relationships, analyses and data presentation, using tables, bar graphs, text, pictures, and others.

### **3.6 Limitations of the study**

The study consists of the use of secondary data that followed the NIDS procedure to use the data and used human subjects. The limitation of all social sciences is that there is no practical experiment used for findings, as a result errors such as duplication, observation errors and some people who refused to be interviewed are likely to occur. This study has complied with national and provincial laws and regulations and with professional standards governing conduct research. Additional limitations could be that in the NIDS Wave 5 sampling that was used, these consist of e.g. round-offs and random selection of the sample size from the population that could lead to bias in findings. Through few limitations, the study has reported results that are as accurate as possible. The study has reflected scientific and professional contributions accurately from Stata Version 14 and NIDS Wave 5 (2017).

### **3.7 Chapter summary**

The main aim of this chapter was to provide answers on the research questions through discussion of research methodology. The study used quantitative research methods to examine the social grants impact on food security and poverty alleviation with NIDS data sets of Wave 5 (2017). The methodology of the study included both descriptive and inferential statistics methods to examine the significant relationship between the social grants, consumption of households and different characteristics of households, like food consumption in poverty alleviation. The next chapter presents a discussion on data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of this chapter is to identify the different types of social grants and assess the variation of poverty within the nine provinces of South Africa, by population groups and household income. It is also to identify different social grants distribution and trends of food security by provinces and population groups. In addition, analysis will help to establish standards for judging the accuracy of the data. This chapter commences with descriptive statistics on population demographics, the food insecurity line (household food insecurity) and the poverty line in South Africa. In conclusion, the chapter provides a discussion on the relationship between poverty alleviation and food security through the effectiveness of social grants, thereafter interprets the presentation of the results and finally offers a conclusion.

### **4.2 Descriptive results**

This section presents a descriptive statistics analysis of South Africa according to poverty, food security and social grants intervention. Data from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) and the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) Wave 5 data set guides this section with information that is as accurate as possible. The methodological perspective of this study clearly aims to assess, describe, document and inform people concerned about a phenomenon under investigation. The interpretation of the data is based on household heads as primary chosen sample to determine the relationship status in the household and describe the income and expenditure analysis. Based on the NIDS Wave 5, a sample of 47 055 individuals in South Africa is being used with 52 361 households. The Stats SA 2016 census calculated the South African population at 55 653 654 people (NIDS Wave 5, 2017).

#### ***4.2.1 Population demographics***

Stats SA (2019) estimates the current South African population at 58 676 759 people and 16 923 309 households, with the population composed of different racial groups. The Africans constitute the largest percentage of the population in South Africa at 80.9%, followed by Coloureds at 8.8%, Whites at 7.8%, and Indians/Asians at 2.5% (Stats SA, 2016). The National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) Wave 5 (2017) study in South Africa covers the population across all

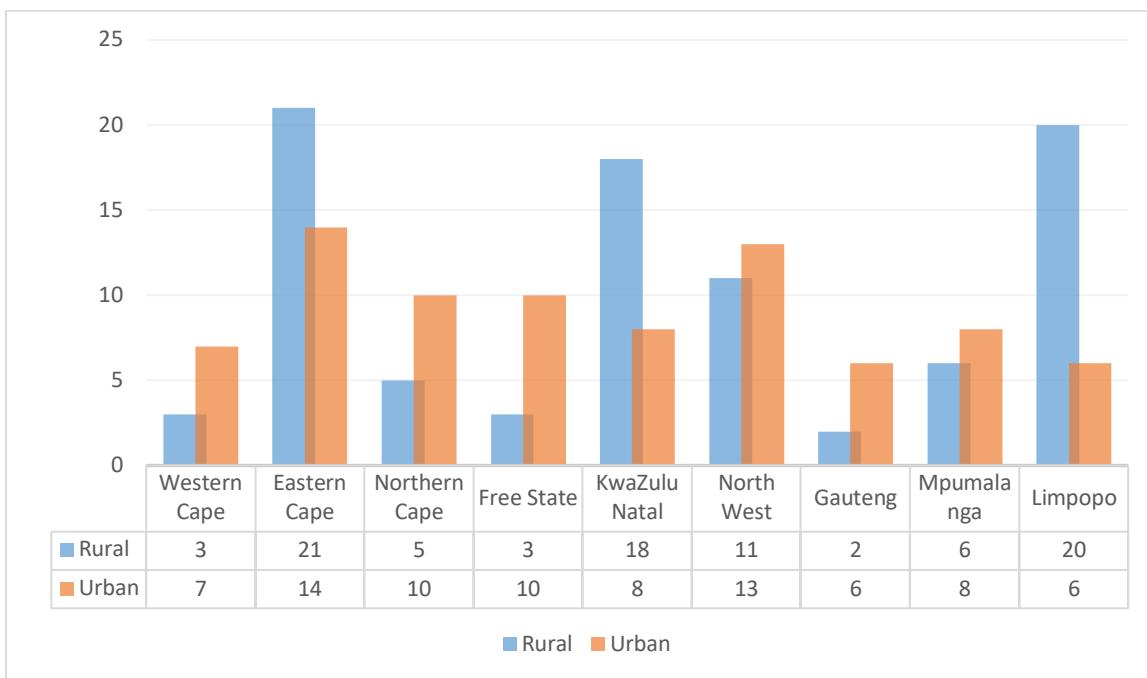
nine provinces by race and households. By using the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) data set, this study's total participating households amount to 80% of Africans; 13% of Coloureds; 5% of Whites; and 2% of Indians/Asians. In terms of the gender breakdown, the proportion of the female population consists of a larger percentage of 54.69 % compared to 45.15% of males. It is through these demographics that we are able to find out which provinces, race groups, geographic areas and gender groups are more vulnerable than others and what sources of intervention are required.

#### ***4.2.2 Poverty in South African provinces***

In 2014/15 the provinces with the highest head-count of adult poverty were Limpopo (67,5%), Eastern Cape (67,3%), KwaZulu-Natal (60,7%) and North West (59,6%). For these four provinces, significantly more than half of their population were living in poverty. Gauteng and Western Cape had the lowest proportion of adults living in poverty at 29,3% and 33,2%, respectively, according to the Living Conditions Survey (LCS) of 2014/2015. Using the 2017 NIDS data set, this study has made a detailed analysis of the state of poverty in South African provinces.

According to the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) survey the province with the highest poverty rate is the Eastern Cape with 33%, followed by Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, both at 26%, North West with 23%, Mpumalanga with 17%, Northern Cape with 15%, Free State with 13%, Western Cape with 10% and Gauteng with 8%. Looking at the top four provinces with the highest rate of poverty, it is evident that a huge proportion of the South African population is living in poverty and the majority are rural-based South Africans. Figure 1 below elaborates more on the poverty rate in the nine provinces on urban and rural bases.

**Figure 1 Poverty in South African provinces**



*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

The above results reveal that poverty is experienced mainly in the underdeveloped provinces in South Africa such as the Eastern Cape with 21% in rural areas and 14% in urban areas, with the total poverty rate of 33%. KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo are also affected by high poverty rates, especially in their rural areas. This implies that the South African poverty rate in general is much higher in rural areas, compared to the urban areas. Most South African rural areas are underdeveloped, with poor standards of living due to the lack of vital facilities such as clean water, electricity, health care centres, etc. Provinces with low poverty rates are overpopulated because people move from rural to urban areas for better standards of living. These provinces are Gauteng with 8% of poverty, Western Cape with 10% and Free State with 13%. The South African government ought to invest more resources and create more job opportunities in the rural formations of South African for better standards of living for all and to decrease the poverty rate.

#### **4.2.3 Poverty by population group in South Africa**

According to Stats SA (2015), there is significant disparity in poverty levels between population groups in South Africa. In 2015, 9 out of 10 poor people in South Africa (93%) were black. In order to understand and analyse the poverty by population group in SA, this study analysed the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) data set.

Based upon the information obtained from the analysis from Stats SA (2015) that demonstrates a huge gap of inequality in population groups, black Africans continue to suffer the most according to NIDS Wave 5 (2017). Table 1 shows that about 3 844 024 people are poor in South Africa and the most vulnerable race group are Africans with 80% of the poverty rate in the total of 55% of the poverty rate in South Africa. Based on the upper bound poverty line which is R1 136 per person in every month, 64% of the population of poor people in South Africa were Africans, which means that nearly seven out of ten (7/10) poor people in South Africa were Africans. The lowest level of poverty is still Indians and White people after 25 years of democracy with 2% and 5% of the population in 2017. According to the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) the number of black South Africans has increased as compared to other race groups, while the majority of Indians with Whites are above the poverty line of R1 136 per person. Currently Black people and Coloureds are at the most critical stage in poverty levels in South Africa.

**Table 1 Poverty by population demographics**

Poverty by race groups								
Race group	Mean=87748.645	%	SD	Min	Max	N=40929	%	
African	8275	9	26862.55	50	2605524	32823	64	
Coloured	11389	13	18887.74	206	588500	5293	13	
Asian/Indian	24057	27	35228.34	1650	588500	724	2	
White	44027	50	41959.63	1400	615000	2089	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>87748</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>122938,26</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>3844024</b>	<b>40929</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)

The table on poverty by population groups highlights that the most vulnerable group to poverty is black Africans in both the 2015 and 2019 financial years. In 2015 the poverty rate increased by 4.3% to arrive at the 55.5% poverty rate in South Africa and in 2019 it declined by 7.5% to reach the 48% poverty rate. The decline of the poverty rate from 2015 to 2019 only means that people are moving closer to the poverty line and others remain above the line. This illustrates that people's standards of living are improving as compared to the year 2015 but black Africans are the most vulnerable population group as compared to other race groups, even in 2019. The South African government should invest more resources in economic development and create more job opportunities especially for the black marginalised Africans, to ensure for better standards of living for all population groups.

#### ***4.2.4 Household income by population group***

According to NIDS Wave 5 (2017), household income consists of the total income from salary/wages, income from capital/assets earnings, pensions, investment income, agriculture earnings, social grants, and imputed rent earnings from property and remittances. LCS (2014/15) reveals that South African annual household income consists of R138 168 on average by the year 2015 with households headed by black Africans at 12.3%, in the upper quintile with an average of R71 479 annually. Households headed by Coloureds were at 20.9%, Indians/Asians at 43.9% and Whites at 74.8% in terms of average income (LCS 2014/15).

The South African average household income was R981 725 in 2017 according to NIDS Wave 5, (2017). The household income calculated consists of a collection of different sources of income such as salary and wages, social grants, pension fund, investments and business profits. The total of all these sources of income will then form the household income which will then indicate the average income according to different population groups. It was easily determined that the highest earning population group in South Africa are White people, with an annual average earnings of R444 446, as compared to the black South African's average annual earnings of R92 893, according to NIDS Wave 5 living conditions survey. The second largest earning population group are Indians/Asians with an average of R271 621 and Coloureds with an average of R172 765, and the Black majority population group at the bottom with R92 893. According to the 2011 South African census, the same results were found with regards to income gaps between household

population groups, where White households had an average monthly income of R30 427 and Africans had R5 051 (SA Census 2011). The high income gap between the two population groups shows the income inequality in South Africa and reveals where poverty mostly dwells in these different population groups. In terms of percentage analysis from NIDS Wave 5 data sets (2017), Africans consist of 9.5% of average income, which is the lowest compared to all other racial groups. The table below shows the different average household monthly income by population group.

**Table 2 South African household income**

<b>Household income by population group</b>						
<b>Race group</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
African	8106.508	25634	50	2605524	92 893	9.5
Coloured	11259.82	18651.65	206	588500	172 765	17.5
Asian/Indian	23544.55	34690.95	1650	588500	271 621	27.6
White	43903.71	41683.7	425.367	615000	444 446	45.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10467.83</b>	<b>27197.37</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2605524</b>	<b>981725</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

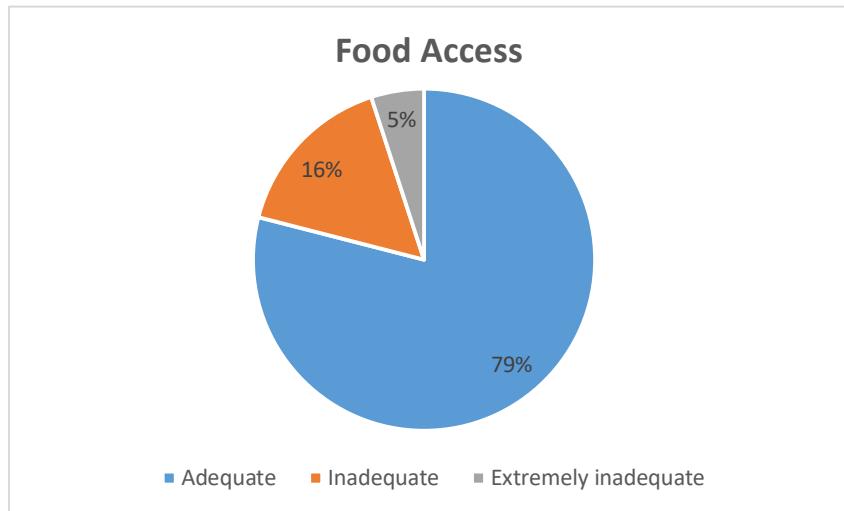
This implies that the household income by population group has a high income gap between the population groups which highlights the issue of income inequality in South Africa and shows where poverty resides in these different population groups. It is through resource investments such as capital, assets, power supply, land for agriculture and quality jobs that other population groups (excluding Black South Africans) would access high levels of household income and contribute more to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Black Africans and Coloureds are at the bottom with 9.5% and 17.5% respectively on the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) simply because they have fewer resources, assets, earnings and are mostly unemployed; hence their household income is also less than other population groups. Therefore, expanding investment on Black African and Coloured communities in the economy, ensuring the normal monetary market, and promoting equivalent access to service delivery would make a huge change to redress the imbalances in household income.

#### ***4.2.5 Food access in South Africa***

The World Bank (1986: 1) issued a food security policy on poverty and hunger in which food security was defined as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life.” Two essential elements are “the availability of food and the ability to acquire it.” The bank’s definition is likely to gain wide international acceptance because it is simple but comprehensive and it reminds one that there are two interacting parts of the food security agenda generally: (1) food availability through domestic production, storage and/or trade; and (2) access to food through home production, the market, or food transfers (World Bank, 1986: 1). The issue of food access and availability is of increasing concern to South Africans because of the need to adequately feed the population and to eliminate starvation in so many parts of the country. In order to assess the food access in South Africa and examine the effect, statistical analysis has been using the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) data. According to the information obtained, the analysis states that about only 80% South African households have access to food and 20% is confirmed food insecure.

According to Stats SA (2014), the South African household survey conveyed that 5% of households experienced extremely inadequate food access in South Africa, whereas 16% of households stand at an inadequate level and 79% of households’ population could at least access food. This confirms that 13 million out of 16.2 million South African households have access to adequate food and 0.9 million households remain vulnerable with extremely inadequate food access, insecurity and hunger across almost all provinces (Stats SA, 2017). The Statistics SA on General Household Survey Report (GHS, 2017) indicated that both individuals and households have experienced limitations to accessing food, with an increase in food insecurity from 5% to 5.5% from 2013 to 2017 (Stats SA, 2017).

**Figure 2 Adequacy in access to food in South Africa**



*Source: General Household Survey 2017, Stats SA*

All these trends show that access to food depends on the purchasing power of the money that people earn, their access to land to grow food crops, foraging, and the support in kind received from other members of communities. Therefore, if there is no purchasing power through the lack of money and access to land to grow food crops, the 20% of food insecurity in South Africa according to the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) will escalate in the near future.

### ***Trends of food security in South African provinces***

South Africans are among the 204 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa living under circumstances of food insecurity (FAO, 2004). Food security has been in the heart of the governing officials since the beginning of the democratic South Africa especially for the poorest of the poor and children. Despite the country's rich endowment in land and surface water, there has been a disturbing trend of declining production of food per capita. Food production is estimated to have grown at an average of 2% per year over the past decade, while the population has increased at a rate of over 3% a year. These two trends have forced the country to supplement production with imported grain, which diverts scarce foreign exchange from general development (Faber and Wenhold, 2007).

According to NIDS 2017 data sets, the subjective food insecurity indicators revealed that more people in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) are exposed in hunger and food insecurity, at 36.01%; this province is home to the majority of the South African population. The data analysis also indicates that Eastern Cape and Gauteng followed after KZN with 10.58% and 10.44% respectively, followed by Limpopo at 9.77%, Free State at 8.97%, North West at 8.57%, Mpumalanga at 7.36%, Northern Cape at 3.35% and the last one is Western Cape at 4.95%. This indicates where food access and availability is needed most in the country and highlights where public officials must generate most resources in terms of service delivery.

**Table 3 Subjective food insecurity by South African provinces**

<b>Food insecurity by provinces</b>				
<b>Provinces</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cum.</b>	
Western Cape	37	4.95	4.95	
Eastern Cape	79	10.58	15.53	
Northern Cape	25	3.35	18.88	
Free State	67	8.97	27.84	
KwaZulu-Natal	269	36.01	63.86	
North West	64	8.57	72.42	
Gauteng	78	10.44	82.86	
Mpumalanga	55	7.36	90.23	
Limpopo	73	9.77	100.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>100.00</b>		

*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

The above evidence demonstrates that all South African provinces have insufficient food security but in different levels of percentage. KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo provinces need serious attention especially in their rural formations and informal settlements for it is evident that they are the most subjectively food insecure provinces according to NIDS Wave 5 (2017).

Therefore, there is a need of an action plan against food security that consists of agricultural research and training, livestock production and animal disease control, soil and water conservation, and forestry, fishery, and wildlife projects to ensure that there is enough food for the whole South African population.

#### **4.2.6 Social Grants**

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the term social security refers to social welfare services related to social protection or protection against socially identified situations such as poverty, old age, disability, and unemployment. There are various international and national-level legal instruments which ensure that a government provides social protection for its citizens (Dinbabo, 2011: 92).

According to the NIDS Wave 5 data sets of 2017, South Africans have access to five main social grants. These are: Old age grant (people over the age of 60); Child support grant (Children under 18 years living in households with low-income); Disability grant (people unable to work because of temporary or permanent disability or health condition); Foster child grant (Children under foster parents and recognised by a court of law); and Care dependency grant (Children under the age of 18 with disability and with parents under low income category). Social grants, according to NIDS Wave 5 are one source of income to eradicate poverty and food insecurity in households. It is through income and expenditure that one can determine the level of household poverty and food insecurity in this study.

##### *4.2.6.1 Average household income from social grant income by population groups*

The social grants allocation and distribution percentage has increased since its establishment, and according to Stats SA it increased from 12.8% in 2003 to 30.8% in 2017 for individuals receiving social grants (Stats SA, 2017). In order to investigate an average household income from social grant income by population groups, this study undertook a data analysis. Accordingly, the household social grants income also shared the same increase in percentage per household. In 2003 it was 30.8% and it increased to 43.8% in 2017, which highlights the fact that more people, especially Black South Africans, need social security services, such as social grants (Stats SA, 2017). According to the NIDS Wave 5 data sets, 86.8% of African households received social grants, followed by Coloured households with 11.3%, Indians/Asians with 0.95% and lastly Whites with only 1.03% receiving social grants.

**Table 4 Household monthly income from social grants by population groups**

Average household income from social grant income by population groups						
Race group	Mean	Min	Max	SD	N	%
African	1947.511	150	21540	1441.831	25895	86
Coloured	1961.651	300	10000	1568.621	3611	11.9
Asian/Indian	2283.668	360	5520	1291.651	289	0.95
White	2388.099	300	11300	1652.02	312	1.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>1957.165</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>21540</b>	<b>1459.462</b>	<b>30107</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

It seems that most of the household income comes from social grants support in poor families. This sends a very strong message to government, that it is clear that people are poorer and social grants are the source of survival to many poor South Africans. It is therefore important to put strong mechanisms in place in support of the Department of Social Development, from policy implementation to a strong monitoring and evaluation process to sustain this important office. Furthermore, this confirms that most poor people depend on social grants as the increase of about 44% in 2017 showed. It is the government's responsibility to devise alternatives with regards to poverty and food insecurity alleviation especially in households that depend on the three major social grants which are: Old age grant, Child support grant and Disability grant.

#### 4.2.6.2 Social grants distribution by provinces

The South African government offered the right to social security that provides for the protection of the human values of those who are most vulnerable and marginalised such as elderly citizens, war veterans, the disabled, and children (Social Assistance Act of 2004).

The distribution of social grants by provinces shows that KwaZulu-Natal has the biggest percentage of 38.92% on household distribution. Gauteng is at 11.77% followed by Eastern Cape with 11.52%, Limpopo with 7.79%, Western Cape with 6.67%, Mpumalanga with 6.55%, Free State with 6.26%, Northern Cape with 5.59%, and North West with 4.87%. Table 5 below outlines

the average household distribution of social grants by provinces. Most social grants distribution is generated in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Eastern Cape. This is because most of the population of South Africans dwells in these provinces and the people are poorer in these provinces. Social grants were created mostly for the poor and the vulnerable.

**Table 5 Household monthly income from social grants by provinces**

Average household income from social grants by provinces						
Provinces	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Sum	%
Western Cape	1850.844	1375.539	340	7120	592270	6.67
Eastern Cape	1752.26	1306.152	160	6760	1023320	11.52
Northern Cape	2070.667	1563.084	350	8480	496960	5.59
Free State	1738.656	1463.803	350	7500	556370	6.26
KwaZulu-Natal	1940.32	1398.539	170	6540	3455710	38.92
North West	1656.513	1137.492	350	6360	432350	4.87
Gauteng	1675.654	1504.887	340	11300	1045608	11.77
Mpumalanga	1548.59	1201.623	180	5740	582270	6.55
Limpopo	1691.8	1234.364	350	6210	691946	7.79
<b>Total</b>	<b>1756.406</b>	<b>1348.593</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>11300</b>	<b>8876804</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

The household monthly income from social grants by provinces highlight the fact that South Africa is now perceived as having a progressive and extensive social security programme for a developing middle-income country (Social Assistance Act of 2004). Underdeveloped provinces such as KwaZulu-Natal (38.9%) and Eastern Cape (11.52%) have a huge income from social grants which demonstrates that there are more people that are poor, old and who depend on social grants. Gauteng province is also one of the provinces with a high income from social grants (11.77%) and this could be because of the high population rate that the province has which consists of a number of people receiving social grants. Limpopo is at 7.79% which is unusual as per the poverty rate which that province is faced with, and this could be that more deserving people that are supposed

to receive grants are not receiving them. The government objective for social security programmes is to alleviate poverty, accelerate economic growth and invest in health, food security and education with programmes that aim at social cohesion and the redistribution of wealth among the vulnerable people such as the elderly, children and the people with disabilities. Therefore, the government officials must make sure every deserving person receiving social assistance is served with the purpose of alleviating poverty and food insecurity in many vulnerable households.

**Table 6 Household monthly Old age pension grant average by population groups**

Old age pension grant income received by race groups						
Race group	Mean	Min	Max	SD	Sum	%
African	1534.043	150	1620	152.8253	3669430	79.6
Coloured	1556.836	340	1600	123.0795	644530	13.9
Asian/Indian	1566.795	1100	1600	83.75123	122210	2.65
White	1492.034	300	1620	223.9736	173076	3.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>1536.437</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>1620</b>	<b>151.5466</b>	<b>4609246</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

#### 4.2.6.3 Old age pension grant

The Old age pension grant is R1 780 per month to support the elderly people of South Africa from age 60. In the event that elderly people are beyond the age of 75 years they are eligible to receive R1 790 per month (Social Assistance Act of 2004). The average household monthly Old age pension grant by population groups should be able to state which racial group receives the highest amount of grant as per household average. According to the NIDS survey, African households received an average of 79.6%, Coloureds were at 13.9%, Asian/Indians were at 2.65% and Whites were at 3.75%.

The Old age pension grant increased in April 2019 to R1 780 per month (RSA, 2019). It is clear, according to the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) that more old age pension grants are received by Black Africans in South Africa and this confirms that they are poorer with less income and fewer assets, as that is the first requirement from the means test from SASSA in order for one to

qualify. It is the government's responsibility to invest more in Black African household heads who receive Old age pension grants, for the poverty numbers to decrease.

#### *4.2.6.4. Child support grant*

The Department of Social Development introduced the Child support grant (CSG), in April 1998, with a means-tested approach. The main purpose of the CSG is to reduce child poverty and to promote social development (Dinbabo, 2011). The Child support grant is currently at R420 per month and an additional increase of R10 is expected on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2019 to all eligible children under the age of 18 (RSA, 2019). Since the establishment of the Child support grant in April 1998 the primary care givers of children and who are also residents of South Africa are the only eligible people to receive the grant on behalf of children (Social Assistance Act of 2004). The average household monthly Child support grant by population groups should be able to state which racial group receives the highest amount of grant as per household average. According to the NIDS survey, African households received an average of 75.41%, Coloureds received 14.44%, Asian/Indians received 3.56% and Whites received 8.57% of the Child support grant.

**Table 7 Household monthly Child support grant average by population groups**

Child support grant income received by race groups						
Race Group	Mean	Min	Max	SD	Sum	%
African	1.763566	-9	2	1.380675	3640	73.41
Coloured	1.794486	-9	2	1.263269	716	14.44
Asian/Indian	1.945055	-3	2	.5241424	177	3.56
White	1.864035	-3	2	.8041333	425	8.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.782189</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.303134</b>	<b>4958</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

Child support grants were established to assist households with low income, especially towards children's nutrition and other basic needs of children. This grant is not intended to supplant household income, but to help with any barriers to the cost of living (Social Assistance Act of 2004). According to the NIDS Wave 5 (2017), Black Africans and Coloureds received more

income from the Child support grant with 73.4% to Blacks and 14.4% to Coloureds. This means that more children could be taken care of in terms of basic needs such as food, clothing and medical care in these population groups. The demand on the income received from Child support grants is much higher than expected from households' members; as a result, many children suffer from hunger while grants are received by their parents.

#### *4.2.6.5 Disability grant*

The Disability grant is available on a permanent or temporary basis for a period of between 6 and 12 months (RSA, 2019). When a beneficiary's temporary grant expires and they have not fully recovered to return to work, they need to apply for the grant again. If they are receiving other grants, they are not eligible to receive a disability grant (South African Social Security Agency, 2019; Dinbabo, 2011).

The Disability grant value is currently at R1780 per month for all eligible persons. Disability grant requirements include that applicants should be between the ages of 18 and 59 years (RSA, 2019) applicants must be medically unfit and this must be confirmed by a medical officer's report that an applicant is indeed physically or mentally disabled (Statistics South Africa, 2014). The average household monthly Disability grant by population groups indicates which racial group receives the highest amount of grant as per household average. According to the 2017 NIDS survey, African households received an average of 70.6%, Coloureds were at 21.8%, Asian/Indians were at 2.7% and Whites were at 4.7%.

**Table 8 Household monthly Disability grant average by population groups**

Disability grant income received by race groups						
Race group	Mean	Min	Max	SD	Sum	%
African	1506.991	350	1700	216.5579	851450	70.6
Coloured	1551.235	380	3000	176.8067	263710	21.8
Asian/Indian	1585.714	1400	1600	47.80914	33300	2.7
White	1798.125	1200	9800	1463.574	57540	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1530.545</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>9800</b>	<b>357.8852</b>	<b>1206000</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Own calculation from NIDS Wave 5 (2017)*

According to NIDS Wave 5 (2017), Black Africans and Coloureds received more income from the Disability grant with 70.6% to Blacks and 21.8% to Coloureds. This means more people with disabilities could be taken care of in terms of basic needs such as food, clothing and medical care in these population groups. It is through the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) that we are also able to identify that population groups with a high income from Disability grants are households with lower income according to the means test requirements from SASSA. The demand on the income received from Disability grants is much higher than expected, from households' members. As a result, many people with disabilities suffer from hunger, medical care insufficiency and lack of clothing, while grants are received on their behalf.

#### *4.2.6.6 Impact of government grants on food insecurity and poverty*

In the course of recent years, social grants have reduced malnourishment and hunger. However, through those measures against food insecurity, the high persisting levels of malnutrition continues to affect especially women and children and a new comprehensive approach is needed. Social grants are an urgent segment of South Africa's battle against food security and poverty. However, they are not sufficiently high enough, therefore social grants are insufficient to the general issue. Devereux and Waidler (2017) also wrote that South African social grants are insufficient to alleviate malnourishment and hunger, primarily because even if there are social grants increments, the high inflation rate supersedes social grants' slow increase especially on food prices. The money from social grants is not spent exclusively on food, but on numerous needs of the household and by many individuals in the households as social grant payments are included in household income (Devereux and Waidler, 2017).

The impact of government grants on food insecurity and poverty is the main subject of this study and as far as the study findings show, this subject has been addressed. It would be wrong to overlook the contribution of social grants to alleviating food insecurity and poverty in South Africa. Without social grants, a huge number of poor people in South Africa would be more unfortunate than is the case today. There are many other unaddressed factors that contribute to food insecurity and poverty, which mostly involve the deduction of grants payments in getting rid of them, e.g. health care and lack of breast-feeding to children, transport expenses, etc. A new

comprehensive approach is indeed required to alleviate this persisting social factor for the increased well-being of all in South Africa.

It is no myth that poverty and food insecurity continue to persist in South Africa although the government has implemented many policies and programmes to alleviate poverty, hunger and food insecurity. The poorest and most vulnerable people in South Africa continue to be the Black majority, especially those who live in rural areas and informal settlements. The key findings of this study direct those who are in authority for service delivery to be aware of the different provinces, race groups, geographic areas and gender groups who need the most urgent interventions for development and sustainability.

#### **4.3 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the analyses of results obtained from this study. The study used descriptive statistics analysis in evaluating the impact of social grants on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa. The results of the study indicate that social grants are an urgent segment of South Africa's battle against food security and poverty and yet they are not sufficient for the overall alleviation of poverty and food insecurity. This chapter also highlighted that according to the population demographics, Black Africans constitute the majority of South Africans and they are more seriously affected by poverty and food insecurity, especially women and children. Looking at the provincial comparison, it is evident that Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal are in serious crisis in poverty and food security and social grants are also in demand in these provinces, especially in the rural areas.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings of the study and concludes with recommendations for the relevant stakeholders. The main focus of this study was the evaluation of the impact of social grants on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa. The key findings of the study, based on the literature review, concur that the problems related to poverty and food insecurity are dire and deep-rooted, and that the intervention of social grants alone cannot provide the solution to the overall alleviation of poverty and food insecurity. This study acknowledges that the government's intervention of social grants have made a huge contribution, however, a lot more work needs to be done to meet the fundamental issues at hand.

The post-apartheid government introduced new socio-economic policies such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) as part of its economic development and redistribution strategy. These policies were intended to lower the rate of unemployment, introduce programmes and strategies for economic growth, and alleviate food insecurity and poverty, with sustainable programmes of action. Most of these policies were not effective enough to eradicate the fundamental issues of economic growth, poverty, and food security, especially in redressing the imbalances of the past.

Food security and poverty continue to be a major issue confronting developmental challenges on the part of the South African government in the post-apartheid era, despite the many policies implemented, including the Social Assistance Act of 2004, implemented by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). The common goal in all the anti-poverty measures attempted by the South African government, remains the development of the undeveloped and the maintenance of the well-being of all South Africans. The relationship between social welfare policies, food security and poverty in South Africa and across the world remains a significant challenge that has raised intense scholarly debate from global to national developmental spheres. A number of suggestions have been offered on how to measure social welfare policies in terms of addressing the household levels of food security and poverty reduction. Global and national

overviews stipulate that countries increasingly have to find ways of addressing the incidence of more than one type of malnutrition, which results in extreme poverty. Access to healthy and enough food for the whole population must be the key focus of the policy-makers in ensuring that food security is no longer a myth.

The White Paper on Development Welfare (RSA, 1997) is one of the strategic tools for social development by the South African government. It states that the alleviation of poverty and the support provided to as many poor people as possible in South Africa, under the office of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), is the fundamental role of the state. This White Paper remains one of the important guiding documents for South African social welfare development but many challenges in terms of growth and sustainability remain. Clearly, the development approach to welfare is not perfect and even less perfect is the transition to a developmental paradigm in South Africa. Despite the welfare model, it is apparent that its aims and focus are far more suitable to the needs of the country than the traditional approaches. In South Africa, social welfare needs to position itself in the emerging democracy. Policy-makers need to understand the developmental welfare system and be willing to transform with the most appropriate paradigm.

In this regard, the study reviewed the Rawls and Cosmopolitan theories of justice, to clarify how social justice must be exercised and be visible in people's lives through ensuring their well-being, in a social welfare state. Rawls asserts that, "In the modern world, justice is a distributional concept, that is, it is concerned with how different resources, wealth, income, educational opportunities, and so on ought to be distributed legitimately to people" (Rawls, 1971: 266).

South Africa is rich in natural resources and has large amounts of minerals such as gold, diamonds, coal, and iron, as well as vast land and water resources for farming and fishing that are currently not benefitting the majority of the people of this country. The current government of South Africa, as a developing country has invested much time and resources on social development policies since the dawn of democracy in 1994, prioritising human needs in the growth and development of society's well-being. Unfortunately, this succeeded on paper, but not in practice. Since the end of the apartheid era, programmes pertaining to social grants, health care, basic education, access to clean water and sanitation etc., were among the burning social development issues prioritised by the new South African government, to conform with social justice. This study set out to critically

examine the impact of social grants on food security and poverty alleviation in South Africa, post-1994.

Through quantitative research methods used to analyse secondary data, the study results indicate that more than 55% of the South African population is poor and 15.8% of the population is not food secured, and vulnerable to hunger. The government, via the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) has been able to distribute social grants which contribute a lot towards the alleviation of food insecurity and poverty and fulfilling other needs of households. However, with more than 17 million people assisted in 2017 on social grants clearly demonstrates that there is a huge number of people under both the poverty line and the food poverty line, pointing to a crisis.

The findings based on the NIDS Wave 5 (2017) also indicate that the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal are more acutely affected by poverty and food insecurity especially in the rural areas of these provinces. In terms of race comparison, Black South Africans constitute a huge percentage of poor people in both the food poverty line and the poverty line, even though more social grants are distributed to Black African and Coloured communities. Government officials need to look into areas such as provinces, race groups, geographic areas and the gender dynamics, in order to intervene where those who are more vulnerable than others, need greater government support.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

- The majority of South Africans that are poor need more than social grants to rescue themselves from poverty, for social grants themselves are not enough. Poor people, in particular Black Africans, must be equipped with skills, education and resources that will enhance them to access higher levels of income in both public and private industries.
- A clear definition of developmental social welfare must be issued in communities in a form of bottom-up approach for a clear understanding of what it seeks to develop in South Africa.
- Policy formulators need a clear orientation of public needs from national to local government to ensure that the majority of people are informed of developmental models.

- The government of South Africa needs to establish a clear line of communication, especially in institutions of social development, for quick interventions on issues affecting service delivery for alleviating poverty and food insecurity.
- The public officials responsible for food security in South Africa should revive the lack of agricultural farming in rural areas and townships for food availability and access at an affordable price.
- To alleviate poverty, social grants must be substantially increased and the cost of food must be subsidised by government to survive the high rate of inflation and other related issues for purchasing power.
- Social welfare policies such as the White Paper on Development Welfare, Social Assistance Act of 2004, White Paper on Social Welfare of 1997, etc. need a clear developmental review for effectiveness and efficiency in eradicating poverty and food insecurity that keeps on persisting in South Africa.
- The programme of action for monitoring and evaluation on the implemented strategies for well-being, must be visible and active especially in the public sector for efficiency of service delivery.
- Poverty-related issues such as high rates of crime, poor education system, high rates of unemployment, and poor infrastructure need serious intervention, e.g. developing young people on scarce skills that are more related to the development of South Africa; we need to develop our own machines and power stations that will advance economic growth; and finally, the infrastructure must be suitable for import and export services.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Food insecurity is slowly persisting in South Africa and social grants will soon add no value in solving this issue of poverty and hunger, which escalates stronger than the intervention and strength of social grants. South African governing authorities need to come up with a holistic approach to dismantle poverty and food insecurity especially in rural areas, informal settlements, among women and children where high levels of malnutrition are mostly experienced. It is crucial for the South African government to adopt a more strategic approach, which consists of well-considered action plans and include stringent monitoring and evaluation

components. It has been proven that social grants alone cannot solve the state of social well-being of South Africans. Lastly, a sustainable solution to this critical social problem is to redress the imbalances of the past, especially for the poor majority, through the provision of resources, skills and a developmental education system that will enable access to higher levels of income and an improved quality of life for all South Africans.



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