

Righting the Controversies of the South African Social Security Agency through Functionaries on the Subject of Disability Grant Disbursement Violations

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Abstract

This quantitative article addresses ethical dilemma issues on the mechanisms used to disburse social disability grants by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). It is founded on philosophies of social justice including equity which all infers from the underlying assumptions in social life that keep people from being fully and truly understanding of how the disability grant world works. These are premised in concepts of Critical Theory along with the Theories of Change, and they are all meant to help SASSA to identify the solutions to effectively address the causes of problems that hinders progress, and to guide this agency decisions on which approaches should be taken to address challenges which arise when disability grants are disbursed. Both the moral and economic arguments associated with the operations and disability grant strategic policy issues of SASSA are extensively and passionately contended for. The article further reflects on, and in some instances, provides disclaims using three criticisms of the disability grant disbursement arguments: that disability grant inefficiencies are more than just a lack of adequate policy knowledge; and that disability grantees rights are not totally disregarded by SASSA; in addition to, refuting the allegations of the disability frauds that are lamented by the media. To some degree, the article understands the disability grant disbursement issues to other unique strategic administrative issues than what is before the public. It encapsulates particular arguments ranging over different perspectives by operational and strategic officials of SASSA in previously mentioned three respects. It once more assesses the worth of the objections to disability grant disbursement appropriate to challenges of disability grant frauds and inefficient practices. It is concluded that disability grant disbursement issues hinge more on uncoordinated policy movements than just fraud and the need for South African government to consider other issues such as vacant positions, the removal of non-functional operations such as the rotation of regional managers. Solutions includes the availability of resources and, perhaps, even borrowing some of the disbursement methods used in highly industrialized nations to curb frauds and inefficiencies experienced at SASSA.

Keywords: righting, controversies, SASSA, violations, disability grants disbursements.

The primary objective of this article is to right the controversies of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), through the sharing of correct knowledge that is

disseminated by the functionaries on the subject of disability grant disbursement violations. The secondary goal of this paper is to delineate whether, why, and how the disability grant policy is distinctly difficult to design and innovate. This topic gained considerable attention in the academic literature as the media continues to write about the height of fraud, maladministration and inefficiencies taking place at SASSA. The relationship between high unemployment rate and increasing disability grant frauds that is presumably taking place at SASSA gained considerable attention in the academic literature in the last two decades. Prior research has hypothesized that fraud and disbursement disparities may be mitigated if SASSA improves the existing disability grant instruments. Existing research frequently attributes these challenges to the lack of commitment by SASSA functionaries, the system that allows for heightened levels of fraud, and the lack of accountability. Yet, it remains unknown how the findings from the disability grant policy and praxis gaps come about, reasons behind the silencing of grantee voices by the system which ultimately translate to chaotic and inefficient systems and how transforming the agency through the use of critical and change theories towards addressing disbursement challenges and the uniqueness of the provincial disbursement challenges can influence the practices for the better as the agency improves through the optimization of sharing crucial knowledge in varying provincial levels.

There is, however, still little research on how the rotation of regional managers, changing of ministers and leadership vacuums impacts the disability grant policy implementation, and on the potential obstacles that may prevent grant disbursement functionaries from providing effective and efficient service delivery of disability grants. This implies that scholars working on the disability grant frauds and inefficiencies are still dealing with unanswered questions such as ‘What are the actual reasons to permeated frauds and inefficiencies that are

seemingly perpetuated? What other policy administrative challenges apart from what appears in the media affects the policy functioning?’. This paper contributes to the field by investigating how the strategic and operational challenges in an extensive policy formulation authorities called the Regional Management Committee (REMANCO), where high ranking officials of SASSA sets agenda, formulate, adopts, implements, and evaluates the effectiveness of the disability grant policy. In the light of these considerations, this article suggests that it is interesting to analyse the impact of inadequately administered disability grant policy from both a taxpayer and grantee rights violation academic point of view. To the best of the author’s knowledge, this is the first study that addresses this issue. The contributions of this study are threefold. First, by being the voice of reason for the voiceless grantees who have been silenced by the SASSA disbursement system, bridging the disability grant gap between policy and praxis during disbursement and through the transformation of critical and change theories towards addressing SASSA disbursement issues. Moving a step further, in this article, a comprehensive discussion is presented that establishes and interlinks to provincial unique experiences and varying disbursement challenges by mapping data and incorporating outputs from well informed functionaries, thus producing an important information on how the disability grant administration can be improved for the better.

Considering the lack of accountability and unjust disability grant management policies in the SASSA in general, and local offices in particular, the service delivery value chain led by this agency to fight poverty and hunger is harder to be achieved. Therefore, it is essential to review the disability grant disbursement policy of the SASSA now, especially after COVID-19 in South Africa and assess the challenges and efforts essential to mitigate the additional burden of inefficient practices and fraud in this country. The analysis showcases that to move from a

general public view thinking to a realistic known disbursement issues, it is important to focus on core disability grant issues and that which is known by the agency. Looking at other control variables, the hypothesised results were generally in line with the literature and confirm the importance of disability grant policy improvement characteristics as mediating factors on the extent of disability grantee rights violation. Contrary to this article's expectations, the results from grant disbursement challenges show that as much as most grantee rights are somewhat violated by the SASSA system when disbursing disability grants, however, care and sympathy still exists from most officials when it comes to the needs of their disability clients. The findings support the inclusion of NPOs that house disability grantees to form part of the key strategic policy formulation and implementation decisions of SASSA as that can limit the negative impacts of negligently unmet disability grantee needs while also highlighting the need for better strategies to engage and retain disability grant clients who are often vulnerable to fight for their own rights. In the next paragraphs, this research discusses the bridging of disability grant gap between policy and praxis when grants are disbursed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conscientising on the mystified South African disability grant phenomenon

Corroborated evidence on the disbursement of disability grants places the South African Social Security Agency systems as instruments that are mounted with inefficiency, fraud, and maladministration. The several scholars who have explored the disability grant field, over the years, have made significant commentaries on how it is that this agency has left its disbursement systems engulfed with varying challenges such as delays on beneficiary payments, and more issues concerned with the grant renewals, among other administrative issues which has left a lot of grantees with untenable stress. In the same

breath, there are other seminal contributions pronounced in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which place particular emphasis on the provisions on how disability grants should be disbursed as embedded in the Social Assistance Act (13 of 2004). According to this statutory framework, the South African government places the persons challenged with disability as the citizens who meets the requirements such as (1) within the prescribed age (18), (2) owing to individual mental or physical disability, and (3) unfit for any labour or employment placement by virtue of somewhat service which is the means needed to enable every citizenry to afford their maintenance.

While that is the case, it also appeared that despite several theories that have been proposed to resolve evident numerous systemic errors which SASSA to this date faces, that being the issues having to do with disability grant disbursement inefficiency challenges, including different media laments about the perpetual incidents of fraudulent encounters which this agency has been facing for a period over a decade, it is quite clear that the agency disbursement instruments leaves a lot to be desired when it comes to providing effective and efficient social grant services. What is more intriguing is, the previous studies such as that of Mazela, Masiya and Mandiyabike, (2022), and that of Luthuli (2020) have shown that that SASSA is thrown into a full-blown crisis that is created by the problematic disbursement strategies. Subsequently, the scourge has had a far-reaching if not a devastating impact on the lives of the grantees who are recipients of this grant, and that is, despite the suggested resolutions from previous scholars which has met with no available action in terms being implemented. To a greater degree, particular authors have also questioned and perceived this agency disbursement strategies as weak instruments which keeps failing to improve the quality of life of grantees who are already in significant distress.

This research argues that SASSA social grant strategies are supposed to act as poverty alleviation instruments, and hinge of the purpose of improving the lives of grantees. The grantee real-life experiences, except in a few instances, appear to be that of agony and hardships based on their shared painful experiences that has become a testament of how much more work needs to be done by the Department of Social Welfare and Development to remove such exerted pressure. Luthuli (2020) critiqued one of the SASSA disability grant eligibility requirement which necessitate for all applicants to provide a physical address without considering the disability applicants who are homeless living in the street having referred to this practice as a restriction which deprives (violates) clients of their constitutional rights. This argument stems from the pronouncement which claims that the government is responsible for 'Providing the disability grant to all the disabled persons who are unable to support themselves, including their dependents due to their limiting nature of disability conditions'. Besides, no one can deny that the evident cases of disability grant fraud and inefficient practices plunges the South African government, especially tax-payers into a crisis state and ultimately an economic burden as these demands for taxation to keep growing, including to create a situation whereby it is very hard for the government to avoid paying grant that has an increment that moves at a very slow-pace, while the needs compete with the ever growing country inflation. What is SASSA strategic direction without a regard for taxation, effective ways to curb fraud and innovative ways to reduce inefficiency? The agency must in a position to race forward with times by benchmarking what other countries are doing to mitigate the existing phenomenon of fraud and inefficiency.

What obtains globally as well-known unfavourable disability grant dilemmas

Studies of different authors in the field of social disability grant are well documented, and they all well acknowledged that the SASSA

disbursement system is set-off with issues that pertains to fraud and inefficiency. A number of authors such as Kijakazi, Smith, and Runes (2019), including the great read of the (Urban Institute on the African American Economic Security and Role of Social Security) have recognized vigorous efforts (twenty years later) as in the interest of different government in African countries which shows continuity towards improving specific country's social security programs as progressive action towards promoting the reasonable disability grant benefits. This approach is in itself is intended to help varying governments not to be accustomed to creating self-effacing benefits which do not only violates grantee rights but also make it difficult to live with so many social needs competing for their financial attention. Studies of improving social disability instruments in policies are well documented, however, it is also well acknowledged that more changes are needed towards sharpening the disbursal of social security.

Despite this having been discussed by a great number of authors in literature such as Veghte, Scheur, and Waid (2016) over the years, of late authors such as Luthuli (2023) and Gabrielle (2022) pursued studies which continuously reveal that disability groups across Africa remain disfranchised owing to the short-sighted social security benefits offered by their countries. In the main these different existing research show that most African governments has many problems in representing the actual needs of persons living with disability when it comes to social security systems to which then throws the grantees into a state of indigent. As evidenced in the advancing disability meagre social security grant challenges, it is quite clear that the social grant offered to the grantees is insufficient to meet their day-to-day needs. Other scholars on this aspect of research suggested, through varying theories, that these identical African governments promote social support by reimagining the disability grant benefit strategies, including to look into unique newer

ways of protecting the disability groups besides getting to learn more about the client’s family dynamics (Kijakazi, Smith and Runes, 2019). Over time, an extensive literature has developed on all centre fraud, as reported by the Indian government, in accordance with which several vulnerable disability grantees (grant recipients) had fallen the victims of scammers who defrauded them using phones pretending to be from grant office call centres to extract client information that will help them to fraudulent steal their grant money for self-enrichment, although the culprits were eventually arrested by the ATLANTA-Federal agents as discovered by (Corra, 2020). A recent study by Powell (2022) concluded in the study background that the gaps in the disbursement system has led to a fraudulent problem whereby the inculcate manage to rip-off the government a substantial amount of \$ 400, 000 in social grants. Desperate efforts to battle against such practice by the fraudulent phone call scammers has been underway, as led by the American Department of Justice and Social Security office of the Inspector General where the main aim is to put an end to this type of manipulation of the system.

CONCEPTUALISATION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

By using Critical theory, the researcher intended to give a perspective of, including to transform the inadequate SASSA DG disbursement paradoxical situation that, after all, sidelines the disability grantees, and insomuch as the Theory of Change is concerned, it were of service to explaining this agency’s in-use instruments which can be understood to be made available for the sake of providing an effective

disability grant administration. The findings of this study can be derived, to some extent, the SASSA development change towards the causal analysis which the researcher has drawn based on the finding subjects of fraud, corruption and inefficiency stemming from available corroboration. This inclusion of transformative paradigm, as can be observed in this article, adds to a growing corpus of research showing the provincial grantee dynamical complexity of the disability grant administrative circumstances, and as means of approach towards hearing the given expressions of grantees as a group who have been an underrepresented minority.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling and data collection

A quantitative outcome technique was used in this section to provide for the significance of data outcomes that bear on responses provided by the SASSA functionaries of Gauteng, Western Cape, and the KwaZulu-Natal together with the provincial disability non-profit organisation professionals. A challenging problem which arises in this domain is fraud and inefficiency as experienced by SASSA when grants are disbursed which wears away the policy integrity where disability grant administration is concerned. This was experimentally investigated by large-scale review of literature, scrutiny of documents including the evidence-based research that is done at this agency as the selected case study. For the current work, it is sufficient to point out that quantifiable findings extends to novelty of this study to what place conclusions were drawn likewise the recommendations were made.

Table 1.1: Numerical data – Feedback Ratings-Response bias

INCUMBENCY CLASSIFICATION	Total number of questionnaires administered	Recorded number of questionnaires returned	Feedback ratings
Regional Management envoy	6	6	100 %
SASSA Local managers	40	21	84 %

Medical practitioners	40	37	92%
SASSA Administrators.	50	42	84 %
NPO professionals (WCAPD, GPAPD and St Giles)	35	33	94.2 %
TOTAL	141	139	98%

Source: Luthuli (2023)

The field has gradually broadened in that the researcher aligned the problem statement as insinuated in the introduction with the paper objective which was to (critically analyse the policies that guide the disbursal of SSDGs in SA), including research questions which all had to do with controlling the article rigour from onset until finish. After a series of experiments the capturing of data that is representative of self-managed questionnaires having been completed by SASSA, WCAPD, GPAPD and St Giles functionaries was considered as sufficient. The researcher considered the setup inclusive of respondent feedback ratings (see Table 1.1). These were designed in such a way that the quantifiable findings appertaining to the three provinces, namely: (WC, GP and KZN) were grouped as per each questionnaire section.

This proceeds in seven-fold that seeks to find out the following:

- i How often does SASSA compare social security service outcomes with other provinces?
- ii Checking to see if the respondents do get training on how to execute the disability grant policy.
- iii How the respondents rated the usefulness of the disability grant policy.
- iv If the respondents had enough of understanding of the disability grant policy.
- v How they would rate their understanding of disability grant policy guidelines.
- vi How they would classify the mechanisms used to distribute disability grants.
- vii How they would classify the disability grant mechanisms in addressing fraud and improve service delivery.

This section is further indicative for the essential part which mentions that particular quantifiable passages be viably ascertained by this article. It is important to highlight the fact that the researcher also included the sections

which called for the urgency of mentioning included parts of the questionnaire although these were not quantifiable since the nature of the questionnaire was semi structured. There were some important differences to note in responses that were clustered together for all three provinces which is the fact that these still represented the individual statements of respondents despite them being integrated into one sectional analysis and interpretation as extracted from the research questions. It is interesting to note that, the researcher in some measure, incorporated complex analysis as well as the discourse to give an idea of the important relationship between empirical data and the epistemic paradigms of previous scholars. A popular explanation is that this article enhanced research adequacy through the use of graphs, tables to which this implies association between synoptic discussions to present quantifiable empirical data. This section has further been used to successfully account for the use the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 computer software programme to analyse the article’s quantitative data. An important question associated with validity and reliability test is as provided for in the SPSS Software corroborates that due to a sizeable populace that has been party to this study, validation had a propensity for using the descriptive statistics and inductive statistics. In contrast, this makes it possible to assert that the ascertaining of content validity in consequence of bordering on the research questions, as an accessory to the direct sectional questions that were considered important for each one of the sections of this article.

This is important not only because it is an ethical rule, however, it assisted the study to notice key critical knowledge as it authenticates its content validity in the course of analysing

empirical data which was informed by the creation of controversy around disability grant disbursement administrative issues using theoretical arguments appropriate to views of other social scientists. As it is not generally agreed that the importance of having adequate feedback response for prompt data analysis including reporting should be well understood, the next section dwells on taking the reader through the respondent feedback following the administered questionnaires.

RESULTS

This section is devoted to providing the results as provided by the respondents who are SASSA functionaries extending to the perspectives of the professionals who house the disability grantees at the non-profit organisations.

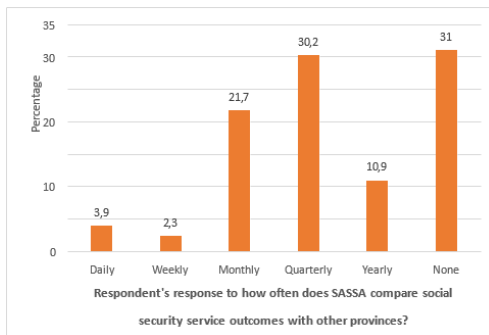


Figure 1.1 Respondents' Response To How Often Does Sassa Compare Social Security Service With Other Provinces

Source: Luthuli (2023)

Figure 1.1 represents the respondents' feedback to how often does SASSA compares its social security service outcomes with other provinces having placed the special emphasis on the provincial offices of SASSA in Cape Town, Gauteng, and the KwaZulu-Natal provinces. The use of organisational distribution were carried out as a tool for establishing the communication frequency of SASSA as a way to illustrate the

extent of essential tools that this agency uses to facilitate high performance during its operations. A significant (31%) denoted the Western Cape (WC) with the highest number of SASSA's functionaries who indicated that their provincial office does not compare their social security service outcomes with any other province as depicted in Figure 1.1. It is quite clear to prove that a (30.2%) were respondents with an understanding that the agency compares its provincial social security service outcomes with other provinces quarterly. The bar showing a percentage of (21.7%) expresses the viewpoints of respondents that deemed SASSA to have been comparing its social security outcomes monthly with other provinces. A gradual decrease in responses, at (10.9%), was observed from the cohort of respondents that accepted as true that the agency compares its social security service outcomes with other provinces every year.

As is clear from the result that a subsided (3.9%) has to do with respondents who is convinced that SASSA compares its social security service outcomes daily with the other provinces. Let the (2.3%) be defined as the lowest number of respondents owing to the impression that SASSA compares its social security service outcomes weekly with the other provinces. Now we can derive, according to (Figure 1.1), that the parallelism can now make the reader proceed analogously to conclude that there is a literature gap with reference to the grasping of the actual period in which time SASSA is able to compare its social security service outcomes with other provinces as a way to benchmark which supervene on mutual misunderstanding as regards to fulfilling the requirements of the same SASSA mission, vision and aims which the agency stands for nationwide. This paper argues that this is the only way SASSA can successfully engage on strategies that pronounce how all provinces will be able to resolve strategic key issues. Figure 1.1 further implies that the system which appears mounted with fraud and inefficiency stem from issues such as the repetitive change of ministers

by SASSA which prove to have a visible impact on how the disability grant policy functions. This is true for highlighting the importance that comes with the adequate interpretation of the findings as discovered by the researcher having been taken as issues of no account by other scholars in the field yet drastically affecting the policy that which flaws the disability grant disbursement.

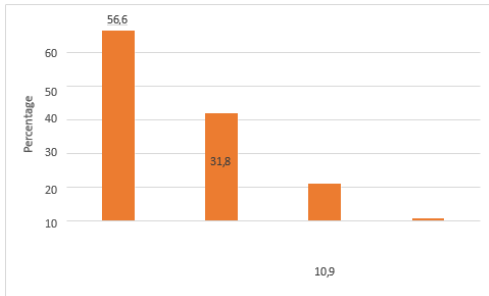


Figure 1.2: Training On How To Execute Disability Grant Policy
Source: Luthuli (2023)

Figure 1.2 represents an experimental data of the perceptions of SASSA staff and the professionals who are social workers in relation to their knowledge on how to execute the disability grant. A significant percentage of (56.6%), which was representing the three provincial and local SASSA offices of (WC, GP and KZN), along with the WCAPD, GPAPD and the St Giles, that being the non-profit organisations that house persons living with disability, gave substance to the fact that the agency does provide adequate training to them on how best they can execute the disability grant policy. A burgeoning (31.8%) provides for a constituency of respondents who begged to differ stating that they do not get sufficient training of how to implement the disability grant policy effectively and efficiently. This lends support to the previous findings in the literature such as that of (Gabrielle, 2020), which specified the gaps faced by the agency in terms having sufficient policy knowledge by staff which is to the detriment of the disability grant policy aims and

objectives, including its overall mission, vision, and goals. The most striking results to emerge from the data in Figure 1.2 is that an intriguing percentage of (10.9%), that is representative of the functionaries that are of the view that SASSA train them all the time to which the researcher observed the lack of truth in this statement and felt that it was said by respondents to avoid getting into trouble with authorities. Only a meagre (0.8%) respondents revealed that, on no occasion, SASSA has ever trained staff on how to execute the disability grant policy.

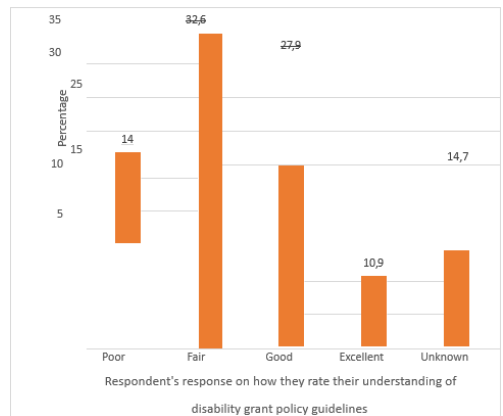


Figure 1.3: Respondents Rating Their Understanding of Disability Grant Policy Guidelines
Source: Luthuli (2023)

Figure 1.3 set forth the varying views regarding functionaries' s understanding of the disability grant policy guidelines insofar as the disbursement is concerned. Over (32.6%) of those surveyed reported that their understanding of the disability policy guidelines as fair. Just under (27.9%) commented that the disability grant policy guidelines are good. A small minority (14%) indicated that the policy guidelines are poorly spelled out.

When more subjects were questioned about their understanding of disability grant policy guidelines, a minority (5.4%) commented that the disability grant guidelines are excellent.

Figure 1.3 once more analysed how the selected functionaries understand the disability grant guidelines which is reported in threefold: (i) an ‘unknown’ option ranking at a considerable (14.7%), (ii) respondents who said its ‘fair’ placed a noteworthy (36.6%), and (iii) an important (27.9%) which refers to the respondents who classified the policy guidelines as ‘good’. It was further found that an important 31% of respondents who did not understand the disability grant policy guidelines matched the results in Figure 1.1 on respondents’ response to how often the SASSA compares its social security service outcomes to other provinces which found that another momentous (31%) were those implying none. The results vouching for an ‘okay’ option tagged at the heartstrings of an adequate (24.8%). This moves further to enlighten the reader about a substantial (22.5%) which represents respondents on the ‘fair’ option. A mean of (18.6%) is evidenced in the ‘poor’ option as provided for by the respondents.

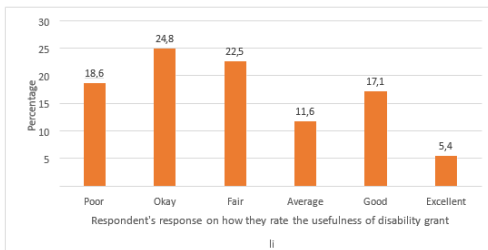


Figure 1.4: Rating the Usefulness of Disability Grant Policy
 Source: Luthuli (2023)

As accounted for in Figure 1.4 this passage will unfold pertinent views of respondents in regard to the usefulness of the disability grant policy. A burgeoning (18.6%) suggested that respondents deemed the usefulness of disability grant policy poor. Evidence of poor usefulness of the policy was found from the cohort of functionaries who had been with this agency for a period longer than five years of service. This section gave a wider spectrum of analysis to a significant (24.8%), which is a majority who

deem the policy usefulness to be ‘okay’. It is evident in this statement that the aforementioned percentage has to do with limited exposure to higher operational demands of the policy, including officials being adequately trained. A noteworthy (22.5%) infers the respondents who regarded the policy as ‘fair’. The researcher arrived at the understanding that this response accommodated the functionaries that have been exposed to some form of policy training rather than those that have not been party to the training. Careful consideration should also be given to the constituency of (11.6%) which refers to those who understand the usefulness of the policy to be of an average standard. The feedback of this nature extends to the need to facilitate the training required by SASSA to capacitate staff and other parties connected thereto.

The researcher’s future pragmatic lens indicates that there is likely to be a drop in these numbers if SASSA continues to show the lack of technical revolution in its DG policy. It stands to reason, looking at the (5.4%) who considered the policy excellent, that counter productive policy decision making will remain the agency downtime futuristically. Efforts towards removing the mechanisms that undermine the efficiency of disability grant disbursement can only prove meaningful if there is space for innovation in the policy. We need to recognise an important number (n=139) which were respondents that vowed to form part of this study representing the Western Cape, Gauteng, and the KwaZulu Natal SASSA Regional and local offices, including the WCAPD, GPAPD and St Giles non-profit organisations as it unleashes the severity of the study outcomes. There has been a rapid increase of respondents who deem the usefulness of the policy okay, although there is still much that needs to be done to expand the policy efficiency horizons.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	47	36.4	36.4	36.4
	Not sure	43	33.3	33.3	69.8
	Yes	39	30.2	30.2	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

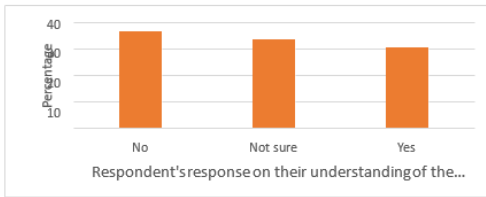


Figure 1.5: Enough Of Understanding Of The Disability Grant Policy
Source: Luthuli (2023)

Corroborated evidence on Figure 1.5 affirms to the varying responses of functionaries in regard to their level of understanding of the disability grant policy that is used as a primary guide of SASSA disbursement practices. The critical view from an overwhelming majority symbolises a classification of respondents that did not seem to have enough understanding of the disability grant policy, at (36.4%). This article further observes a considerable (33.3%) respondents who leaned towards the direction of not being sure as to whether their understanding their disability grant policy is sufficient. A lower percentage at (30.2%) tantamount to the views of respondents who confirmed their understanding of their disability grant policy. It is clear from the aforementioned notions that SASSA fails to a certain extent to fully define what their policy guidelines stands for fully to all their functionaries. Several respondents fails to acknowledge the significance of the disability grant policy the SASSA uses. The agency overlooks the fact that the majority functionaries with inadequate policy knowledge contributes to inefficiencies and fraud experienced by the agency. What SASSA fails to do is to draw a distinction between employees understanding the policy and them being able to implement the policy to which this remains as one of the major

issues that dispels chaos, although one the paper would appear to be overambitious in its claims. Another weakness is that we are given no explanation of how much of employee policy training is fit for purpose as observed to the productivity of the disbursement of grants by employees who claimed to have clear understanding of the disability grant policy. An attempt was made to quantify the association between the lack of understanding the disability grant policy and not being in a position to effectively disburse the grant. The main weakness of the study is the failure to address how consistently and adaptively the employees who seem to understand the policy are able to share insights with their counterparts who did understand the policy. The study fails to consider the differing categories of damage that the agency faces in terms of not having enough financials set aside to support the policy plans as that was not the primary focus. The research does not consider pre-existing budget issues such as the imposing of austerity measures by the Department of Social Development that oversee to the operational functionality of SASSA as an independent grant disbursement system.

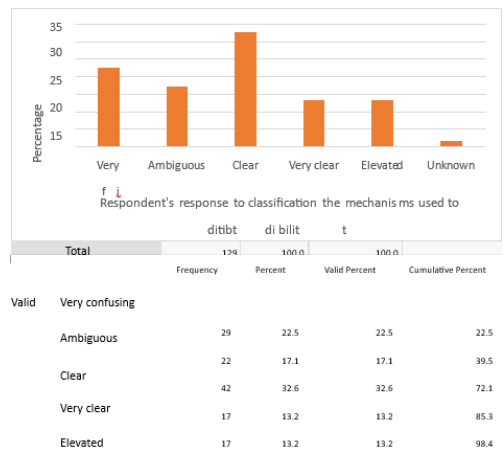


Figure 1.6: Classification Of The Mechanisms Used To Distribute Disability Grant
Source: Luthuli (2023)

Empirical evidence on the classification of the mechanisms used to distribute disability grant, as extrapolated in Figure 1.6, emerged. Herein this paragraph the researcher alluded to a frequency of (n=42), that is representative of a 32.6% of respondents which explained the disbursement instruments as clear. This points to concerns of the policy efficiency as provided for by the SASSA mission statement which this organisation stands. The feedback ratios further showed that only 13.2% (n=17) appear to be clear with the disability grant mechanisms. These results connect with the discoveries of Kelly (2016), which revealed that effective disbursement yields no positive results subsequent to poor policy mechanisms. The finding of this nature proves fundamental if one is to refer to the unbearable reality on how SASSA, through its inadequate disbursement systems, is continuing to marginalise the persons living with disability as it was the case with the apartheid administration. This study inferred 13.2% of respondents who viewed the disbursement mechanisms as elevated in the matter of service delivery standards. A burgeoning 1.6% (n=2) seemed not to know where the effectiveness of the mechanisms of the disability grant fall under which arose concerns on how these respondents engage with day-to-day operations, including accountability therein. The ambiguity of SASSA disbursement mechanisms can be traced in the empirical evidence of 17.1% (n=22) respondents who confirmed this as true. Knowledge capital theft appears when organisations fail to explain and make clear the systems and processes to rightful recipients. This study epistemic notions gravitates in providing philosophical assumptions through frameworks that will address issues of inequality and injustices faced by the disability society. In the greatest scheme of things, the results more than proves that very little is understood about the effectiveness of the operability of the disability grant mechanisms as, for example, a valid number of (n=29), which accounts to 22.5%, infers the respondents who

deem the disability grant mechanisms as quite confusing. In the main, this study perceived SASSA as having failed to fulfil its core mandate which has to do with fulfilling its mandate “by ensuring that there is a provisioning of comprehensive social security services which should guard against vulnerability as well as poverty as an agency which seeks to ensure that their operations are within the constitutional and legislative framework”.

Observations on fraudulent experiences as seen at SASSA are considered in Figure 1.7. This probe discovered considerable evidence of 48.1% (n=62) of informants who maintained to have heard about the exacerbated fraud at SASSA. The researcher asserts that discussions of this nature were observably a guise by respondents who seemed afraid to speak the truth on the real knowledge they have about fraud. This seemingly could be attributed to internal intimidation by culprits within the organisation whom although they are known but seek to threaten those who may expose them. As suggested by a few respondents, ‘Walls have ears’, and that is from a significant 26.4% (n=34), which obviously signals how rife intimidation is at SASSA, thereby, resorting to a ‘No response’ answer. It was difficult to determine the degree to which the ‘no response’ answers could be traced as a way to assess the severity of the status-quo within the organisation.

Although this research put forward a lowest 25.6% (n=33), despite that, the evidence of this nature suggest that fraud exist at SASSA, and that is across the three selected provinces (WC, GP and KZN). Regardless of the different provinces (WC, GP and KZN), fraud prove to be irrespective of the organisational demarcations, meaning it exists across all three provinces. Suffice is to mention that fraud as observed in the disbursement of disability grants at SASSA not only constitute a betrayal to the South African democracy, however, it also opposes the hard efforts by government geared towards bringing

disability grantees back to the mainstream of the society whose fundamental rights are respected.

As accounted for in the discoveries of Kelly (2016), during the study entitled: ‘Conceptions of disability and desert in the South African welfare state: The case of disability grant assessment’, this study agrees that the rife fraud challenges taking place at SASSA remains the major factor which throws the disability grant disbursement mechanisms into a state of inefficiency and ineffectiveness. This catch-2022 (an impossible situation) makes it believable that the several policy gaps which condones fraud and perpetuate inadequate grant administration are especially in violation of grantee disability rights as noticed on the 48.1% (n=62) which are respondents who submitted as true to these allegations.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	34	26.4	26.4	26.4
Head about it	62	48.1	48.1	74.4
Yes	33	25.6	25.6	100.0
Total	129	100.0	100.0	

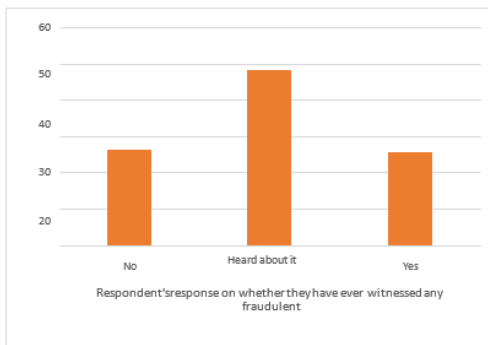


Figure 1.7: Witnessed Any Fraudulent
Source: Luthuli (2023)

This article further attests to the 16.3% (n=21), which is a number of respondent’s facts on the notion of existential fraud and poor service delivery taking place at SASSA. To a greater degree, this article’s method tagged at the heartstrings of the most robust findings, at (n=8) having to do with the 6.2% of informants who

gave reasons for the adequate disability grant mechanisms that they deemed to be vigilant enough to deal with fraudulent encounters, whilst they perceived the policy as having reasonable potential to improve the grant administration service delivery.

Herein Figure 1.8, the researcher provides evidence made of respondent’s perspectives with reference to the classification of the disability grant mechanisms towards addressing the challenges brought by fraud as well as assess if these instruments are able to improve service delivery when grants are disbursed at SASSA. Essentially, part of these results suggests policy changing as a considerable choice as recommended by a significant 29.5% (n=38) of respondents who deemed this practice to be of great importance. The provisions encapsulated in Section 34 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa place, as a criminal offense, the practice of failing to report fraud to the available channels that have been made for the mandated functionaries.

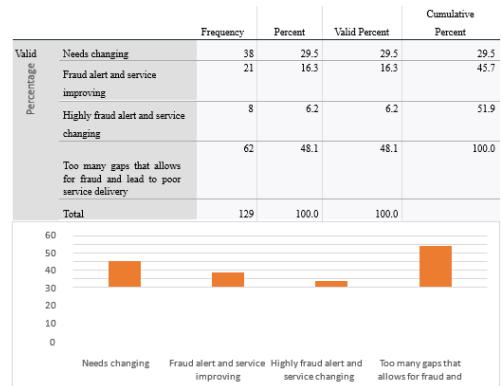


Figure 1.8: Classification Of The Disability Grant Mechanisms In Addressing Fraud And Improve Service Delivery
Source: Luthuli (2023)

The ridicule of SASSA mandate which pronounces that ‘the South African Social Security Agency has the mandate of assisting the most vulnerable members of the country’s

society' is observed in the fraudulent encounters which this agency reports yearly which shows rampant growth. For example, in the year 2022 the report provided by the minister of Social Development, Lindiwe Zulu mentioned that the agency has had to deal with nearly 500 cases of alleged corruption and fraud over the past decade to which this can be traced at (SASSA, 2022) report. A reasonable 45.7 % (n=21) were of the view that the disbursement mechanisms are fraud alert and service improving. A two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$), represented 100 % made of (n=62) respondents who were inclined to think that the disability grant policy has too many gaps which perpetuate fraud and lead to poor service delivery. A voluminous out-turn of (n=8), adding up to a significant 51.9 % put through respondent opinions which is with the notion that the disability grant methods vaguely improves. With regularity, this outcome propels the researcher to draw the reader's attention back to the ultimate purpose of this research which had to do with improving the administration of disability grant. Policies remain valueless in the absence of positive impact and as long as fraud is not controlled at SASSA, the disability grant disbursement process will remain flawed and mounted with inefficiency.

IMPLICATIONS

Discussing implications on the realised outcomes that pertains to the disbursement of the South African disability grants was particularly important towards: (i) reflecting on what this study set to accomplish in the first place, (ii) to ascertain if there were changes to the initial different perspectives after collecting new data, and (iii) to inform the disability grant audience about the important disability grant matters around which their future research (interest area) can focus. This article evidence shows that the inefficient and rife fraudulent practices that are experienced by the selected SASSA offices build on existing evidence of Luthuli (2020), and that of Gabrielle (2018), who argued that the systems

used by SASSA are not adequately designed to resolve a number of administrative challenges this agency faces, especially when it comes to issues of fraud and inefficiency. These findings suggest that the in-house mechanisms used by this agency are not fit for a purpose when it comes to addressing the real-life problems faced by grantees who are the key recipients of this form of government grant, subsequently, the functionaries look incompetent and unbothered about the grantees. Particular results should be considered when reformulating or advancing the current disbursement policy as a mitigating strategy towards helping to reduce the chaos that pervades organisation with a public impression that says all employees working for this agency lacks integrity and accountability. While Dlamini (2022) has focused on how it is private organisations violates the grantee rights when it comes to social grants, these results show that the disability grantee rights who are served specifically by SASSA seem to have a great deal of their rights violated without even knowing about it. In fact, this realised that grantees, to a greater degree, do not have any powers to challenge some of the relentless inefficiency actions casted unto them by dysfunctional functionaries. One study found that as much as some disability functionaries enjoy serving the grantees, however, to a certain extent they are challenged by the lack of resources this agency faces (Luthuli, 2020). This result suggest that some functionaries are wrongly portrayed as inefficient and fraudulent employees because SASSA cease to give them adequate resources to work with towards making social granny type of service delivery more applaudable and appreciable.

CLOSING SUMMARY

This article investigated the effectiveness of the mechanisms used to disburse the social disability grant of South Africa. The aim was look first look into social security frameworks that obtains globally, understand the associated

policies within the African continent insofar as disability grant control is concerned, and thereafter understand the SA DG policy guidelines and provide a critique on the functionality of its instruments. Key findings presents the disability grant disbursement as area that is mounted with inefficiency and fraud, and as long as the agency fails to look into the issue of policy improvement, through changes some of the traditional approaches, the policy will remain permeated with shortfalls. This article highlights the future implications of the “negative growth”

probability prospects at SASSA as fraudsters are continuing to advance on unduly methods for benefitting illegitimately the disability grants.

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