



**The 10th anniversary of the uprising: how has organising
changed for farmworkers in De Doorns post 2012-2013
strikes**

**Minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of master's in industrial Sociology**

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Abstract

During apartheid farmworkers in South Africa were barred from organising. After the political transition in 1993 labour legislations were extended to farmworkers which included: the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1998*, the *Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995*, which extended the right to organise and strike to farm workers; the *Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997*, 2003 *a Sectoral Wage Determination* that provided a minimum wage level for all agricultural workers. Even though farmworkers were given rights and were protected by the legislation, their working and living situations remained largely unchanged. Thus because of the unchanged working and living condition of farmworkers regardless of the legislation in place, they sparked the uprising in 2012. In De Doorns in 2012-2013 farmworkers organised themselves for the first time in South African history. The farmworkers demanded an increase to their daily wage of R69 to R150, an end to labour brokers and an end to farm evictions, to mention a few. Ten years after the De Doorns uprising, organising farmworkers continues to be a challenge for trade unions. The purpose of this study seeks to ascertain if there has been a change in how trades unions organise seasonal and permanent farm workers. To answer this question, I used purposive sampling and conducted 14 interviews.

According to the study's findings, despite inroads made during the 2012-2013 uprising at organising there have been continuities in the way workers organised previously. This is due to internal divisions within the workforce, divisions along ethnicity, nationality, employment status and residence. Trade unions have not been successful in tackling the challenges of organising permanent and seasonal farmworkers and are actively working towards finding alternative ways to organise farmworkers. While there is resistance, it seems on the main workers are still intimidated by paternalistic farmers who hinder attempts to organise farmworkers.

The study emphasizes that there are differences in working experiences and organising between local residents and cross-border migrant workers and between seasonal and permanent workers. The study concludes that organising for farmworkers has not change for the betterment because they are divided. However, once all farmworkers; locals and cross-border migrant workers look past their disparate nationalities and forge a shared identity, they will be powerful and capable of organising collectively. Thus, while the farmworkers are still divided, they give the farmers the power to oppress, exploit, marginalised and divide them because the local workers regard the cross-borders migrant workers as their enemies instead of the farmers. I therefore argue that when the workers are united, and see their shared identity, and see what they have in common rather where they differ, they will be better able to organise. Thus, permanent, and seasonal workers can work with their differences and used it productively to create common ground for collective organising and worker power.

Keywords:

De Doorns strike, farmworker organising, precarity, intimidation, trade unions, farmworkers, collective identity, lack of working relationships

List of Acronyms

ANC -	African National Congress
BAWUSA-	BAWSI Agricultural Workers Union of South Africa
COSATU-	Congress of South African Trade Unions
ESTA-	Extension of Security of Tenure Act
FAWU-	Food and Allied Workers Union
NGO-	Non-Governmental Organisation
WFP-	Women on Farms Project

CHAPTER 1

1.1. Background

In November 2012 to January 2013 thousands of farm labourers and rural dwellers in more than twenty-five towns engaged in an uprising around the Western Cape. The uprising was considered to be both historic and unprecedented (see Wilderman, 2015). In addition to other demands like the elimination of labour brokers so that employees may be engaged directly by the farmers, the end of piece work, rent-free housing, and better living circumstances, to name a few, farmworkers were calling for an increase in the minimum wage from R69 to R150 per day. (Wilderman, 2015; SA History, 2019). Although with farm workers and the rural dwellers have been plagued with grievances for years in these areas, they have never engaged in protests, let alone protests at such a large and intense scale (Wilderman, 2015).

The protests demonstrated a form of resistance that was distinct from the paternalistic discourse that historically characterised farm owners' and farm workers' relationships (Wilderman, 2015). The paternalistic "moral universe" itself, which relied on personal pleas, consensual agreements, and avoiding the appearance of open confrontation, served as the foundation for traditional farm workers' opposition. (Ewert and Du Toit, 2005, p329). The Western Cape uprising, however, was distinguished by open conflict, with farmworkers and rural residents adopting an overt, confrontational, and adversarial approach a marked departure from conventional paternalistic language (Wilderman, 2015 & 2016).

In the discourse of paternalism, farmers constructed permanent on-farm workers as 'farm family' and those coming from outside and workers involved in labour activism were stigmatise as "troublemakers" (Du Toit, 1993). This resulted in on-farm workers refraining from any open defiance because of the power relationship which existed between the farmer and the worker. There was a 'belief' that the farmer and the worker had the same interest for the survival of the farm community (Du Toit, 1993; White, 2010). This prevailing paternalistic power structure evolved in a setting where farm owners served as both the "providers" and the primary authorities over the "farm family" and everyone else who resided on "their" land. The grounds of contention between black farm workers and white farm owners were profoundly formed and constrained by this social development.

For centuries commercial farm labourers in South Africa have endured abuse and exploitation. The paternalistic practices on commercial farms have been described as a complex set of

intimate and deeply unequal power relations by the white men's control over women, children, and young men, who remained on farms after the abolishment of slavery (Orton, Barrientos & McClenaghan, 2001). Paternalism was a violent system in which the farmers assumed the role of patriarchal father figures, operating based on benevolence, favouritism, as well as punishments and discipline (Du Toit, 1993; Eriksson, 2017). Moreover, with the political transformation, labour and human rights were extended to farm workers enabling them to make demands on farmers as rights-holders.

After 1994 the legislation provided legal protection to agricultural workers intended to improve their working and living conditions (Devereux, 2020; Pons-Vignon & Anseeuw, 2009). These legislation included the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1998, which outlined conditions of work, hours, maternity leave and overtime pay; the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, which extended the right to organise and strike to farm workers; the Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997, which provided farm workers with protections and legal resource in the case of evictions; and, in 2003, a Sectoral Wage Determination that provided a minimum wage level for all agricultural workers (Department of Labour, 2014). While these legislations have been important victories to farm workers it has come with a double edge.

The existing Labour Relations Act, for example, which extends the right to organise and strike to farm workers can be criticized because of the barriers that paternalistic social relations create to participate in collective action or join trade unions. A study conducted by Mompati (2011) found in 2010 the percentage of farm workers who belong to a union were around 30 percent. In particular, in 2010 farm workers in the Western Cape who were union members was around 3 to 5 percent. In other words, many farm workers remain unorganised (Mompati, 2011; Wilderman, 2015). However, according to Devereux (2019) the farm workers labour rights survey data state that in the Western Cape there has been an increase now with 13.6% of farmworkers that belongs to a union, of which 13.8% of the permanent worker and 9.5% of the seasonal workers belonged to a union. Though, there has been an increase in farmworkers unionisation the figure is still low compared to other sectors.

Over the past decades labour on commercial farms has transformed significantly where farm owners were shifting to externalisation and casualisation of their labour force (du Toit & Ally, 2003; Eriksson, 2017). This meant that there were jobs shedding and millions of farm dwellers experienced displacement all over the country. Ever more, in the Western Cape where farm workers lived in rural towns within informal settlements and were employed on a casual or

seasonal basis normally through labour brokers or contractual arrangements (du Toit & Ally, 2003; Eriksson, 2017). This has intensified the division amongst workers because some on-farm permanent workers tend to have had better paying positions with non-wage benefits whilst casual and seasonal off-farm workers are likely to be financially worse off (Eriksson, 2017). In addition, the workforce in the Western Cape has become more diverse where farmers started to employ more migrant labourers from other provinces or from neighbouring countries particularly from Lesotho, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. The restructuring on commercial farming can be interpreted as farm owners' response to the global processes whereby retailers have strengthened their control and power over value chains, as well as the decisions of the South African government to deregulate (Eriksson, 2017).

The restructuring of labour on commercial farms has changed fundamentally (Eriksson, 2017). Firstly, despite the passing of the Labour Tenant Act and the Extension of Security of Tenure Act, which are meant to protect farm workers against evictions, there are an increasing number of farm evictions that affect farm workers (Andrews, 2018). The evictions or the displacement that farm workers faced to off-farm housing dismantled the problems that came with the paternalistic structures. Secondly, because farms are so spread out and more workers are living off-farm in rural communities, this makes it difficult for workers to come together and organise (Mompoti, 2011).

With the ongoing evictions of farm workers in a democratic dispensation means more workers which were once permanent are now hired on a seasonal or casual basis. The identities of farm workers have become fragmented because people from marginalised rural and urban areas are also now engaging in farm labour (Eriksson, 2017). Together with the increased diversification of farmworkers' work trajectories and the histories of belonging to the commercial farm "family" and the positioning in hierarchies of gender, race and nationality also shaped the differentiated attachments and who can claim "farm worker" as an identity (Eriksson, 2017). A recent study conducted in the Western Cape and Northern Cape highlighted within the democratic dispensation that farm workers' labour rights is violated by continuous abuse and exploitation on farms (Devereux, 2020). The forms of social security that comes with living on-farms is questionable. Most farm workers make minimal income and live in substandard housing while also having to pay for the use of the farm's electricity, sanitation, and water systems. This situation makes farm workers feel even more powerless and dependent on their employers. (Prince, 2004).

When these farm workers organised collectively there were conflicting ideas from on-farm permanent workers regarding the identities of the striking farm labourers. Eriksson (2017) state that some farmers, managers, and foremen referred to the protesters as ‘newcomers’ and ‘foreign element’ claiming that the protesters represented something unfamiliar and were identified as not ‘real’ farm workers. The paternalist construction is not just an institution that creates dependency on farm owners for farm workers’ essential needs, but it is an institution that establishes a deep ‘organic and hierarchical’ conception of the relationship between the farmer and farm workers (Du Toit, 1993). This results in employment relationships that are more difficult to distinguish from larger social relationships than they could be in settlement life. Henceforth, protestors were not considered as ‘real’ farm workers. Furthermore, it is important to note that the division amongst farm workers are constructed by their race, gender, immigration status as well as their employment status (see Wilderman, 2015).

This division amongst farm workers are not only constructed by their race, employment status or gender but also on how the traditional paternalist discourse made on-farms workers identify themselves. The farmworkers who stayed on-farm formed part of the “farm family” and threats that came to the ‘farm family’ comes from outsiders who are not considered part of the ‘farm family’. In essences, on-farm workers had no voice all they needed was to have the same interest as the farmers (White, 2010). They were considered as children whose opinion doesn’t count but only must do what they were being told (du Toit, 1993). Additionally, both on- and off-farm workers are more conscious of their rights nowadays, yet there is a definite difference between these two kinds of workers. For instance, even while on-farm workers are aware of their rights, they discover that pursuing them can be risky and that maintaining a patronage relationship may be just as crucial. However, since off-farm workers are not obligated to the farms and their relationship is transactional, meaning they depend on their wages rather than the farmers for their survival, their demands are more likely to be centered on inequality in outcomes and rights rather than on the peace and benefits provided by the farmers (Du Toit, 2014).

In essence, the division amongst permanent farm labourers who relatively enjoy a better position, and seasonal or casual labourers who commonly have a lower standard, sometimes feel threaten by each other instead of a common fight against their employers. Therefore, is it important to understand how the paternalist discourse characterised the identities and experiences of farm workers in the present day. Since paternalism still exists today in various forms, it serves as a "palimpsest in which labour relationships are regulated concurrently by

both formal codes of legislation and the interpersonal connections and implicit contracts of paternalist practice." (Ewert and Du Toit, 2005: 325). Workers who live permanently on farms profit from fair trade, shared decision-making, and equity sharing, whereas others who live off farms do not receive these benefits and are only considered temporary employees. This situation is known as "ethnic corporatism." (Ewert and Hamman, 1996; Webb, 2017).

Thus, the above highlights the general issues that is experienced by farm workers especially the precarious position that off-farm seasonal labourers as well as on-farm permanent workers occupy. It also illustrates how the paternalistic discourse has left a divide between permanent and seasonal workers, in terms of their employment status but also how they identify themselves. The above also confirms how paternalistic practices made it difficult for farm labourers to join trade unions but also how it killed collective action. Further it indicates that during the De Doorns uprising in late 2012 to early 2013 how farm workers engage in collective action but also how permanent workers questioned the identity of the farm workers who participated in the protest.

1.2. Relevance and purpose of the study:

Literature shows that with the political transformation after 1994 there has been an exacerbation in externalised and casualised labour, in South Africa (Wilderman, 2015; Visser, 2016; Eriksson, 2017 & Webb, 2017). Externalised labour refers when the farmers do not employ the workers directly but rather use contractors or labour brokers (Theron, 2005), whereas casualised labour is the transformation of employment from permanent to seasonal or temporary labour. The difference between externalised and casualised labour is the employer and employee do not have a direct working relationship. Instead, the farm enters into a contract with a third party, who is then tasked with hiring workers for the farm (Theron, 2005). With this unstable nature of employment trade unions have struggled to organise farm workers.

According to an article by Andrews (2021) due to paternalistic labour relations, lack of organisation, and isolation from both the apartheid and current ANC governments, farm workers continue to be among the lowest paid workers in South Africa. During the 2012- 2013 De Doorns farm workers strike in the Western Cape, attention was drawn to the struggles of security, low wages and decent working conditions that farm workers face daily. Post the De Doorns strikes farm workers still experienced violations of their labour rights (Devereux, 2020). Even though workers have illuminated their working and living conditions, trade unions, government officials and farmers have failed to address the conditions of farm workers.

Before the De Doorns strike in 2012-2013 farm workers experienced a range of challenges which prohibited trade unions from organising seasonal and permanent farmworkers. The fragility of workers, opposition from employers, and a widespread culture of subordination and control were some of these challenges, especially for those workers who lived on the farms and were dependent on the farm owners for food, shelter, and other necessities. Another barrier to organising was the precarious nature of seasonal employees and the distance between farms where permanent workers lived, which hampered linkages between various groups of farm workers.

Most of the work done by scholars on farm workers have been focused on the restructuring of the workforce and the living arrangements since it is viewed as the most important issue for farm workers and the traditional vehicles of resistance such as trade unions (Du Toit & Ally, 2003; Ewert and Du Toit, 2005; White, 2010; Du Toit, 2014; Webb, 2016 & 2017; Visser, 2016; Wilderman, 2015 & 2016; Eriksson, 2017; Devereux, 2020). The high levels of seasonal farm workers and low levels of trade union density show why this is the case. This study is important because it may help us understand if there have been successes in addressing the challenges that farm workers have faced before the strike in 2012-2013 and if there has been a change in how traditional trade unions organise seasonal and permanent farm workers. It provides a chance to examine the trends in organising amongst permanent, seasonal, and migrant farmworkers post the De Doorns uprising in 2012/2013 in the Western Cape province of South Africa.

This research brings a focus on two aspects; the role trade unions have played to organising permanent, seasonal, and migrant farmworkers collectively in the 10 years post the uprising and how the diversity between permanent, seasonal, and migrant farmworkers impacts their organising. Therefore, the study focuses on how organising has changed for seasonal and permanent farmworkers in the Western Cape province.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to investigate whether post the De Doorns farm workers strike in 2012-2013 if there has been a change in organising between seasonal and permanent farm workers. To help the attainment of this objective, the following specific objectives were set:

- To identify how traditional trade unions have changed the challenges which barred seasonal and permanent farm workers previously to organise collectively.

- To help identify where trade unions can improve to organise seasonal off-farms and permanent on-farm workers collectively.
- To investigate whether there has been a change in how seasonal and permanent farm workers identify when they organise.

1.3.1. Research Question (s):

- Post the De Doorns strike in 2012/13, how has organising changed for seasonal and permanent farm workers in the Western Cape?

1.3.2. Sub-research questions

- In what ways and to what extent has the De Doorns strike action enhanced farmworker struggles for workplace and socio-economic rights?
- What are the impediments to the collective organisation facing farmworkers in De Doorns wine farms?
- How have farmers responded to the farmworkers agitation for workplace rights following the De Doorns?

1.4. Outline of the research report

This research report is laid out in the following sections. Chapter one provides a background to the research problem, relevance and purpose of the study, objectives of the study and the overall research question. Chapter two is the literature reviewed and relevant conceptual framework used to analyse the data. Chapter three is the research methodology, where I explain how I gathered the data and interpreted it to address the research question. Chapter four is a combination of the findings and the analysis section. Chapter five is the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2

2. Literature Review and Conceptual frameworks

2.1.1. *The double edge impact of the political transformation on farm workers*

Farm workers were not included in the laws governing labor relations and favoring farmers under the apartheid system. Because farm labourers were not covered by labor laws during the apartheid era, forced labor was frequently used by them (Webb, 2017). Farm workers had little choice in how they lived their life since farmers controlled them due to paternalism (Visser, 2016). Their alternatives were further limited by their low cash pay and the solitude that most farm workers experienced. Farm workers had limited room for individual or collective bargaining with bosses.

However, the post-apartheid government implemented legislations which aimed at protecting vulnerable workers especially farm workers which were disadvantage during the apartheid government (Webb, 2017). Therefore, the ANC government eliminated many of the safeguards, regulations, and subsidies that had protected white commercial farmers. Ewert & du Toit (2005) states that the following legislation are the most crucial components that apply to farm workers. These legislations included: the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1998, which outlined conditions of work, hours, maternity leave and overtime pay; the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, which extended the right to organise and strike to farm workers; the Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997, which provided farm workers with protections and legal resource in the case of evictions; and, in 2003, a Sectoral Wage Determination that provided a minimum wage level for all agricultural workers (Ewert & du Toit, 2005).

While these rights have been important triumphs for farm workers, it has come with a double edge. Although the paternalist labor management style has been considerably affected by these labor regulations, it has not undergone a dramatic change (Ewert & du Toit, 2005). With farm workers now being protected and recognised by the post-apartheid legislation have in fact come with a price. As a result, in the Western Cape, the majority of agricultural employees live off-farm, and more than half of those employed on fruit and wine farms are currently temporary or seasonal. (Human Rights Watch Report, 2011). The FARE (2013) report states that the ratio of seasonal to permanent workers in the workforce increased around the time of the farm workers' strike, accounting for around 80 percent seasonal to 20 percent permanent workers. Which makes farm workers even more vulnerable and marginalised because farmers are shifting their workforce to seasonal employment by exacerbating casualised and externalised labour. The

term "casualization" describes direct employment that is irregular because it is part-time or temporary. In the case of indirect or triangular employment, where employees are frequently hired on a temporary basis but through an intermediary or service provider, the employment contract between a core business and its employees is replaced by a commercial contract with an intermediary or service provider (labour broker) (Theron, 2011; du Toit & Ally, 2003).

The political transformation, as Webb (2017) argues, has resulted in farm workers experiencing massive farm evictions to informal settlements and high levels of unemployment. Which have an opposite effect of what the legislative initially aimed to have achieved. According to Devereux (2020), a combination of "the law of unintended consequences" and inadequate enforcement of these laws and regulations has made farm workers more vulnerable than before. The goal of the changes made to the workforce and living arrangements is to reduce labor expenses by more aggressively modifying the workforce size depending on seasonal needs and shielding the farm owner from new obligations imposed by employment and tenant rights legislation. The following section will highlight several instances of how these rights had a dual effect on farm workers' life.

Firstly, the Tenure Security legislation which aimed at preventing the eviction of farm workers from farms. But because "the Act established mechanisms that landowners should follow in the case of an eviction, hence it helped rather than prevented evictions," farmers have used the Extension of Security of Tenure (ESTA) for purposes other than those for which it was intended" (Devereux, 2020). According to a study done by Wegerif et al (2005) it was found that more farm workers and farm dwellers were evicted from farms after the democracy of South Africa than during the apartheid era of South Africa. The ESTA therefore can be criticized for failing to protect farm workers from the illegal evictions they face on commercial farms in the Western Cape. Therefore, it was asserted that recent legislative modifications had been made to better support commercial farmers' interests than those of farm workers.

The recent introduction of the national minimum wage as of January 2019 is set at a higher rate than the Sectoral Determination salary for agricultural workers, according to Devereux (2020), and farmers may file a petition to be excluded from paying the minimum wage required by law. Furthermore, the Labour Relations Act of 1995, which grants farm workers the explicit right to strike and use mediation services, was the first feasible legal industrial framework for agricultural workers (Ewert & du Toit, 2005). Less than 10 percent of the permanent workforce is unionised, while unionisation has been gradual and piecemeal in most rural areas of the Western Cape. The farmers who hire workers vehemently oppose central bargaining, there are

few union resources available because of the distance between farms, and on-farm workers are isolated, all of which contribute to the sluggish unionization of farm workers (Ewert & du Toit, 2005). However, paternalistic practices are so deeply rooted in the identities of on-farm workers, that even being aware of their rights they would rather maintain a patronage relationship with the farmers instead of insisting on their rights (Ewert & du Toit, 2005). According to Wilderman (2015), tenancy on farms is linked to employment, which gives farmers a lot of control over farm workers and causes them constantly dread eviction despite the existence of rules intended to prevent abuse.

It is crucial to take into account that the removal of non-wage benefits as a result of the "racialized paternalism" that was once practiced on farms and replaced with legally protected labour rights. As farmers employ tactics to circumvent legislation and provide as little as possible to their workforce, the formally provided services by these farmers have not been replaced. The labour relations that exist on farms extends beyond the wage-level and involve a broad range of concerns around housing, transport, education, and services (Webb, 2017). Because on-site farm workers are dependent on the farmers for their lives and livelihoods this has made it difficult for workers to engage in any form of overt resistance. The persistence of the paternalist labour relations on farms makes organising incredibly challenging for both on-farm permanent and off-farm seasonal workers. Therefore, it could be argued that why the political transformation could be seen a double edge because it was supposed to be beneficial to the farmworkers, but it is rather a disadvantage for farmworkers.

2.1.2. The effect of paternalistic farm relations on organising

Du Toit & Ally (2003) states that even with the pressures placed on agriculture with the implementation of new legislation, paternalism is far from being destroyed it has simply modified and adapted over time (Ewert, & Hamman, 1999). The paternalistic relationship is increasingly being used to maintain the loyalty of a much smaller group of privileged, skilled, and predominantly coloured farm workers rather than a large pool of cheap, readily available labour (Du Toit & Ally, 2003). However, according to the traditional paternalist discourse, such loyalty is not bought with higher pay but rather with non-wage benefits, such as giving permanent employees access to a provident fund or funeral fund, on-farm housing, subsidized energy costs, access to crèches and vegetable gardens, and on-farm clinics. (Visser & Ferrer, 2015). Farmers have bind on-farm workers to the farm with non-wage benefits that ensures their continued loyalty and employment in return.

While the technique of offering non-wage perks may resemble attempts made in 1976 to keep workers during a labor shortage, the current goal is to keep a skilled, devoted, and permanent labor force that is familiar with the farm set-up and its business (Visser, 2016). This layer of permanent farm workers is significant because it serves as a barrier between management and a far bigger group of unsatisfied off-farm, seasonal workers. Permanent employees serve as the farmer's "eyes and ears" to detect dangers to his commercial interests as well as to the physical safety of his family in the event of farm attacks (Visser, 2016). The types of perks offered to these long-term farm workers also reveal how paternalism has altered over time. Visser (2016) provides the example that, in contrast to the 1976 strategy of providing "dop" to psychologically enslave workers, current farmers are more likely to send alcoholic permanent for rehabilitation and arrange for a social worker to aid their families. Therefore, according to Visser (2016), having skilled farm workers rather than alcoholics now serves the farmer's best interests.

The study by Mercia Andrews (2021) demonstrates how permanent on-farm workers are challenged for wanting to join unions. Because of the low wages which farm workers receive, it forced workers to buy food on credit at the farm shop or take loans from the farmer to provide for their families which makes them dependent on the farmer. This than cause a cycle of "servitude and indebtedness" as Andrews put it (2021). The dependence of farm workers on the farmers leaves workers vulnerable because they know that if they resist their living and working conditions in anyway, it could jeopardize their relationship with the farmer. This is one of the reasons why the trade union density is so low on farms because of the role non-wage benefits play on the lives of workers. Farm workers especially on-site permanent workers remain subservient to the farmers. Their dependence to the farmer will be endangered if they would join a trade union. This than means that these workers would rather endure the violation of their rights because they fear that they might lose the benefits that comes with being subservient to the farmers.

Another challenge that farmworkers face is that both on- and off-farm workers have been poorly serviced by trade unions, and the trends towards more flexible labour arrangement have created even new challenges for organising (Webb, 2016). The fact that farmers deliberately discourage or forbid farm workers from joining a union, which is against the law, may help to explain the exceptionally low level of union presentation among these workers. However, Union leaders may also point to the difficulties of accessing farms as well as the dispersed location of farms as reasons why they find recruiting farm workers to be "tough and expensive."

Union leaders took center stage in the media during the 2012–2013 farm worker strike, frequently taking credit for organising farm workers. However, trade unions played a minor role in the lives of the majority of farm workers both before and after the strike (Eriksson, 2017). According to Wilderman (2015), local 'coordinating units' and seasonal workers and not trade unions were responsible for starting the strike. However, the question must be raised: how would the lives of farmworkers been if the post-apartheid government maintained regulatory support to farmers and at the same time extend its raft of protective legislation to farm workers?

While South Africa's overall union density the proportion of workers who are members of a union hovers at 30%, agricultural laborers are still largely unorganised. Additionally, the percentage of organised agricultural workers nationwide was between three and ten percent prior to the 2012 farm worker uprising (Mompoti, 2011). The consensus is that between three and five percent of farm workers in the Western Cape belong to a union, despite different studies suggesting varying percentages (Wilderman, 2016). Furthermore, despite COSATU, the largest trade union federation, and its farm work affiliate FAWU discussing the urgent need to organize farm workers, little has been accomplished to date (Human Rights Watch Report, 2011; Mompoti, 2011; Webb, 2017; Devereux, 2020). It is crucial to remember that various types of organisations, including non-governmental organisations, women-led trade unions, community-based organisations, and immigrant rights organisations, have participated in the organisation of agricultural workers into smaller, independent trade unions. Before the historic farm workers' strike, none of these organisations BAWUSA, CSAAWU, FAWU, and Sikhula Sonke, to name a few were able to attract a sizable membership or carry out sizable collective action (Wilderman, 2016).

2.1.3. The divide between permanent and seasonal farm workers

Although there has always been a big difference between the working conditions for seasonal and permanent employees, Ewert and Du Toit (2005: 317) discuss a "deepening division" between the seasonal, casual, and contract workers and "a core of workers who manage to hold on to permanent employment, but often still living on the farm and ensnared in the web of paternalism. Which is a rural lumpen proletariat who frequently lives in rural, peri-urban, or urban shanty settlements. The workplace appears to have been more stratified through time as well as this divide appearing to have gotten worse. According to Theron (2010: 20), there are three lines that separate employees into different categories: those who reside on farms and those who reside off farms, those who are employed directly by the farmers versus those who

are hired through labor brokers. Additionally, it could be important to distinguish between workers hired on a permanent basis by a labour broker and those who are merely employed on a "casual" basis by the broker. This divide between farm workers has a significant influence on how they organise collectively.

This divide between permanent and seasonal workers were intensified by the fact that permanent workers enjoyed the non-wage benefits they receive from farmers. While seasonal workers' relationship to the farms is only considered to be transactional and for this reason these workers do not share the same benefits as permanent workers (Wilderman, 2015; Webb, 2017). On farms in the Western Cape, the paternalistic power dynamic used to be so pervasive that farmers were seen as both the primary providers for the farm "family," which included farm workers, and the ones who had the final say over everyone who lived on their land. (du Toit, 1993; Wilderman, 2015). Permanent on-farm workers were trapped in the web of paternalism, but they 'benefit' from stable employment and housing compared to seasonal and casual workers who often resided off-farm in rural areas and victims of unstable employment. The institutions and arrangements of this social formation not only made the farm worker vulnerable and dependent on him for housing, transportation, water, and other necessities, but they also ingrained the relationship of hierarchy and dominance into the identities of both the farm owner and the farm workers (Ewert & Du Toit, 2005; Nkosi & Webster, 2012).

Aside from the disparity in protection provided by labor laws between seasonal and permanent farm laborers, permanent workers are also better paid. Legislation successfully encourages farmers to hire more seasonal labor because they give farmers greater flexibility and because seasonal workers are less protected by the law. For example, hourly pay for seasonal employees would transfer the risk of a work halt due to adverse weather to the employee. Certain provisions of the Sectoral wage determination allow opportunity for interpretation due to a lack of clarity, which disadvantages workers. For instance, some farmers contend that rather than being able to leave on a pro rata basis, seasonal workers only have the right to quit after working for the same employer for more than four months continuously. In the context of commercial agriculture, this means that certain farm laborers receive better or worse treatment than others. Additionally, labor policy has opened up legal flexibility by designating labor brokers as the employers of workers supplied to customers, allowing the true employer to externalise and reorganise the employment relationship (Theron, 2009). There are no particular accommodations made to address the effects of agricultural labor proxies in the sectoral determination (Theron, 2009).

Despite all the progressive regulations that were put in place after 1994, farm workers are nonetheless more vulnerable than before. There is no intention here to criticize the necessary and long overdue pro-worker legislation. Instead, trade unions need to do more to hold farmers and the government accountable for their refusal to comply, their inability to enforce compliance, and their failure to do so. Devereux (2020) argues that the progressive labour laws which were absent during apartheid changed in the late 1990's when pro-poor labour laws were introduced. However, despite 20 years of democracy, farm owners' non-compliance is still the norm rather than the exception (Devereux, 2020).

Paternalism presents such major impediments to trade unions it is indicative because most trade unions have concentrated their organising efforts on permanent farm workers residing on farm (Webb, 2016). Whereas seasonal off-farm workers are being left behind by trade unions because of their vulnerable employment status. It was noted that most trade unions are using a model of organising that are completely unsuitable for the agriculture sector (Webb, 2016). It is argued that organising female workers, who are much more common in the seasonal and externalized workforce, should take precedence over organising permanent, full-time, on-farm, and mostly male workers (Webb, 2016). The fact that trade unions are restricting their organisation to only permanent farm workers, they are inadvertently furthering the divide between permanent and seasonal workers.

2.1.4. The restructuring of agriculture labour and farm worker's identity

After the restructuring of agriculture labour in the Western Cape farm workers insecurity and vulnerability have intensified, with more workers especially women being employed on farms on a seasonal or casual basis (Webb, 2016 & 2017; Wilderman, 2015). As a result, the gap between "core" or permanent employees and those who were let go by externalization and casualization widened. As a result, with the shift to recruiting seasonal workers off farm, room has opened up for labour brokers to serve as intermediates. Seasonal employment has always been unpredictable because workers are not always guaranteed a job on the same farm or anywhere else the following season. However, workers are now more vulnerable to instability because of labour broking.

The connection between farmers and farm workers has deteriorated as a result of the restructuring, with mixed results. The benefits of "racialized paternalism," such as steady employment, farm housing, and a variety of informal negotiated goods and services, such food and transportation, have been lost to evicted and casualized employees, according to Bolt

(2017). On the other hand, farmers no longer have the control they once did over the employees who resided on their farms. Thus, the shift in the workforce toward more migrant, seasonal, and off-farm labour is transforming the physical landscape of farming communities while breaking some of the fundamental linkages to the paternalistic social edifice. Contrary to most common belief, workers are more susceptible and transitory as a result of global trends toward a more "flexible" workforce, making it more challenging to organise collectively. According to Wilderman (2015), the labour shift, which in many ways aggravated the grievances and precarity brought on by poverty, unemployment, and inequality, made organising and opposition easier in this situation.

The fact the seasonal farm workers were at the fore front of the De Doorns 2012 strike is an example of how the transformation has led these workers to resist against their deprived living and working conditions. The opportunity for resistance presented by this transition is best summed up by the farmers' dismissive statement that "Seasonality caused this "disaster" all those new people sitting up there in those settlements which just keep getting bigger and bigger with nothing to do for much of the year," (Wilderman, 2015). They believed that the growth of "seasonality," "settlements," and "new people" reshaped the dynamic interactions between farmworkers and farm owners, the shifting spatial configuration of rural communities, and the shifting demographics of the workforce (Wilderman, 2016). Because they lacked access to more traditional vehicles of resistance like trade unions or other institutional structures during the uprising, farmworkers and their allies relied, at least initially, on moral urgency, alternative mobilizing structures, and a variety of sources of power. This is true even though some of the main moral and physical barriers to collective action are dissolving (Wilderman, 2015 & 2016).

This transformation of the workforce also highlights how the identities of the farm workers are weakened. Off-farm employees are now less beholden to paternalistic employers, and they presumably have better access to a variety of government programs. Living in townships has also lessened the isolation that farmworkers once experienced, enabling for the emergence of new types of farmworker organisation, as was shown in the De Doorns 2012 strike (Wilderman, 2015). Now that the organisation of work on the commercial farms in the Western Cape changed in fundamental way, the identities of farm workers have fragmented too. As Eriksson (2017) state that this is because many marginalised rural people are engaging in farm work as just one livelihood strategy among others. Therefore, the histories of belonging or not in commercial agricultural areas have also developed diverse attachments to and opportunities for claiming "farm workers" as an identity.

With the massive farm evictions of farm workers to off-farm housing dismantled some of the problematic and uneven forms of paternalistic treatment, however, it also eliminated the forms of 'social protection' that on-farm workers could draw on (Eriksson, 2017). The fact that farm workers are residing off-farm and engage in other forms of livelihood strategies they are unbecoming as a farm worker. Due to the fact that the identity of the farm worker is politically imposed, claimed, rejected, negotiated, or transcended in order to serve various interests and imaginaries (Bolt, 2017). With this in mind, it becomes easy to contest this identity if workers were no longer solely rooted in the farm life. This is evident with the restructuring of agriculture labour and with the De Doorns strike in 2012-2013. With the exacerbation of externalised and casualised labour farm workers had complex ways in which they relate to farm work. Permanent workers who reside on-farm and whose social identities were firmly rooted in farm life would claim the farm worker identity (Eriksson, 2017). And seasonal workers and those who were once permanent on-farm workers no longer relate to farm work only, but their identities have become fluid. This produces highly varied attachments to and abilities of making claims based on, a farm worker identity. It is important to understand how farm workers identifies influences their collective organisation.

2.1.5. Continuation of barriers to collective organising

By more aggressively modifying the workforce's size in response to seasonal needs and shielding the farm owner from additional obligations imposed by employment and tenant rights legislation, this change in the workforce and housing arrangements was intended to reduce labor expenses. (Visser, 2016; Webb, 2017). Additionally, many households in settlement communities are only related to farming for a portion of the year due to the rising reliance on seasonal rather than permanent labor, which weakens their sense of self as "farm workers" during the other seasons. (Du Toit, 2014). The restructuring of the workforce and spatial living arrangements, which in some ways increases economic insecurity and amplifies worker vulnerability, is also dismantling some of the main social control mechanisms and barriers to collective resistance, particularly paternalism and isolation.

In contrast to harmony and appreciation of the "gifts" of the farm owner, seasonal, off-farm, and migrant workers are more likely to make demands that center on inequality in results and rights. As a result of the workforce transformation, farm owners are no longer fulfilling the role as landlords, service providers, and in some cases even permanent employers. The connections and histories that shaped paternalism's identities, institutions, and norms are significantly diminished. (Du Toit, 2014). Given this, it was not surprising that the strike and uprising action

in the De Doorns region in 2012 were attributed to the seasonal, off-farm workers. Because the majority were seasonal and potential seasonal employees, unemployed workers, and residents of rural communities, the main leadership or the more aggressive leadership came from seasonal workers rather than permanent workers (Eriksson, 2017). Seasonal workers who live in rural settlements depend on their earnings as well as the supply of municipal services and social handouts, as opposed to on-farm labour, whose existence depends on a variety of services given by the farmer. Therefore, the main reason for the strike was the farm workers' demand for a higher wage, which was made mostly by the seasonal workers. Seasonal workers must make purchases at supermarkets, take a taxi into the city, and pay for water and electricity, all of which are growing more expensive, as they are regular employees who do not receive special treatment from farms. They also must cover these costs. Farmworkers are substantially less susceptible to the power and connection dynamics that lead to paternalistic social construction, and their interactions with farms and farmers are significantly more transactional.

Additionally, the temporary nature of seasonal employment and the concentration of a sizable workforce in settlement settlements are dismantling isolation and impediments to cooperation and the open exchange of grievances. This explains why the settlement communities served as the centers of action and organisation for the protests while also forming and growing unofficial networks and connections (Webb, 2016). Where employees and the larger community might unite over a common set of frustrations relating to injustice and poverty. Hence, the “farm workers strike” was to some extent an unexpected moment of unity when thousands of workers and rural farm dwellers come together and demanded for a pay of R 150 per day (Wilderman, 2015; Eriksson, 2017). However, it was also a moment when the significant diversity among farm workers was revealed. When there were conflicting ideas regarding who a ‘real’ farmworker was and who could speak on their behalf. Seasonal farmworkers were not considered as ‘real’ farm workers because they serviced a different interest which was conflicting to the interest of the farm. Off-farm workers are more able to organise and advocate for their rights without worrying about losing their employment or homes. It is no surprise that seasonal workers from De Doorns and other municipalities were the principal organizers of the strike in 2012–2013. More women than men, Africans than people of color, residents of rural areas than farms, and seasonal workers than permanent workers made up most of the strike organizers. (Eriksson, 2017).

While trade union organisers frequently voiced worries about their capacity to reach a large number of employees with little resources, this living pattern of seasonal workers living off-farms also made organising viable without the need for major expenditures (Webb, 2017). It is more conceivable and possible that seasonal workers and rural dwellers may experience similar battles as the identities and complaints of these groups grow more intertwined, especially given the more fluid and transient nature of employment. This is because changing spatial arrangements have made it possible to engage people in rural settlements other than just farm workers, such as the unemployed, those working but not on farms, young people, and the elderly (Wilderman, 2015). In other words, the large number of farm workers living off-farm is reshaping the physical landscape of farming communities by releasing some of the key constraints imposed by the paternalistic social construction. Because of the increased grievances and precarity these workers share because of poverty, unemployment, and inequality, the workforce's change to more casualised and externalised labour made organising and resistance more feasible (Wilderman, 2015). Additionally, it produces a flexible workforce, which makes organising large-scale protests more difficult because agricultural workers are flimsier and more transient.

The fact that seasonal workers were the ones who initiated the strike in 2012-2013 is an indication that permanent farm workers are still trapped in the legacy of paternalism. Because permanent on farm workers are still so dependent on the framers for their livelihoods, they fear that confronting the racial structures on farms would negatively affect their situation. Ewert & du Toit (2005) states that paternalistic practices are so deeply rooted in the identities of on-farm workers, that even being aware of their rights they would rather maintain a patronage relationship with the farmers instead of insisting on their rights. This is confirmed by the study Mercia Andrews conducted in 2021, which highlights how on-farm workers would rather remain unorganised than to join a trade union because they can buy on credit or take loans from the farmer as a means to provide for their families. And this is one of the reasons why the union presentation among these workers in the agriculture sector remains so low. Moreover, during and after the farm workers strike it became evident that through gradual exclusion of some categories of workers from representation of protesting farm workers. The differentiation between groups of workers linked to power hierarchies of race, nationality and gender construct some farm workers as core to the farm and its progress, while others are considered foreign and disposable (Eriksson, 2017).

While with the transformation of the workforce and living arrangements some of the key impediments to collective action were broken down which were created by the paternalistic practices. However, these impediments to collective action were not destroyed completely because on-farm workers were still trapped in the paternalistic social construction. mainly, because there is still a divide between seasonal and permanent farm workers. The De Doorns farm workers strike was a clear indication of how farm workers identify, and how that identity influences their collective organisation. On the other hand, the traditional vehicle of resistance like trade unions have lacked to organise farm workers because of the barriers which paternalism created. Even in the post-apartheid regime these barriers continue to exist because farm workers have little access to the traditional vehicles of resistance and other institutional structures. Moreover, with farmers now shifting more to seasonal employment is creating another barrier to seasonal workers mainly because their employment is unstable and flexible. Meaning that paternalistic practices are still present but operates in a different form and it continues to remain a barrier to collective organisation among farm workers.

The above literature review highlights the impediments which farm workers faced when organising collectively. It also illustrates how farm workers' organisation is compromised because of the continuous paternalistic practices present on farms especially in the Western Cape. The literature review above reveals some of the reasons why permanent farm workers refrain from joining trade unions because of how it will endanger their relationship as well their employment with the farmers. Moreover, scholars have conducted mostly research on the restructuring of the workforce and the living arrangements, and the implication it has on trade unions and their density in the agriculture sector. Literature have also highlighted how traditional trade unions understand the practice of paternalism continues to remain a barrier in the contemporary moment. However, further research is required to help understand how trade unions have shifted traditional ways of organising farm workers given the changing nature of their employment. Part of what this study seeks to do is engage on an interesting journey to how post the De Doorns strike in 2012/2013 farm worker organisation has changed.

This research paper primarily focuses on the Western Cape, South African farms context. However, the following articles looks at agriculture from the American contexts: Garcia, M. (2016). Cesar Chavez and the united farm workers movement. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*. García, M. T. (2012). Trampling Out the Vintage: Cesar Chavez and the Two Souls of the United Farm Workers.

2.2. Conceptual frameworks

2.2.1. *Paternalism*

Paternalism is the idea that a state or an individual should intervene in another person's affairs against their will on the grounds that the person being interfered with would benefit or be safe from danger (Dworkin,1972). The author is attempting to demonstrate how paternalism develops in relation to governmental limits. Dworkin (1972) argues that an action that limits another's freedom or performed without the consent of the subject and be performed with a beneficial intent to be considered paternalistic. The agriculture sector in South Africa has historically operated under the paternalistic practices where the farmers had authority over farm workers. The farmer viewed himself as the father figure and the workers as children (White, 2010). The author is attempting to demonstrate how paternalism develops in relation to governmental limits. Following the end of apartheid, the state entered farm labour relations, which led to workers organising and becoming aware of their rights under the new laws, eroding paternalism (Webb, 2017). Paternalism, however, still exists in a number of forms. It functions as a "palimpsest in which employment connections are simultaneously managed by both formal legal regulations and the interpersonal ties and implicit contracts of paternalist practice" (Ewert and Du Toit, 2005: 325). This concept is significant when focusing on liberty and autonomy of farm workers who are marginalised and historically from oppressed backgrounds.

According to Ewert and Du Toit (2005) farmers' paternalist power has been resisted by a paternalist state, which has also imposed additional restrictions on their ability to manage the lives of their workers. These modifications provide a significant legal and formal threat to the established agricultural paternalism. Consequently, the paternalistic state only replaces the paternalistic farmer; yet paternalism has "simply evolved and adapted itself over time" and is far from being destroyed by the forces (Du Toit & Ally 2003, p 3, 22, 50; Theron, 2009). Instead of committing a large pool of readily accessible and inexpensive labour to the farm, the paternalist relationship is increasingly used to win the loyalty of a much smaller population.

This concept will prove valuable to the proposed research as it will allow understanding in terms of how the history of paternalism are still embedded in the identities of farm workers. Paternalism will reveal how the traditional paternalistic practices influenced the division between seasonal and permanent farm workers.

2.2.2. *Precarity*

Judith Butler (2004) argues that people who are subject to economic uncertainty, injury, violence, and forced migration are considered precarious. She continues by stating that some lives and bodies are accorded societal significance while others are denied it. Additionally, some lives and bodies are protected while others are not (Butler, 2004). Precarity is a term frequently used to characterise the shift from steady, full-time employment to a flexible labour market. The labour restructuring in the agriculture sector where farmers are shifting to casualised and externalised labour resulted that farm workers have become more precarious (Du Toit & Ally, 2003). Standing (2015) refers to precarious employees as the "precariat," and they have spread throughout the world, marking a tragic collapse in the power of labour and other oppressed groups fighting for economic and social justice. Because of their nature of employment, seasonal farmworkers endure unpredictability, a lack of protection, insecurity, and social or economic fragility, which makes it challenging for traditional trade unions to organise these workers. According to Standing (2018), the mass class is the precariat, which has unstable employment, poor and inconsistent wages, and lost citizenship rights. The fact that its fears produce resentment, disease, and wrath that can serve as the foundation for "right-wing populism" is one reason why it is the new "dangerous class." Therefore, the new class will be in a strong position to become the agent of a major social transformation provided it can organise and unite to a sufficient degree around a shared identity, alternative vision, and feasible political agenda. This concept shows that weakening of trade unions because the farmworkers are either casualised or externalised contributes to precarity. Mainly because seasonal workers are not really protected by labour legislation and trade unions struggle to organise seasonal workers because their employment is unstable.

Precarity is therefore at the center of this study, which focuses on farm workers. As labour and social protections wore thin, farmers sought for more affordable and flexible employment options (Butler, 2004).

2.2.3. *Collective identity*

It is believed that collective identity is an emerging group phenomenon. Van Stekelenburg (2013) claims that collective identity is an interactive, shared description of the variety of opportunities and constraints presented by collective action. It is made by many people, and since it is constructed and negotiated through recurrent activation of the bonds that link people to groups, it must be seen as a process. Another aspect of this idea is identity strategies, which

are defined as "individual or group disclosure of identity with the aim of producing change in how individuals understand and feel about their identity, in how the group is defined in the larger culture, or in the politics of state and other institutions." (Van Stekelenburg, 2013). However, Lindell (2011) points out that in order for employees to build bridges between the various worker constituencies, they must get over their differences and create a common ground. Building a collective identity is necessary for more than modest integration to take place, according to Lindell (2010) in her article. In fact, processes of communal identity-building and the formation of sameness need to be given more emphasis in assessments of actual bridging attempts.

This research uses collective identity to argue that when the workers are united and see their shared identity and see what they have in common rather where they differ, they are better able to organise. This conceptual framework helps me to unpack how farm workers can work with their differences as permanent and seasonal workers to mobilize them effectively in order to build common ground for collective organising and power. Collective identity becomes central to the study focusing on permanent and seasonal farm labourers and the way in which they perceive each other.

CHAPTER 3

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

Discussing facts about one's livelihood is rarely an easy process, especially if it occurs in a conflict environment. The nature of the research entailed an intrusion into people's daily working lives and an inquiry into problems that could potentially result in their being laid off from employment that they sorely need if the answers given were to reach the wrong ears. Since all farm employees signed consent forms acknowledging this fact, no farmworkers' true names are included in this study.

This research adopted a qualitative case study within the qualitative paradigm, which consisted of 14 in-depth semi-structured interviews. Case study research is typically undertaken when the researcher wants to understand something deeply and in the context of real-world events or phenomena (Crowe, 2011). The case study design is an empirical technique that deeply examines a current occurrence (the "case") inside its actual environment, particularly when the distinctions between phenomenon and context may not be obvious (Yin, 2018). The case study design provided a rigorous approach for collecting and analysing data (Zach, 2006). Additionally, the case study design offered a multifaceted viewpoint that could be applied to develop a consensus understanding of the topic being researched (Remenyi et al., 2002, p.5). Case studies provide the "potential for a complete understanding of a process" as a result (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003, p.63).

The research findings emerged from the dominating themes that were detected in the raw data through the use of a descriptive inductive approach (Thomas, 2003:2). The research should not be generalized because it only includes information from a small, specific segment of the agriculture sector, even though it shows similarities to other striking scenarios in a South African setting.

3.2. Sample

For this study, there was a sample size of Fourteen (14) participants; three seasonal, three migrant and three permanent farmworkers were interviewed to gain perspective from their viewpoint. In addition, five union representatives were interviewed to gain understanding how

organising has changed since the De Doorns Strikes in 2012. The former president of BAWUSA was interviewed, two from FAWU and two farmworkers activist from Women on Farms Project (NGO). Therefore, criterion purposive sampling was used to draw samples from the target population in the De Doorns Valley in the Western Cape. Purposive sampling, according to Richards (2014), is helpful when one must swiftly contact a specific sample because the researcher already has a pre-set sample in mind. In a non-probability sampling technique known as "purposive sampling," items are picked for the sample based on the researcher's assessment (Suanders, et al, 2012).

Purposive sampling was used, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with trade union representatives, seasonal, permanent, and migrant farmworkers in De Doorns. The participants ranged from trade union representatives who were organising in farms before and after the uprising in 2012, and activists from an NGO who were farmworker at the time of the uprising. Several farmworkers were also interviewed including permanent, seasonal, and migrant farmworkers. One of the permanent workers was a former union member and one of the seasonal workers are a member of the WFP. The farmworkers worked on the farms before and after the uprising. They included locals (coloured people who historically lived in the back yards of the farmers but moved to the informal settlements), workers from outside of town from the Eastern Cape, and the foreign nationals from Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

3.2.1. Possible problems faced in the design

Bias: Being entirely objective while studying social issues is challenging for us as humans. The inherent preconceptions one might already have could have influenced the research in a biased way. These presumptions are developed based on knowledge about the subjects provided by the media or developed through social interactions and discussions. The cause of the strike is one instance in which the media presented a narrative that contained elements of truth but that was contradicted by in-depth interviews with participants. These presumptions could change how the researcher frames his or her questions and analyzes data.

However, the goal of this study was to take an idiographic approach, allowing the information provided by the respondents to generate accurate outcomes. As the researcher from Cape Town and studying at UCT, not sharing the same daily struggles as the participants of this research study, I stood at an unbiased objective position.

3.3. Data Collection

Data was collected by conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with farm labourers and

union representatives. In-depth interviewing is the most common qualitative research method as it allows the researcher to have a flexible and free-flowing interaction in which the respondent is given a good deal of leeway. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, these interviews were conducted following the covid-19 protocol. Thus, it included conducting all interviews in non-crowded, well-ventilated spaces. Both the respondents and the researcher had to maintain a physical distance while donning face masks that covered their mouths and noses. To guarantee that all relevant information was gathered, each interview was audio recorded with the interview subjects' permission. The recorded interview was manually transcribed.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data from the interviews were analysed using a data thematic approach. Because the data was addressed with some predetermined themes that were anticipated to be present in the data received, based on theory and current knowledge, a deductive approach was adopted.

Braun and Clarke (2008) broke the framework down into the following six steps:

Step 1: Familiarization

The first stage was familiarizing myself with the facts. Before analysing the data. It is critical to obtain a comprehensive overview of all the data gathered. This includes reading the text, taking initial notes while listening to the audio, transcribing the audio, and overall looking through the data to become familiar with it.

Step 2: Coding

Various phrases which were relevant and potentially interesting to the research question were highlighted. The codes made it possible to summarise the key ideas and recurring meanings in the data.

Step 3: Generating Themes

The codes which were created were examined, patterns were identified, and themes were generated.

Step 4: Reviewing Themes

This step involved making sure the themes represented the data in a usable and correct manner. To confirm that the themes were present in the data, the created themes; *The different working relationship with farmers*, *Continuous barriers to organise farmworkers*, *Barriers to organise post the uprising*, *Fear of farmworkers*, and *other forms of organising post the uprising* were compared to the data set.

Step 5: Defining and naming Themes

The themes and potential subthemes such as: *Occupations on farms, Nature of employment contracts, Challenges to a good working relationship between farmers and farm workers, Challenges to a good working relationship between worker representatives and farmers, Challenges to a good working relationship between worker representatives and farmworkers* to mention a few contained in the data were "refined and defined" in this step. The identified topics were further developed by ongoing analysis.

Step 6: Producing the report

This final step involved the use of the data that link to the themes and subthemes to write a report that answer the research question which this research asks.

3.5. Access

With farm workers being trapped in the continuous paternalistic practices it was challenging to gain access to permanent on-farm workers without putting their lives and jobs in danger. In order to gain access to the targeted respondents, a pilot study was conducted in De Doorns before the data was collected. Through the pilot study farmworkers who stayed in Stofland and De Doorns East was approached. A day before the data collection process started in De Doorns, conference hosted by Women on Farms Projects (WFP) were attended where trade unions mentioned above that organise the farm workers in the Western Cape was approached. and asked them for recommendations for union representatives that work in De Doorns. One of the farmworker activists of WFP helped the researcher connecting permanent farmworkers who stayed on the farms.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Even when the study subjects are uninformed or indifferent with ethics, it is the moral and professional responsibility of the researcher to conduct themselves ethically. Thus, all ethical principles were adhered to during the data collection process, at the writing stage. Before the interviews were conducted, the respondents were informed about the nature of the research, and all respondents gave consent to continue with the interviews.

Given the fact that three of the respondents stayed on-farm and farmers are not fond of having people who do not work on the farms speaking to workers, it was important to ensure that the researcher was discreet and acted as a visitor to ensure that it didn't cause any negative consequences for the workers staying on the farms. a farm worker activist from Women on

Farms Project who represents some workers who stay on the farms was used to connect permanent on-farm participants who were willing to participate in interviews. Respondents were not forced to participate in the study. The identity of the respondents remains anonymous. The farms are not mentioned in the research because it might jeopardize the identities of the on-farm permanent workers or even seasonal workers. The respondents were informed that the interviews were recorded, and the recording would only be used for interview accuracy, and it was ensured that it was not distributed to anyone except to the supervisor of the research.

3.7. Limitations of the study

Due to time restrictions, I could only interview the workers at a specified time or over the weekends when using a qualitative research methodology that relied on in-depth interviews with key informants.

Using non-probability sampling techniques, the sample members who provided the necessary information for the data collection were selected. As a result, judgments formed about the population may not be statistically representative of the total population.

No farmers were interviewed during this study and therefore, the information gleaned from the interviews could be biased in favor of the union representatives' and farmworkers' perceptions of the farmers.

Cross-border migrant workers might have been hesitant to take part in this study out of concern that they would be found out which can result that they lose their jobs.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present the findings of the study which are divided into two sections and discussed with reference to the aim of the study, which was to determine how organising has changed for permanent, seasonal, and migrant farmworkers post the De Doorns uprising in 2012-2013. The first section presents the demographic information of all participants. The second section demonstrates the different working relationships that exist between the farmers, farmworkers, and worker representatives. It goes further to demonstrate the continuous barriers worker representatives face even after the De Doorns uprising in 2012-2013 and how it affects organising farmworkers. The findings help us to understand what factors influence the different working relationships which exist between the farmers, farmworkers, and the worker representatives. The findings also help us to understand how fear, intimidations, and precarity are embedded in workers which results in difficulty for worker representatives to organise farmworkers in De Doorns. The findings go on to highlight that after the uprising in 2012-2013 the government have implemented a Farm Workers Forum which have not been of services to the farmworkers. I argue that, after 10 years there has been no real change in how farm workers organise, and I present evidence to this effect. The continued barrier from the past haunts the present day and influences how farmworkers organise. Further on, I demonstrate that farmworkers are still divided because of the role farmers play in the relationship between workers, therefore farmworker struggle to build a collective identity.

4.2. Background of the participants

Table 1 below summarises the demographics of all the research participants to give a sense of who the participants of this study were.

Table 1: Summary of farmworkers general information

<u>Participant no.</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Type of farm</u>	<u>Unionised</u>	<u>Period of work</u>	<u>Citizenship</u>	<u>Residence</u>	<u>Employment status</u>	<u>Gender</u>
Emma	General worker	Wine farm	Not unionised	1981-Present	South African	On-farm De Doorns	Permanent farmworker	Female
Mary	General worker	Wine farm	Not unionised	1991-present	South African	De Doorns East	Permanent farmworker	Female
Joanne	General worker	Wine farm	Not unionised (former union member)	1985-present	South African	Stofland De Doorns	Permanent farmworker	Female
Sarah	General worker	Wine farm	Member of WFP	1975-Present	South African	Stofland De Doorns	Seasonal farmworker	Female
Elena	General worker	Wine farm	Not unionised	2006-Present	South African	De Doorns East	Seasonal farmworker	Female
Jenny	General worker	Wine farm	Not unionised	1991-Present	South African	De Doorns East	Seasonal farmworker	Female
Max	General worker	Wine farm	Not unionised	2008-Present	Mosotho	Stofland De Doorns	Seasonal farmworker	Male
Isak	Waterman	Wine farm	Not unionised	2007-present	Zimbabwean	On-farm De Doorns	Seasonal farmworker	Male
Dean	General worker	Wine farm	Not unionised	2009-present	Zimbabwean	On-farm De Doorns	Permanent farmworker	Male

4.2.1. Occupations on farms

All the participants were general workers whose tasks varied every day from cleaning the vineyards, trimming grapes, and or operating farm machinery. Machines were mainly operated by men while women did most of the cleaning. In the farming ranks, general workers form part of the middle tier. Women made up the majority of the study's participants. However, research on farmworkers reveals that there are more men than women who work on farms (Eriksson, 2017;). The main reason why the participants for the study were women, the NGO that connected me with employees, the simplicity of approaching women, and their willingness all contributed to the high proportion of women in my sample.

From the data obtained, eight of the farmworkers indicated that they have been working as general workers and one of the participants indicated that he has been working as a waterman for 14 years. Overall, three of the farmworkers who had been working on the farms for years indicated that at some stage of their employment they have fulfilled the role of supervisors and team leaders to workers who had less work experience in farm work. However, their job descriptions were that of general farmworkers.

4.2.2. Nature of employment contracts

Eight of the farmworkers indicated that they were directly employed by the farmers and signed contracts with the farms, while one of the migrant seasonal farmworkers stated that he is employed by a contractor and has never signed a contract. Nine farms were covered for this research because all the farmworker participants worked on different farms. Three of the farmworkers stated that before the uprising, they only signed a contract once with the farmer. Five of the farmworker participants indicated that they have never signed a contract ever since they started to work as farmworkers. However, post the De Doorns uprising the workers noted that they sign contracts for every season. For example, when it is pruning season, they must sign a contract and when it is harvesting season, they also sign a contract. Therefore, the farmworkers sign contracts twice a year for each job they undertake and each season they are employed. The same farm will occasionally hire the same workers for each season, but this does not always happen.

The fact that farm workers must sign a contract for every season and each season has a duration of 6 months, is a clear indication of the precarity of their employment.

Workers facing the uncertainty regarding their employment it seem to exemplify Choonara's (2020) findings that there is a loss of stable and secure employment because jobs have become short-term and easily terminatable. If the workers work for one season it is not guaranteed or predictable that they will be employed for the following season. This is also a way the farmers control the farmworkers by making them sign contracts for every season they work and to keep them in check because if the workers do not abide by the farmers signing a contract the next season on that farm will not happen. For example, one of the participants noted that "*they will not hire you because they do not like it if we belong to an organization or a union*" (Elena, De Doorns East, November 2021).

In fact, Fishwick (2018) alluded that firms (farms) adopt rigorous disciplinary that restructure labour to fragment collective organization. This suggest that the restructuring of labour in the farming industry is a form of labour control that farmers exercise over their employees. As discussed, this is due to the fact that farmers are encouraging flexible working arrangements by making the workers sign contracts for each job they undertake on the farms. This flexible working arrangement erodes secure forms of employment. This generally means that workers would experience reduced benefits (Fishwick, 2018), they might not be employed by the same farmers for the next season. This instability is a contributing aspect that makes it difficult for the unions and NGOs to organise these workers because of their precarious employment.

4.2.2. Background information of the union representatives

Table 2 below summarises the demographics of all the trade union representatives and their activities to give a sense of who the representatives of this study were.

Table 2: Summary of the worker representative's information

<u>Participant no.</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Name of Union/ NGO</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Period of work</u>	<u>Gender</u>
Beatrice	Farmworker Organiser	WFP	Estimated 40 in De Doorns	2013- present	Female
Margie	Farmworker Organiser	WFP	Estimated 40 in De Doorns	2013- present	Female
Tony	Union representative	FAWU	Estimated 2500 in De Doorns	1987- present	Male
Samuel	Union representative	FAWU	Estimated 2500 in De Doorns	2012- present	Male
Theo	Former President	BASWI/BAWUSA	Estimated 6000 in De Doorns (during the uprising & after)	1980- 2015	Male

The trade unionists and activists who were interviewed for this study have been representing farmworkers for 10-35 years. Three of the participants have represented farmworkers for 10 years, and two of the participants have represented farmworkers in the wine industry for more than 35 years.

Base on the number of years union representatives been active in the farming industry one would expect that the unionisation would be high, but that is not the case. The number of workers in Table 1 indicates they are not union members even with unions being around for long. Existence of a union does not assure that workers get unionised.

4.3. The different working relationship with farmers

Historically all permanent farmworkers resided on-farm had a good working relationship with the farmers. However, after the uprising in 2012-2013 this seems to have changed as permanent farmworkers also reside off-farm which previously have not been the case. Emma, Isak, and Dean who reside on-farm stated that they have a good working relationship with the farmers whereas the off-farm workers noted that they do not have any working relationship with the farmer or even see the farmer. Mary, Joanne, were permanent workers but they lacked a good working with the farmers because they reside off- farm. Therefore, based on the finding it demonstrate that the farmworkers that reside on-farm have a stronger relationship with the farmers then those who stay off-farm. This relationship is not tied to the employment status of the worker but rather the living arrangement of the farmworker. All the participants who reside off-farm commented on the lack of a working relationship they have with the farmers even after years of being in the farming industry, but they do state that they work with the management team who is working under the farmers. Thus, there is a difference in the working relationship between permanent workers that reside on-farm and farmers in comparison to the farmworkers that reside off-farm.

The standard used to describe a working relationship refers to the way people work together, trust that is built, the respect and inclusion between co-workers, management, and employers (Gallup, 2022). A good working relationship between employers and employees would ensure that workers have a sense of importance. Three of the participants who reside on-farm noted they have a good working relationship with the farmer. The following comments were made by the three participants who reside on-farm of which two are permanent and one a seasonal farmworker:

“My boss, is 100 percent for me I do not say for everybody but to me and I have

his cell phone number. If I need something from him, I go straight to him. I can say my boss is right for me” (Dean permanent migrant, De Doorns on farm, November 2021).

And the other worker stated that: *“our relationship is very nice because sometimes they would come inside my house and sit here” (Isak, De Doorns on-farm, November 2021).*

“I have a good relationship with the farm managers which the farmer employs for maybe 5 or 10 years” (Emma, De Doorns on farm, November 2021).

The farmworkers who reside on-farm believed that they have a good working relationship with the farmers because they engage with them on a professional and personal level. They feel as though they have a sense of importance because the farmers visit their homes. On the other hand, the workers that reside off-farm stated they do not have a good working relationship with the farmers because they do not share the same experience as the workers that reside on-farm. Off-farm workers do not engage with the farmers on a professional or even on a personal level hence there is a lack of a working relationship between off-farm workers and the farmers. Thus, a good working relationship in this case can be linked to the professional and personal relationship that exist between the farmers and the on-farm workers.

4.3.1. Challenges to a good working relationship between farmers and farm workers:

How well the working relationship between farmers and farmworkers is maintained depends in large part on personal relationships. As mentioned above, off-farm workers mentioned they do not have a working relationship with the farmers because their interaction with the farmers is not as frequent as the workers who reside on-farm.

The workers who claimed they do not have a good working relationship with the farmers were either seasonal off-farm workers or permanent off-farm workers. The lack of a good working relationship between farmers and farmworkers who reside off-farm confirms that there is no trust between farmers and off-farm workers. Since on-farm workers live on the farm and have a greater understanding of what is happening there, on-farm employees are perceived as trustworthy and devoted to their employers, which helps to explain why farmers have a different working relationship with on-farm compared to their relationship with off-farm workers (Ewert & Du Toit, 2003).

Since those farmworkers do not reside on the farms it comes with a challenge for them to build good working relationships with the farmers. Therefore, the type of interaction you have with farmers or even with the farms will determine the type of relationship you have with them. One of the respondents claimed that *“because they would say that it is fine, or they don’t have a*

problem if you belong to a union or an organisation, but we know that they don't actually like it" (Elena, De Doorns East, November 2021) as some of the fellow participants alluded to the problem, that farmers are not very pleased with having unions on their farms.

According to the statement made by Major and Morganson (2011) superiors do not have identical relationships with all their subordinates, and there is a difference in how they behave towards different subordinates. Based on the statement made by Major and Morganson (2011), it confirms that workers who reside on-farm have a better working relationship with the farmers because they interact with the farmers more often than the workers who reside off-farm. The presence of different quality exchange relationship between farmers and farm workers namely the insider and outsider are confirmed by some of the interviewees (Henderson et al., 2009; Du Toit, 1993). They have recognised the type of workers who falls into each category. Participants 1 and 3 both stated that the farmers would always say that he will always give first preference to his people and those coming from outside will fill in where it is needed (Emma, On-farm De Doorns, November 2021; Joanne, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021). Mary mentioned that her employer would indicate to the workers that whatever happens amongst them will come to him because he has his people that informs him about what happens on the ground (Mary, De Doorns East, November 2021). Dean mentioned that his employer would say that his on-farm permanent workers stand out from the rest of the workers because they are like family (Dean, On-farm De Doorns, November 2021).

Therefore, not all the farmworkers are subject to a lack of a working relationship with the farmers; however, it also depends on their living arrangements. Participant and Dean both on-farm migrant workers expressed that they have a good working relationship with the farmers, but they also understand that it might not be the case for all farmworkers (Isak, On-farm De Doorns, November 2021; Dean, On-farm De Doorns, November 2021).

Therefore, the workers who resided on-farm were considered as part of the farm family and other workers were considered as outsiders (Du Toit, 1993). Moreover, historically the permanent workforce on farms were made-up of workers who stayed on-farm, and seasonal workers were residing both on and off-farm. However, this is no longer the case, the permanent workforce also resides off-farm now, but they are more considered as outsiders compared to how they identify historically as part of the "farm family". This continues to be an issue where the seasonal farmworkers relationship with the farmers are only transactional and and the on-

farm workers relationship with the farmers are more personal they are seen to be “his people” (Wilderman, 2015).

The existence of relationship differentiation, ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ (Du Toit, 1993) were distinctly named and verified during the interviews. Therefore, using "paternalist management" strategies, it is possible to comprehend the existence of relationships between farmers and agricultural workers. (Fishwick, 2018).

4.3.2. Challenges to a good working relationship between worker representatives and farmers:

There is a lack of a working relationship between most of the farmers and worker representatives which makes it difficult to organise workers freely. Sentiments expressed by union representatives and NGO organisers ranged from:

“We never had a working relationship with the farmers, we were tolerated, because we are the guest they can do without” (Theo, MS Teams online, January 2022), *“...the only relationship we have with the farmers is that we are both active in the industry”* (Samuel, MS Teams online, January 2022), *“we do not have a working relationship with all the farmers some of them do not like unions on their farms to recruit farmworkers”* (Tony, MS Teams Online, January 2022).

However, there are some of the worker representatives that mentioned their NGO does not have a working relationship with the farmers, but they were once employed by the farmers as permanent workers who stayed on-farm therefore they use that to leverage with the farmers.

It shows that the working relationship between farmers and worker representatives are determined by the nature of the relationship with the farmers. This requires one to have some form of acquaintance with the farmers. If the representatives do not have any form of acquaintance with the farmers, it makes it difficult for them to develop a working relationship with the farmers. Mainly, because worker representatives are considered as an outsider which can be seen as a threat and an ‘outsider’ does not have the best interests of the farm at heart (Du Toit, 1993; Visser & Ferrer, 2015). However, if you are considered as family which can be seen as an insider, it would make it easier to develop a working relationship with the farmers.

“The NGO does not have a working relationship with the farmers because the NGO is based in Stellenbosch, but I am acquainted with some of the farmers because I was a permanent farmworker before I became a full-time farmworker activist” (Beatrice, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021).

Even though Tony, Samuel and Theo have been around working on farms organising workers, they were unable to develop good relationships with the farmers. Yet, Beatrice and Margie, who have started representing farmworkers after the uprising in 2012-2013 have some form of relationship with the farmers, because they were insiders at some stage in their lives. This gave Beatrice and Margie the opportunity to develop a relationship with some of the farmers. Therefore, based on the evidence obtained from the interviews it is argued that being acquainted with the farmers influences the quality of their working relationship.

4.3.3. Challenges to a good working relationship between worker representatives and farmworkers:

Trade unions continue to fail workers in terms of their efforts to represent seasonal, permanent, and migrant farmworkers collectively.

Theo stated that *“I think twice before I recruit seasonal worker because I know the challenges the workers would face”* (Theo, MS Teams Online, January 2022), also Samuel alluded that *“when it comes to organising permanent workers it is less challenging compared to organising seasonal workers”* (Samuel, MS Teams Online, January 2022).

This indicates that trade unions do not make real effort to organise or recruit farmworkers because of the difficulties they face when it comes to organising seasonal workers.

The interviews with the farmworker participants alluded that even with the unions and NGOs being around for so long, there is still no real change even after the uprising to build good working relationships with the unions. The fact that the union membership continues to be low post the De Doorns uprising in 2012 is a clear indication that there continues to be a lack of a good working relationship between trade unions and farmworkers in De Doorns. For example, no one of the farmworker respondents at the time of conducting the interviews belonged to a union but one was a member of the Women on Farms Project. One of the permanent off-farm respondents admitted that she was part of a union, but she left the join because they have not helped her whenever she needed assistance from them when she was dealing her with a case which cost her job (Joanne, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021). All the other workers interviewed for this research indicated that the unions are untrustworthy and only take the money of the people and are always missing in action when needed. Joanne state that unions only make empty promises to the workers just to get membership. Thus, to build good

working relationships with the farmworkers are the unions responsible to actively recruit the workers.

This lack of trust farmworkers has in trade unions could be explained by the negative responses they have received from unions when they needed unions to represent them but then deserted the workers in time of need. Consequently, workers do not have trust or faith in unions to represent them. This contributes that most farmworkers cannot build a working relationship with trade unions because their problems are not articulated by unions.

Thus, the conceptual underpinning of the study, namely the issue of paternalistic managerial technique in the working relationship amongst the factors mentioned are one of the factors that have an influence on the challenges worker representatives face to build good working relationships. Du Toit (2014) noted that if a farmer allows unions on their farms who wants to manage the farms and order the farmers on what to do it will influence the relationship between farmers and farmworkers. Therefore, farmers try to keep trade unions and NGOs away from their farms as far as they can, through intimidating and victimizing farm workers.

Additionally, farmers have paternalistic managerial techniques which aimed at extending discipline over labour to increase the degree of labour control (Fishwick, 2018). This managerial technique is where the farmers treat workers as if they are members of a large extended family. In exchange the farmers expect the loyalty, obedience, and trust from the workers. This is evident when Emma, Isak, and Dean alluded that they are part of the 'farm family' (insider) and whenever they have a problem with the farm or the farmer, they would go directly to him. Therefore, the practices of paternalistic managerial techniques undermine the potential of collective socialization in the workplace.

Consequently, the labour structure in the agriculture sector even post-apartheid is still mainly paternalistic because farmworkers still find themselves dependent on the farmers benevolence, so for farmworkers being active in trade unions can cause problems for them such as not being employed.

4.4. Continuous barriers to organise farmworker

After the political transformation and the government's patronage to the farmers came to an end in 1994, there has been many changes in the ties between farmers and farmworkers, including uncertainty and modifications to that connection. Apart from the transformation in the labour force, which left most farmworkers vulnerable, they were no longer part of the 'farm

family' which gave workers the freedom to join trade unions or speak up toward exploitation. Thus, one might assume that this shift has lessened farmers' paternalistic authority over the farmworkers; nevertheless, this is not the case; farmers still maintain control over their properties regardless of the law. Additionally, farmworkers still frequently identify their status as being dependent on the goodwill of the farmer and formal laws.

Even if the employees are still reliant on the farmers, they are also aware of their rights and fight for them, as was the case during the De Doorns uprising in 2012–2013. But claiming these rights came with a twist for the farmworkers. After the workers claimed their rights punishments from the farmers followed which they did not expect would happen claiming their rights. Farmworkers were penalized by the farmers after their rebellion in 2012–2013, which is typical of how farmers have dealt with workers who behave improperly. Previously, farmers had the authority to discipline employees whenever they saw fit because they had taken on the role of farm father. During the apartheid era if farmworkers did not comply with the demands of the farmers, they were typically punished by being expelled from the farms. The sanctions farmworkers receive now, such as losing non-wage benefits because they stood up for their rights, are comparable to those experienced under apartheid.

Since farmworkers now have some degree of freedom, this type of interaction between farmers and farmworkers has evolved, and the farmers no longer perform the role of "farm father" (Du Toit, 1993). Because they are not entirely dependent on the farmers for their survival, the degree of independence is most prevalent among the employees who live off-farm. It was therefore simpler for off-farm workers, who are frequently seasonal laborers, to assert their rights. Thus, for the farmer to have regained his authority and power he knocked the farmworkers where it would hit them the hardest by taking away the non-wage benefits which they were dependent on. Therefore, taking away the benefits from the workers were mainly to show the authority the farmers possess over the lives and livelihoods of farmworkers.

Farmers, according to Du Toit (1993), occupy the dominant position of an "unchallengeable authority," which makes it more difficult to distinguish between "job" and "home." However, even after 30 years, Du Toit's conclusion is still valid since following the workers' uprising, the workers were penalized and were intimidated by the farmers. This intimidation felt by the farmworkers contributed to why trade unions and NGOs still struggle to organise farmworkers post the De Doorns uprising in 2012/2013. The challenges faced by unions to organise farmworkers affects how workers come together to speak about their grievances on the farms.

As outlined earlier, the challenges farm workers face when they go against the will of the farmers affect their livelihoods which results in farmworkers bargaining with oppressive and exploiting working conditions. From the above, it is evident that the farmers are reversing some of the hard-fought gains, by taking away some of the benefits mentioned earlier, which most farmworkers depended on.

From the section above the type of working relationship that exists between farmers, farmworkers and worker representatives impacts the liberty for workers to join unions in post-apartheid. The responses from the interviews highlighted other factors which continue to be barriers to organise farmworkers. In addition, to the changes the farmers made after apartheid with the reshaping of labour in agriculture which caused division between permanent and seasonal workers which made it difficult for unions to organise farmworkers (Webb, 2017), moreover after the farmworker uprising in 2012/2013 farmers continued to make changes to the farming labour which makes it even harder for unions to organise workers. One of the female farmworker respondents for this research claimed that *“nothing has changed but rather things got worse, we are being abused by the farmers”* (Sarah, Stofland, November 2021). The conditions within which the workers work is now more intense. Bear in mind that agriculture is one of the labour intense sectors. As a result of the uprising in 2012, farmers punished workers in two ways. The first way was when farmers increased the workload of the workers. The second way was when farmers took away the non-wage benefits which farmworkers were dependent on.

Firstly, the farmers have reduced the number of people they employ on the farms, to do the work. The following comments were made by farmworkers:

“...since the uprising the farmer did not employ so many people like he used to...” (Emma, De Doorns on-farm, November 2021); *“...they reduce the workers so they do not have to pay more money...”* (Dean, on-farm De Doorns, November 2021); another participant mentioned a similar statement *“they also reduce the amount of people they usually employ”* (Isak, on-farm De Doorns, November 2021).

This issue was confirmed by a discussion amongst agricultural stakeholders regarding the working and living conditions of farmworkers. Mandela & Nontsele (2022) stated that during the 3rd quarter of 2021 there were about 660 000 fewer people employed in the farming areas compared to the 2nd quarter of 2021 in the whole of South Africa.

The result of the decrease in the workforce meant that the workers have daily targets, where they are given 100 grapevines with double cordons which they must prune. They must reach

those targets which are difficult to reach when the working team is small. If they do not reach the target, they are given warnings or worse they may face the prospect of not being rehired the following season or being chased away after three signed warnings. The farmworkers feel that the farmers are being unreasonable with the targets they are setting for the workers because: *“They let you work like you are a person who does not gets tired especially in this heat. They expect you to work at the same tempo for the whole day..., I believe no one can work from the morning until evening at the same speed. But you must work otherwise you get hearings, or you will be chased away”* (Sarah, Stofland, November 2021). However, most of the time workers do not make the daily target and must work overtime for free to ensure they finish the work that was assigned to them. According to the respondents the farmers stated that the workers wanted more money so they must work for the money they strike for. Also, because the farmworkers strike for more money in 2012 the farmers are not willing to pay all the workers that amount of money therefore, they reduced the amount of people they normally would have employed for a season. The following comments were made by two respondents:

“...because the people were asking for more money so he (farmer) would say that he can't afford to pay more money so he would take less people” (Emma, on-farm De Doorns, November 2021), *“one of the managers said to us that we should not complaint about the work because we wanted more money now we have to work for more money”* (Elena, De Doorns East, November 2021).

The second way in which the farmers punished the workers was when they have taken away some of the benefits, they used to give workers. Workers are dependent on those benefits. previously, farmers provided farmworkers who resides on the farms with rent free housing that came with electricity. He provided them with transportation whenever they had to go to town to do their shopping, and he paid their doctor fees when they needed to go to the doctor. However, after the De Doorns uprising in 2012/2013 a lot has changed for the farmers. The following comments were made by the participants regarding the benefits that were taken away:

“Previous years we use to get doctor money, and transportation to town, but all of that benefits were taken away” (Mary, De Doorns East, November 2021); *“...benefits where they workers did not have to pay for electricity, on-farm workers are now forced to pay electricity. Transport was provided for free from the famers, it was taken away or they must pay for it. When workers were sick the farmer use to pay their doctor fees and farmers would only deduct it from their wages in installments instead of the whole amount. But now farmers*

do not pay for farmworkers doctor fees anymore” (Theo, MS Teams online, January 2022).

Overall, it can be claimed that a variety of labor discipline tactics, including the withdrawal of some benefits that workers depend on, are implemented (Fishwick, 2018). In this context, "labor discipline" refers to the farmer's desire to maximize the amount of effort and adherence to the farm's rules made by farmworkers (Fishwick, 2018). The cost of job loss and other actions, such as the withdrawal of some benefits to demonstrate the farmers' control over their workers, are reflected in the degree of labor discipline. Work is being reorganised because of these types of labour discipline, which shatters employees' collective organising.

With farmers continuing to create barriers to make it difficult for farmworkers to organise it demonstrates farmers are against workers organising themselves because of the workplace bargaining power workers will have when they are organised. Hence, farmers do anything to prevented permanent and seasonal farmworkers from organising collectively. When farmers took away the non-wage benefits from the workers, it was to subdue farmworkers for them to become compliant to the farmers. The goal of the farmers was to keep a skilled, devoted, and permanent workforce that is familiar with setup and its operations who is mainly on-farm permanent workers. Importantly, this layer of permanent on-farm workers serves as a barrier between management and a far larger group of supposedly disgruntled off-farm temporary employees. As the farmer's "eyes and ears," the permanent employees serve as watchdogs for his family's physical safety as well as risks to his commercial interests and the interests of his farm in the wake of recent farm attacks. The benefits offered to these permanent employees demonstrate how paternalism now serves a different purpose. Therefore, worker representatives continue to struggle to organise farmworkers after the uprising in 2012.

4.4.1. Barriers to organising post the uprising

4.4.1.1. Nature of farmworker representation

It is challenging to represent and communicate farmworker issues particularly when there are so few unionised farm workers. The issues that are so identified are typical of a tiny workforce whose ideals are considerably simpler to influence. One of the union representatives mentioned that *“it is easier to organise permanent farmworkers because they are not as vulnerable as the seasonal workers who are only employed during peak seasons”* (Theo,

MS Teams online, January 2022). Even though, it is considered by the union representative that it is easier to organise permanent workers because of their stable employment yet, permanent workers interviewed did not seem interested in unions because farmers do not like it if they are organised. However, the vulnerability of employment for seasonal farmworkers makes it difficult for unions to organise them. Given that permanent workers can join a union but do not want to and seasonal workers are unlikely to join a union, what does that mean for organising of farmworkers? This merely means that there is not a real representation of both permanent and seasonal farmworkers. However, because my sample size was so small, this finding cannot be generalised for all permanent and seasonal farmworkers in the district.

The low representation of farmworkers could be explained in relation to the conceptual aspect of precarity, where farmers make more use of temporary employment that may be insecure, unstable, and unprotected. Due to the fact that most workers only have steady employment for short periods of time, some workers may believe that the expenses associated with union membership are excessive. Worker dissatisfaction with pay makes additional financial commitments unappealing. This makes the already difficult situation of insecure employment for farmworkers even more difficult.

Consequently, the claim would be that farmworker representatives would therefore have a sizable membership and have built up the trust of the farmworkers over the course of their long tenure in the farming industry. Additionally, they would have come up with alternate strategies to organize farmworkers despite the challenges involved in doing so. However, this is not the case for the trade unions in the farming industry in the Western Cape. One of the respondents mentioned that *“I will rather fight for myself if the day arrives where I must defend myself I will. I was in a union, but the union only took my money”* (Joanne, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021). While the seasonal farmworkers feels that it is *“pointless to join a union”* because they are only employed for 6 months of the year and the other 6 months, they are unemployed. Therefore, both on- and off-farm workers claims that they have been poorly served by trade unions (Webb, 2017), which explains why farmworkers do not trust trade unions and only see them as taking their money and do not assist them when needed.

Another is that due to farms' remoteness, dispersion, and the difficulty of gaining access to them, trade union leaders find recruiting farm workers to be tough and expensive. Two of the union representatives alluded that:

“Because the farms are so far spread out from each other it is quite expensive to drive to the farms to try and organise only one worker, therefore I would wait for when the workers would

go do their shopping on weekends” (Theo, MS Teams Online, January 2022); “It is expensive to drive to the farms to recruit workers and you cannot access the farm without an appointment” (Tony, MS Teams Online, January 2022).

This indicates the distance between the farms continues to be a challenge for unions to organise farmworkers. The perception that unions have been unsuccessful in organizing and recruiting farm workers was echoed in the interviews. The joining of unions has been aggressively discouraged or forbidden by farmers. Therefore, despite the challenges in organizing farmworkers, unions have not created substitute methods for organising the workforce.

Trade unionists persist to struggle organising farmworkers and are still restricted to access farms freely. When asked how successful the unions have been in organising seasonal, permanent, and migrant farmworkers collectively post the De Doorns strike. The union representatives allude that it is challenging to try and recruit seasonal workers because signing them up to join the union could cost them their employment. One of the union representatives from BAWUSA states:

“I’m concerned, I know that when I give those 250 or 300 forms to that farmer, it will trigger conflict, and it might end the seasonal contracts of those workers...And if I write them up, the next minute is they might get a letter to say your contract has come to an end... people think recruiting seasonal workers is a problem. It is absolutely no problem that those workers want to come. There is the fear from the workers side but there are also the concerns of the official.” (Theo, MS Teams online, January 2022).

The farmworkers confirm this fear they experience whenever they want to join a union:

“...but the farmers do want workers to belong to a union or an organisation. And because the people are scared to lose their jobs, they will not sign up for union membership” (Jenny, De Doorns East, November 2021); “I am in a doubt to belong to a union because I’m afraid I will not get work again” (Elena, De Doorns East, November 2021); “belonging to a union on that farm is pointless because the union doesn’t count the farms law is law on that farm...so, what will it help if you are in a union because what the farmer says is law” (Joanne, Stofland, November 2021).

The possible reasons why unions, NGOs and farmworkers face these challenges despite the farmworkers know their rights could be explained as follows:

According to Ewert and Du Toit (2005) examination of unionization in the majority of rural Western Cape districts such as: De Doorns, Worcester, Rawsonville and Touwsrivier less than

10% of the permanent farmworkers are union members. The information gleaned from the interviews appears to support this conclusion by Ewert and Du Toit (2005). The participants in this survey did not affirm that they were members of a union or that there was a sizable trade union presence on the farms they were working on. As a result, farmworkers have continued to face difficulties and have minimal union representation since the De Doorns rebellion in 2012–2013, which is a sign that the workers are reluctant to speak up or participate in a process that includes challenging their bosses. This is not rare because proactive employees have a real fear of being fired or punished if they aggressively rebel against the farm owner.

Due to this, people's ability to support themselves depends on whether or not they join a union, which creates an atmosphere that discourages participation in groups like unions or NGOs. This is consistent with the concept of precarity as proposed by Mole (2010) demonstrating how precarity makes people vulnerable to marginalization, anxiety, and fear. One possible reason for this sense of anxiety and fear amongst the workers might be because the farmworkers are cognizant of their vulnerability and possibilities of being replaced at any given stage of their employment. Therefore, workers eliminate any possibility that could compromise their employment even if that means working in oppressive and exploitative working conditions. In essence, it confirms that the labour legislation: the *Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995*, which extended the right to organise and strike to farm workers; are being violated by most of the farmers of which they still control the liberty of most farmworkers to freely join a union.

This is because farmers are still in control of the farms and their farms are considered as private property hence, they don't adhere to most of the legislations. Farmworkers are dependent on the generosity of the state because there is no effective organisation that allows for collective bargaining; the paternalistic state has effectively replaced the paternalistic farmer (Theron 2009). The stresses on agriculture, however, have not abolished paternalism; rather, it has just evolved and "adapted itself over time" (Du Toit & Ally 2003: 3; 22; 50). One of the participants mentioned that the labour laws implemented by the government has no authority on the farms but rather the rules and laws of the farmers has power on the farms (Mary, Stofland, November 2021). Therefore, workers rather adhere to what the farmers expect from them because the legislations by the government do not protect them.

4.4.1.2. Security gates on farms

A barrier that has become very prominent on the farms post the farm worker uprising was the security gate the farms have been put up to keep people from trespassing their properties. When asked what the barriers unions are face to organise workers, the worker representatives

stated:

“...they will not be able to organise workers if you do not have someone on the inside to open the gates” (Margie, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021); “before we could go into the farms but now we cannot, and you had to press a button to talk to the person in the office to open the gate for you or when you have a member staying on the farm to open” (Beatrice, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021); “on weekends we must go late afternoons, or during weekdays around nine o'clock or 10 o'clock at night, to have meetings with them, to bring them on board but only if there is someone willing to open the gates” (Tony, MS Teams online, January 2022).

When asked if the worker representatives have other means to get to the workers to recruit them, the worker representatives highlighted the only way they can get to the workers on the farms is if they have someone who can open the gate of the farm on the inside (Margie, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021). The other worker representative participants also had the same thing to add:

“...now you have to press a button to speak to the person in the office to open the gate for you and they will decide to open the gates for you, or we go after hours and if we have someone on the inside they will open the gate for us” (Beatrice, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021), “we must go in late afternoons, like nine o'clock or 10 o'clock at night, to have meetings with them, to bring them on board. Because the owner doesn't allow you to come on their premises” (Tony, MS Teams online, January 2022), “we have to wait maybe on weekend when the workers are going to town to do their shopping to speak to them and try and get them on board” (Samuel, MS Teams online, January 2022).

Mandela & Nontsele (2022) stated that farmers or farm owners are making it difficult for farm workers forming or being associated to a union. Many of the worker representatives' participants confirmed that they were having challenges to organise workers because of the security electric gates farmers have put up after the uprising. The union representatives of FAWU are experiencing very similar problems as BAWUSA with access to farmworkers on farms. Apart from the fact that trade unions always had an issue accessing farms before the uprising because of this idea that farms are private property and entering the farms without permission is considered trespassing and farmers simply do not want unions on their farms. All the participants commented on the barriers that the security electric gates have on organising and how it bars unions and NGOs to access farms freely. It would therefore appear that the security gates allow the farmers to control who they will permit on their farms.

Three of the worker representatives interviewed for this research stated that the alternative way for them to enter the farms would be if they have someone on the inside, they get into the farms. However, if they do not have someone on the inside it is difficult to enter the farm and recruit farmworkers on the farms. Therefore, the worker representatives would either enter the farms pretending to be visitors or just wait to interact with the workers in an informal manner when they are doing their shopping on weekends. And because the workers are in a different space, they might not have time to be speaking to the union representatives when they are doing their shopping.

Mandela & Nontsele (2022) mentioned that even though unions and NGOs continue to face challenges to access the farms, there were still farmers who came on board with trade unions. The worker representatives interviewed for this research stated that post the De Doorns uprising in 2012 some farmers wanted to be educated about the rights of the workers. However, that is not the case for all the farmers. Some of the farmers or farm owners still sees trade unions as the enemy. Whether some farmers are on board with unions, most of the farmers still see the unions as the devil coming into their faces. All they can think about is that the unions are influencing the workers (Tony, MS Teams online, January 2022). Unions face similar challenges as back in apartheid where farmers barred farmworkers from joining unions or not allowing unions on their farms. With the labour legislation giving unions unrestricted liberty to access farms and to recruit workers, farmers have found a new way to keep unions from their farms and making sure they have restricted access on the farms with the security gates, also intimidating workers from joining a union by treating union members differently compare to non-union members (Samuel, MS Teams online, January 2022). This indicates that the power relations had not changed on many farms but on some farms, it has changed.

4.4.1.3. The divide between workers

The divide between farmworkers remains to be a real challenge to organise the workers collectively. When asked how the divide between farmworkers changed after the uprising, the participants stated:

“There is always friction between us (permanent on-farm and permanent off- farm workers). For example, we would all talk about our problems on the farm or about the farmer. But there will always be one of them that would go to the farmer and tell him what the workers speak about him behind his back” (Mary, De Doorns East, November 2021). *“Farmworkers are still divided amongst each other. Because they want to be in the good books of the farmers and would rather stab their colleagues in the back”* (Jenny, De Doorns

East, November 2021), One of the seasonal participants states that she spoke to one of the permanent workers who stays on the farm where she works at and found out that:

“The permanent on-farm workers would get R150 a day and she get a R195 a day” she goes on to state that *“the on-farm workers are always pressured by the farmer because they stay on-farm, they are expected to work harder they need to know the farm better than off-farm workers. And that is where the division comes in between the different groups of workers”* (Sarah, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021).

The interviews support the finding of Ewert and Du Toit (2005) that there is a "deepening divide" between the core farmworkers who are able to maintain permanent employment and the seasonal farmworkers, who are often still living on the farms, caught in the web of paternalism, and who still receive non-wage benefits. Henderson et al (2009) states that workers will try hard to impress their bosses to increase their chance of being presented with an opportunity. In this regard they are the eyes and ears of the farmers who try hard to impress them so when they need any favors, they might receive it because of the impression they give to the farmers.

Theron (2010) divides workers into three categories: on-farm and off-farm employees, permanent and seasonal workers, and those directly employed by farmers against those engaged by labour brokers. Another divide that Theron is not mentioning is the divide between locals and cross-border migrant workers, and this division is quite prominent because there are a lot of cross-border migrants from our neighbouring country of Zimbabwe and Lesotho. There is this issue where the locals feel that the cross-border migrants are taking away their employment so there is this division amongst them in the work and living space. Two of the migrants from Zimbabwe alluded to how the locals sees the foreign nationals as outsiders he states:

“It was very hard to be a permanent worker because they (local workers) say no, if you a foreigner you may not be permanent” he continues to state *“they say permanent jobs are for them (locals) and not for us (cross-border migrants) they say we must go back to our country and go solve our problems in our own country. That's why they say they do not want ‘you people’ here, you must go, you mustn't stay here and take our jobs, because this job belongs to us”* (Dean, On-farm De Doorns, November 2021).

This demonstrates how it can be difficult for locals to identify points of similarity between themselves and cross-border migrants. Because of the disparity between locals and cross-border migrants, they are weak as farmworkers.

Van Stekelenburg (2013) assert that when people share a strong bond in social networks then it contributes to the development of a collective identity. Thus, it can be argued that there's a

lack of a social network amongst locals and foreign nationals which are causing farmworkers to be divided amongst each other. She goes on to say that in the networks people develop they see themselves as part of a group and their shared characteristics becomes prominent. However, from above it is clear that the workers share the characteristics of being; all workers, poor, black, marginalised, and exploited yet they do not see themselves as part of a group sharing the same problems. Therefore, those shared characteristics mentioned above cannot become important to build a collective identity.

However, during the uprising in 2012 farmworkers were united and fought together in order to attain the demands they had for an increase in their wage. Farmworkers were always divided but during the uprising they surprised the farmers and came together. Van Stekelenburg (2013) states that collective action amongst individuals can be an important element to change collective identity. However, this statement made by Van Stekelenburg (2013) can be questioned because even with the farmworkers whether locals, foreign nationals, informants, or workers advocating for social justices all participated in the uprising but that did not help the farmworkers to build collective identities.

It is apparent that intimidation and division are some of the key elements in the social setting that farmworkers in the De Doorns valley experience. Some of the claims made in the literature are supported by the data gathered from the interviews. Most importantly, the data unequivocally show that farmworkers' organizational behavior has been influenced by the social milieu in which they are embedded ten years after the De Doorns insurrection. It is also clear that farmworkers possess a fear to organise because of their dependence on the farmers. Farmers use that against the workers to keep them in control. Because the farmers know the power farmworkers hold when they come together and fight in unity, therefore the divide amongst the workers is safeguarding the farmers. Thus, farmers supporting the division amongst the farmworkers result in two conclusions. Firstly, when the workers are divided, they are weak. Secondly, because they are weak, they are powerless which affect how the workers would come together and organise. This is consistent with the idea by Silver (2003) indicating that the intensified commodification of labour and weaken labour movements are caused by capitalists (farmers) to strive increasing productivity. Therefore, farmers would stop at nothing to ensure that workers are divided among themselves because doing so renders them helpless. Farmers took away the workers' authority by punishing them once they united in solidarity. Because of the dread that farmers have fostered in the workers, there is a lack of unity among the work force.

4.4.2. Fear of farmworkers

4.4.2.1. *The harden hearts of farmers*

The reality that paternalism and worker empowerment coexist, with paternalism still predominating in agricultural labour structures. This coexistence produces conflict between farmers and farm workers because it upsets the established hierarchy in which farmers previously held the reins of power and farm workers served as their deferential underlings but now have some degree of independence. For the farmers to continue their paternalistic control over the farmworkers and to ensure they regain control over the workers after the De Doorns uprising in 2012 the farmers took away all the non-wage benefits which the farmworkers were reliant on.

Mainly because the trust which the farmers had in the workers were broken when they stood up against the farmers for a higher wage. Based on the long-term history which exist between the farmers and the farmworkers many of the workers are considered as family because many of them have been on the farms for generations. The farm workers had been on the farms for many generations there have been this firm foundation amongst the farmers and the farmworkers where they could work something out should the need arises. The participants who reside on the farms seem to confirm this statement made above *“whenever I have a problem I would go to him (the farmer) and we would sort it out and when he is not satisfied with my work then he would come to me and talk about the problem”* (Emma, on-farm De Doorns, November 2021), another participant had a similar comment *“I have my boss’s number so whenever I need something or I have a problem I would go straight to him”* (Dean, on-farm De Doorns, November 2021).

Clearly, what is happening in the rural Western Cape is not only the result of pressure from economic realities, but also the renegotiation of ideological and cultural frameworks that legitimized social and power labor relations on these farms in previous decades (Du Toit and Ally, 2003 p.46). It is said that this hostility, not economic concerns, was what sparked the farmers' reaction in 2013 against the 52% wage increase. When the workers stood up against the farmers and demanded a higher wage it could be argued that the farmer saw it as the workers being unappreciative of their relationships because they had the kind of relationship where they could come to him and speak about their grievances. However, it was a matter where the farmworkers ignored that step of going to the farmer first to try and work things out and went

straight to the streets instead to rise their concerns and demands. This resulted that the farmers had to take on a different role which the workers have not been exposed to and that was by hardening their heart towards the workers. Mainly because the farmers no longer trust the workers to be loyal towards them. Therefore, to get the workers back in line the farmers had to punish them. The punishment the workers received from the farmers to ensure that the workers do not do anything that they would regret later. Based on this new position that farmers have assumed, farmworkers are reluctant to organise or take a stand against the farmer.

However, if the reaction of the farmers was motivated by hostility, it is therefore to have a loyal workforce that will think twice before they resist against the farmers.

4.4.2.2. Fear to organise

Andrews (2021) states that permanent on-farm workers are trapped in a cycle of “servitude and indebtedness”. The dependence on farms that most farm workers are causing barriers for them to join unions, which leaves them vulnerable because they know if they retaliate their livelihoods would depend on it. Therefore, farm workers do not join unions (Andrew, 2021). As a result, there are labour interactions that are difficult to distinguish from larger social relations, such as in “town life,” where work and home are entirely separate, and in “farm life,” where obligations between employees and farmers go beyond the labor-wage nexus (du Toit, 1993).

The seasonal farmworkers would seem to confirm du Toit (1993) and Andrew’s (2021) findings by stating, “the farmers will classify you as an instigator or as someone who is causing problems, therefore if your name is connected to a union than you most likely will not get work on the farms”. She also stated that she would rather not join a union because she is afraid that she will not get work again on the farms (Elena, De Doorns East, November 2021). Another participant who works as a seasonal worker had a similar statement to add, “workers including myself would rather not form part of any NGO or union because we are scared, and the farmers do not employ workers that belongs to a union or NGO because they (farmers) do not want you to know your rights. And because the unemployment rate in De Doorns is so high people would rather not join a union because they know they can easily be replaced” (Sarah, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021).

Apart from the seasonal workers, the permanent workers also share the same issues as them. One of the permanent on-farm participants states that she had never heard of any unions being present on the farm because during apartheid the farmers did not want unions on their farms at all, they were completely against it.

However, after the uprising the farmers said that we have the right to join a union if we want to, but he doesn't recommend that on his farm (Emma, on-farm De Doorns, November 2021). Most of the participants interviewed for this research mentioned that workers including herself *“are afraid to join a union because the farmer would tell us that he will keep us in mind. So that day when you need him then he would hold that thing against you.”* (Mary, De Doorns East, November 2021). It is clear from the comments above that the farmworkers would rather endure the violation of their labour rights because they fear that they might lose the non- wage benefits that comes with being subservient to the farmers. It is an obvious infringement of farmworkers' rights since what good are rights on which you are unable to rely because of advantages. Given the severity of farm work, the benefits ought to be part of the package. Farm owners should not even have the option of deciding whether or not farmworkers should receive benefits since they would always use that as a means of intimidation.

Other societal issues were brought up during the interviews, such as organising, division, and intimidation. These problems and the impact they have on farmworkers to organise will now be discussed. All the participants confirm that intimidation plays an important role for farmworkers to organise or be part of a union. One of the seasonal workers mentioned that *“one day I took six workers with me to a labour conference held by the WFP, and the following day that people had a hearing because they went to the conference with me”* (Sarah, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021). Theo acknowledged that when farmworkers want to join or joined a union *“they will be called in one by one and be intimidated and threaten...or will not get any assistance from the farmer”* (Theo, MS Teams online, January 2022).

It would therefore seem that intimidating the farmworkers for joining or wanting to join a union has a significant impact on their liberty to join a trade union. From the data obtained, interviews conducted, and discussion earlier, it shows why workers refrain from joining unions. However, the data seem to be inconclusive as to whether on-farm permanent workers are most affect by intimidation. It is also evident that seasonal farmworkers are intimidated by the farmers as well, therefore they endure the exploitation and oppression of the farmers because their employment are precarious and can be replaced very quickly.

Due to the farmers' hardened hearts toward the employees, their inability to receive the benefits they are accustomed to, and their desire to prevent any further harm to their relationship, the workers have a fear of rebelling against the farmers. Therefore, this new role which the farmers have adopted have presented the farmworkers with a fear and intimidations of organising or being part of a union. This demonstrates how the workers have grown more aware of them organising since the uprising. As a result, workers have organised themselves more to avoid

stepping on the toes of the farmers due to their dread of the unknown and their inability to predict what the farmers would do next should they rebel once more.

4.5. Other forms of organising post the uprising

Post the uprising farmers made changes to the structures on the farms and one of that was the implementation of the Farm Worker Forum, a platform where the farmworkers can raise their grievances, with the farmers. This platform was implemented by the then Department of Labour (now Department of Labour and Employment) to ensure that workers had a space to raise their concerns.

The Farm Worker Forum usually consist of the farmers, his consultants, his lawyers, and worker representatives. However, the farmers rather than the employees elect the worker representatives who sit on the Farm Worker Forum.

“The farmer decides himself who will represent workers on the forum” (Elena, De Doorns East, November 2021), *“we are not the ones who decide who we to represent us on the forum...”* (Mary, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021), *“the farmer would say how he wants on the forum...”* (Jenny, De Doorns East, November 2021).

The whole idea behind the Farm Worker Forum is to give the farmworkers a voice and they should have the freedom to choose who they want to represent them during hearing and meeting. The fact that the workers who represent the workers on the forum are not elected by their fellow farmworkers proves that the whole idea around the Farm Worker Forum is change and the implementation of it on the farms is not for the benefit of the farmworkers but for that of the farmers.

Since they have control over who is representing the workers’, the grievances of workers are not handled in an objective manner, but rather handled in a subjective manner. Mainly because the Farm Worker Forum:

“workers’ forum it’s not in the interest of the workers... it actually only there so it seem like you can go complaint somewhere and that it looks good for the books (Emma, De Doorns on-farm, November 2021); *“The forum is not there to assist the workers but only to look good for the books and to keep it up to date, but they does not mean anything to the workers because they don’t have meetings, give you feedback from the farmers if you have a problem or so”* (Mary, De Doorns East, November 2021), *“there is this workers forum where we can discuss our problems, but those forums are for the farmers it’s not for us as the workers”* (Joanne, Stofland De Doorns, November 2021).

With the Farm Worker Forum there are no fees or membership associated with it. However,

this Farm Worker Forum has come with its own problems the workers commented that the Farm Worker Forum is not there to attend to the needs of the workers but rather to maintain record that the farm has Farm Worker Forum.

So, when the department of labour comes out to the farms to do their annual inspections to ensure that the farmers adhere to the laws and policies implemented, the forum is only there to show that there is a Forum on the farms where the workers can raise issues. Nonetheless, the Forum is not there to attend to the needs of the but rather to safeguard the farmers to show that they 'care' about their workers' grievances.

After ten years, organising has not been easy for farmworkers mainly because trade unions have struggled to organise workers apart from the Farm Worker Forum which have not serve the needs of the workers. The forms of organising which were imposed by the government that each farm must have a Farm Worker Forum where workers can raise their grievances has come as a 'double edge'. First, the purpose of the farm worker forum is not being executed because the interests of workers are not being served, workers raise grievances, but they not being resolved. Second, the farmers have found a way to enforce their power by being in control of who represents workers on the Forum. Therefore, the intention of the farm worker forum may have had good intentions but it's failing the workers.

It is crucial to remember that the goal of the Farm Worker Forum was to ensure that farmers and workers observe labour legislations that the government desired. The committee makes decisions regarding the farm workers, and there is open communication between the farm owners and the workers (Andreas, 2013). In essence, besides NGOs and unions, this would have been a viable alternative for organising workers. The greatest candidates to represent farmworkers are those who work on farms that truly understand and are familiar with their problems. Nevertheless, based on my sample, this ideal is not achieved with the Farm Workers Forum because farmers select the workers that sit at the forum's table. As a result, the two parties' negotiations are less informed and impartial.

Furthermore, based on the study's findings, relationships, continuous barriers, and fear from the farmworkers all have a significant impact on how farmworkers organise themselves. Additionally, how these factors prevent workers from organising or simply standing as one as they did during the uprising in 2012-2103. Since the farmworkers are not united as they were during the uprising, little has changed in the way they were organised before and after the uprising.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study focused on the relationship between farmers and farm workers in the agricultural sector and sought to make sense of how worker organising has changed since the 2012 uprising in De Doorns. For the purpose of gaining understanding of the working relationship between farmers and farmworkers, the conceptual frameworks of paternalism, precarity, and collective identity were applied. With the uprising in De Doorns in 2012–2013, the aim of this study was to ascertain how farmworkers' organising has changed since then.

The results showed that the paternalistic relationships that used to exist between farmers and farmworkers had not altered, but rather taken on a different form which is not to the betterment of farmworkers or organising. Farmers no longer play the role of "farm father," but instead punish the workers in order to maintain control over the farms. Removing the non-wage benefits on which the workers were relying, was a way for the farmers to punish the workers. This is also a method for reducing the militancy of the workforce. Therefore, after 10 years of the uprising in De Doorns, unionisation is still very low because of the fear that is embedded in the relations, intimidation, and exclusion that workers who join unions experience.

This study found that farmworkers are still divided along ethnicity, nationality, employment status and residence lines and this division is facilitated by farmers. Farmers have divided the workers into insiders who are considered like family because they reside on-farm, and outsiders who are seen as workers who deliver a service to the farmers in exchange for money. This study suggest that on-farm and off-farm workers are divided. This study also found that a divide exists between local workers and cross border migrant workers from our neighbouring country of Zimbabwe and Lesotho.

The study further confirmed that strong social networks amongst farmworkers is a critical factor in developing and sustaining a collective identity. However, farmworkers have lacked to build strong social networks to build a collective identity. The study also concludes that trade unions have not done much to organise permanent, and seasonal farmworkers collectively. Traditional vehicles of organising continue to fail seasonal workers because of the instability and unsecure nature of their employment. Data showed that precarity, fear, and intimidation are some of the key elements of the social milieu in De Doorns. The results most importantly show that farmworkers' organising behaviour has been influenced by the social context in which they are embedded ten years after the De Doorns uprising.

Therefore, after the uprising in De Doorns in 2012-2013 there has been no real change in how permanent and seasonal farmworkers organise. There are still continuous barriers from the past that linger on in the present day and because of these barriers, farmworkers remain at the shorter end. Therefore, for farmworkers to successfully organise, they need to strengthen their social networks and build a collective identity that recognizes that all of them are marginalized, exploited, underpaid, and black workers, despite other social differences that might be over emphasis as a way of dividing them. This would hopefully lead to unity and a place where locals do not see cross border migrant workers as the enemy rather as part of them exploited class. Until workers are united amongst each other they will continue to play in favour of the farmers and succumb to power from above instead of building power from below.

Historically, on the Western Cape wine farms the permanent workforce which the farmers employed stayed on-farm. After the political transition in 1994, with the extension of labour legislation to farmworkers and farmers unwillingness to cooperate with new legislation, there was a decline in the permanent workforce. However, post 2012-2013 farmworkers uprising in De Doorns, change came when the continual farm evictions resulted that some of the permanent workforce now reside off-farm. However, post 2012-2013 farmworkers uprising in De Doorns, change came when farmers of the permanent workforces are now residing off-farm. Furthermore, while a lot is known about the relationship between permanent and seasonal farmworkers. However, there is limited discussion about the relationship between permanent *on-farm* and permanent *off-farm* workers. Further research is needed to determine what type of relationship exist between these two (on-farm and off-farm) permanent workers, and how the nature of their relationship influences organising.

This research challenged the conventional idea of paternalistic relationships that exist among farmers and farmworkers, and how it effects organising for farmworkers. In doing so, this thesis demonstrates the continuation of these relationships even after a massive historically unprecedented strike wave and how it shapes the way farmworkers think about organising. This research has shown that worker representatives have not been successful in addressing the challenges which caused farmworkers to strike in 2012. Apart from that, things have not change to the betterment for farmworkers or their organising. This is because there is division among the workers along their ethnicity, nationality, residence, and employment status. Along with division that exists among the farmworkers, workers experience intimidation and exclusion if they want to join unions. This dissertation expands the body of academic knowledge on organising farmworkers and, ideally, creates space for new organising ideas and approaches to farmworker organisation's challenges.

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