Working and Living Conditions of Seasonal Workers in the Agro-processing sector: a case study of Carara Agro-Processing Services (Pty) Ltd

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Buyisiwe Sime Ngidi

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the working and living conditions of seasonal workers. In the context of increased demand for processed and higher-value food products, the agro-processing industry has been identified as a main contributor in the South African labour market (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012: 17). In an effort to achieve high production outputs while saving on operational costs, employers have been seen incorporating more non-standard labour. In the agro-processing industry, non-standard labour has been in the form of seasonal workers which has been a matter of concern to state structures tasked with ensuring company compliance with labour regulations, especially as it relates to the protection of workers within the industry. Many of these workers are offered little protection, sub-standard working conditions, irregular working hours, having little or no benefits, lacking skills and often facing a lack of trade union representation (Fourie, 2008:111). The introduction of section 198B of Labour Relations Act (LRA) has been designed to address the rights of non-standard workers and to provide protection against exploitative practices within various industries (Griessel, 2015:1). The thesis focuses its attention on the role of social reproduction and the labour process in perpetuating domination and inequalities within the workplace. Further, the thesis examines the challenges of non-standard labour and the difficulties of regulating it in practice. It also discusses the livelihood strategies adopted by seasonal workers when not employed, in this case, by Carara Agro Processing Services. The research adopted qualitative research techniques in the form of semi-structured interviews and used purposive and snowball sampling in accessing relevant data for analysis purposes.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

B-BBEE	Broad Based Economic Empowerment
BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United States
GEAR	Growth, Employment And Redistribution
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPAP	Industrial Policy Action Plan
LRA	Labour Relations Act
NDP	National Development Plan
UNIDO	United Nation Industrial Development Organization
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

> **"**analysis of work and employment that treats them as separate from family and home life is deeply flawed" (Edward and Wajcman, 2005:63)

1.1 Introduction

The nature of work is changing rapidly, with drastic changes in full-time permanent employment and non-standard employment (Heeray and Salmon, 2003:3). The changes in the workforce are attributed to globalisation, deregulation, technological advancement compounded by unemployment (Fourie, 2008:110). Non-standard work is a broad term which encapsulates casual, temporary, seasonal and part-time work. The growing trend of non-standard work has sparked debate particularly with regard to employment conditions and regulations (Fourie, 2008: 112). The majority of the workers who enter into non-standard employment contracts lack knowledge about their basic employment rights and are usually so desperate for employment that they end up being subjected to inferior terms and conditions of work (Heeray and Salmon, 2003:3). Thereafter, find themselves caught in the cycle of continuous temporary employment by the same employer for years without regulation and protection (Fouries, 2008: 111). In part this is orchestrated by the nature of the jobs, especially in the agro-processing industry. However, non-standard employment is a matter of concern as it leaves workers vulnerable to exploitative and abusive practises.

Non-standard work is rife in South Africa, more so in informal sectors usually located in rural areas where agriculture is a source of subsidence and livelihood for the population. The South African agro-processing industry is a significant employer of labour, particularly non-standard labour. The agro-processing industry is a diverse sector comprising of food and beverages, tobacco products, paper and wood products, textiles, footwear and apparel, leather products and rubber products. It has also been identified by the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP), the New Growth Path and the National Development Plan (NDP) for its potential to create jobs

and enhance food security because of its strong backward linkage with the primary agricultural sector (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2014:1). The focus of the thesis is on the food division which remains dominant in its share of the total output (71.8%), employment (73.4%), value-added (71.8%) and domestic fixed investment (62.9%) as of 2016 (International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa, 2016:2). The contribution of agro-processing to the overall employment within the South African economy, is significant to analysing and examining trends within non-standard work.

Whilst several studies have spoken to the employment relationship, this research study seeks to analyse the working (economic production) and living conditions (social reproduction) of non-standard workers, in particular seasonal workers. Changes in the labour market also create a shift within the culture and the idea of work and community. It is imperative to observe how the link between working conditions and social reproduction interconnect, compliment and contrast. The discrepancies between literature, social systems and cultural practises in understanding non-standard work find expression in the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study, which are the labour process theory and theories of social reproduction. The labour process theory guided predominantly by the work of Harry Braverman's seminal work, *Labor and monopoly capital*, is used to give perspective and insight into the working conditions of seasonal workers. The lack of trade union organization or collective bargaining means that seasonal workers are vulnerable to exploitation. Marx (1976) uses the labour process theory to conceptualise exploitation and the role of management in perpetuating exploitation within the workplace. The labour process theory is best suited for this research as it provides in depth understanding and analysis of relationships and experiences within the workplace. The theories of social reproduction guided by the work of Bourdieu, Passeron and Althusser, are used to analyse the living conditions of seasonal workers. The theories of social reproduction interrogate the role of social structures in informing social behaviour. This theory is best suited for this study as it provides a framework for understanding the social and structural pulls and pushes, which promote or deter seasonal work. Importantly, the theories of social reproduction link both the working and living conditions of the seasonal workers and observes these two distinct spheres of social activity as forming one integrated process.

This chapter begins by providing a discussion on the main theories, namely the labour process theory and the theories of social reproduction, respectively. The discussion on the labour process theory examines the labour process, under capitalism and its expectation on individuals to work for their ultimate survival. The role and purpose of management is also analysed to

assist in examining the working conditions of seasonal workers. This discussion focuses on how management uses control and organization within the labour process to continuously exploit the worker. Ultimately, this chapter discusses how the labour process physically, emotionally and spiritually disenfranchises and alienates the worker from their work.

Following this, the theories of social reproduction are discussed with focus on the influences of culture, educational institutes and the family on maintaining social order. This section focuses on how capitalist societies are organized in the interest of the economic power elites. This social organization is argued to also be mirrored within the labour process. Thus, legislation is seen as a tool used by capitalist societies to create and sustain social reproduction. The last part of this chapter includes discussions on the role of the agro-processing sector in South Africa and its relationship to seasonal work. These discussions also observe seasonal work and its relevance within current discussions of work, particularly non-standard work in South Africa.

1.2 Labour Process Theory (And Labour Market)

This section outlines the labour process theory. The discussion focuses on Harry Braverman's conception of the labour process and the tendencies of the capitalist labour process to continually disenfranchise workers mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically. This section starts by discussing the emergence and development of the labour process. Thereafter, discussing labour market segmentation and its influence on how workers experience the labour process. Finally, discussions on the role of management in the labour process. These discussions focus on explaining how and why labour is exploited to produce commodities for capital accumulation; this foundation establishes a base for understanding the experience of (seasonal) workers within the labour market.

1.3 Discussing the labour process theory and the labour market

The labour process theory developed from the work of Harry Braverman (1974), who sought to conceptualise the developments of the labour process under monopoly capitalism. Braverman's work has become one of the most important attempts in the social sciences to conceptualise the developments of the labour process. Like Marx, Braverman protested the idea that workers entered the labour market voluntarily. Rather, he argued that workers were forced to realise their potential labour power to survive. For Braverman (1998:62), it was at the point of production that class struggle emerged and persist. The emergence of this way of

thinking about the labour process was a radical turn from the approach that many social scientists adopted.

The historical dispossession of the labour process from its workers has meant that the workers have lacked "independent access to the means of subsistence" (Littler, 1982:21). This position has also meant that workers under capitalism have regarded work as a fundamental part for life. It has also meant that workers have become subjects of the labour market as a result of their dependency on it for survival (Braverman, 1998:38; Littler, 1982:21). For Braverman (1998: 42), the social, political and economic conditions of capitalism compelled and continue to be compelled workers to enter the labour market because: "possessing nothing but its power to labour, sells that power to the capitalist in return for subsistence". The precarious position of workers persists in that even after selling their labour power, they have no guarantee that work is forthcoming, or once attained is secure and permanent (Braverman, 1998:42). However, the level of precariousness experienced by workers differs according to the position and industry they occupy in the labour market.

For the purposes of analytical distinction, it is important to distinguish the labour market from the labour process. In practise, these two concepts are in many ways intertwined and mutually dependant. This distinction aids in understanding the labour process theory both substantially and holistically. Labour market refers to the 'place' where labour is bought and sold (Braverman, 1998:31). It is a place of exchange where labour is exchanged for wage (Fleetwood, 2010F:17). The employers exchange wage for labour power (Fleetwood, 2010:17). In this sense, the labour market is a place of exchange between two actors: the employer and the worker. On the other hand, labour process refers to the production process where labour power is transformed into actual labour (Braverman, 1998:32). Central to the labour process is the role of management to organise, supervise and control workers and ensure that workers perform to maximise profit. Drawing from the works of Marx, Braverman (1974:83) argued that

> as craft declined, workers would sink to the level of general and undifferentiated labour power, adaptable to a wide range of tasks, while as science grew, it would be concentrated in the hands of management

Braverman argues that managerial control serves to restructure the skills and resistance of workers within the workplace. The labour process observes the transformation of labour power into actual labour (Braverman, 1998:62). Moreover, it observes the role of technological innovations within the workplace as a means of control and ultimately the deskilling and degradation of work (Woods, 1982:14).

Within the labour market, different categories of workers experience work differently. This differentiation in experience is caused by what is referred to as segmentation within the labour market (Peck, 2005:220). According to Peck (2005:220), "what distinguishes segmentation from mere division is that each segment functions according to different rules". This heterodox approach argues that the labour market is divided into different segments, which are governed by different rules. According to Peck (2005:220), labour markets are social constructs, which contain within them various rules and forms of organisation. These, in turn, condition "the mode of operation and structure to some extent the actors themselves and determine their behaviour" (Peck, 2005:221). This segmentation differentiates workers in terms of recruitment, categorisation and employment sector.

Labour market segmentation theory holds that "segmentation of the labour market is the consequence of underlying socioeconomic processes, forces or tendencies that give rise to, and reproduce, specific and historically contingent labour market structures" (Fine, 2003:108; see also Loveridge and Mok 1979; Wilkinson 1981; Rubery and Wilkinson 1994). Here, the emphasis is on the role of class struggle, structural reproduction, institutional structures and processes in segmentation. Segmentation within the labour market reflects social, economic and political power. Oftentimes, the amount of power a worker holds within society is mirrored in the labour market and expressed through the labour process (Peck, 2005:221). Simply, social privilege and advantage create segmentation within the labour market and in this sense the labour market and labour process become a place of power struggles. In a study which focuses on understanding and analysing the experiences of workers within the agro-processing industry, segmentation assists to explain these experiences.

The labour process is "the system of production and the social relationships that are affixed to the production process under capitalism" (Kheswa, 2013:11). For Marx, the labour process comprises of three critical elements: firstly, the actual work, secondly, the object on which work is performed and thirdly, the instruments of work (Marx in Magoqwana, 2015:45). As

workers interact with these elements and capitalist labour relations are forged. The labour process is not peculiar to capitalism, it is a fundamental condition of human existence (Marx, cited in Magoqwana, 2015:45). For Marx (1992:174), the labour process is the process of interplay of social relationships that naturally emerge as humans interact with each other and with nature. Unlike animals, human labour is not instinctive but conscious and purposive (Marx, 1992:174). Magoqwana (2015:45) argues that the exploitative nature of the labour process, under capitalism, means that social relations during the production process are inherently agonistic. It follows that the labour process ought to be seen as a complex prism with many converging and intersecting connections exiting within and extending beyond the performance of the worker, the object on which work is performed and the instruments of work. An understanding of these relations allows us to observe the tensions that exist within the labour process (Magoqwana, 2015:46).

The labour process is geared towards the maximisation of profit. In an abstract sense, the maximisation of profit is done by maximally transforming labour power into actual labour. This is achieved by either extracting more work from the worker or increasing worker's efficiency. According to Thompson (1983:41), the labour process is "inextricably linked to the struggle for profit production". This means that at any given circumstance, the labour process will favour the interests of the employer above those of the employee. The labour power of the employee, once sold, is at the mercy of the market or more specifically, the owner of the means of production. This is to say, the worker, once having sold their labour power, is constrained to transform it as desired by the employer for maximum profit. As such, the labour process can never be viewed as a non-contentious space but rather must be seen as a space of continual struggle focused on achieving an outcome suitable for both the owners of the means of production and the workers who sell their potential to labour.

The labour process under capitalism presupposes an employment contract which outlines the conditions of the sale of the worker's labour power and its purchase by the employer (Braverman 1998:31). The worker is expected to transform raw material into products for exchange on commodity markets. This exchange is not just applicable for material transactions but also applies for mental transactions. Central to the concept of the labour process is the working conditions, employment relations and wages (Braverman, 1998:50). The advance of technology and the emergence of non-standard jobs has transformed the labour process and it is coming to be defined. Doogan (2009:55) notes that new information technologies are a

critical ingredient of the labour process because it determines "innovative capacity and provides infrastructure of flexibility and adaptability for the management of the labour process". This means that material and mental transactions in the labour process are expanding and adapting to new conditions of relation between employers and workers. Burawoy (1983: 590) remarks that legislation and regulations have given rise to considerable resistance of workers within the employment relationship.

In most cases, particularly in the lower segments within the labour market, employment relations are rarely defined, leaving many workers vulnerable to exploitative and abusive practices by employers (Peck, 2005:221). In these cases, legislation becomes like an absent actor in a performance: thought about, spoken of, spoken to but never seen by the performers. In many ways, the disenfranchising nature of the term "employee" has heightened the degree of vulnerability of the workers, both standard and non-standard workers. Invariably, the employment contract is set in the best interests of the employer. In this scenario, there is a presupposition that the employer employs workers with clearly defined rights, duties and obligations (Fourie, 2008: 13). Within the ambit of this contract, the employee consents to sell his or her labour power in exchange for remuneration. Cohen (1987:36) argues that under capitalism this trade of labour power for wage is not a fair one. The value of the labour is undervalued to maximizing profits. Central to the labour process, it must be reiterated, is the maximization of profits (Braverman, 1974:51). It is left to imagination, how the working conditions of a seasonal worker who has neither an employment contract nor any economic power to demand their rights could be (Fourie, 2008: 13).

Management occupies a position of dominance in the labour process and labour market because they have the capacity to employ and dismiss worker (Braverman, 1998:83). Their dominance comes from the fact that at any point management can divorce themselves from the worker and incidentally divorce the worker from their means of subsistence (Magoqwana, 2015:68). This power, in and of itself, creates insecurity for the worker, especially if they occupy a peripheral position in the labour market. Even with rights empowering workers enshrined in the BCEA and the LRA, the space of insecurity often means that these rights are not always exercised and enforced (Fourie, 2008:16). This also means that negotiations or bargaining the terms of the employment contract are often strained and muffled for the worker. The ideas of openness and transparency within this relationship becomes more of a one-way line from management to workers rather than an active exchange of ideas surrounding ways in which labour power can

be more efficiently, reasonably and fairly transformed into actual labour (Braverman,1974:83). Simply, imbalance in the employment relationship creates an imbalance in bargaining power. This is imbalance in the employment relationship is especially prevalent in workplaces where workers have a lack of representation. It is important to recognise the complexities which exist within the employment relationship so as to interrogate the managerial perspective of worker satisfaction which often becomes the mouthpiece of workers (Braverman, 1974: 60).

Drawing on the works of Marx, Braverman (1974:121) argues that "as craft declined, workers would sink to the level of general and undifferentiated labour power, adaptable to a wide range of tasks, while as science grew, it would be concentrated in the hands of management". Braverman's argument is critical to understanding managerial control, the restructuring of skills and worker resistance within the design of the workplace. Hence, the key role of management to organise, supervise and control workers to ensure that workers maximize performance. For Bravernman (1974:121), technological innovations within the workplace were not purely motivated by demands of efficiency but by the need of management to have control over the workforce (Wood, 1982:14). The results of which would also be the deskilling and degradation of work (Kitay, 1996; Wood, 1982). To understand the development of the labour process, requires an understanding of how capitalism has historically functioned and continues to function.

Braverman's interest was not "primarily with 'control' or even deskilling *per se*, but with the specifically capitalist logic which constructs these tendencies" (Cohen, 1987:36). This is critical to understanding the fact that the degradation of work is not only an argument against the above-mentioned means of oppression in the workspace, but also an argument against the capitalist logic that seeks the maximization of profit at the expense of the workers from the production process. This capitalist logic perpetuates tendencies within the workplace which degrade and further dispossess workers of their ability to control their means of subsistence. The tendencies of the capitalist labour market continually disenfranchise the worker: mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically by separating the conception of labour from its execution (Braverman, 1974:115).

The ideas of Fredrick Taylor, particularly his work on scientific management, encouraged the degeneration of human labour to the level of animals. Premised on stripping conceptualisation from execution - consciousness, creativity, logic and self-realisation were completely separated

and stripped away from actual production as would be the case with animals (Magoqwana, 2015:68). In this way, the division of labour, the monopolisation of knowledge, 'pre-planning and pre-calculation' were all elements of dispossessing workers from their subsistence and ultimately 'deskilling' workers (Carey, 2016:97). Taylor's ideas on scientific management lead to a considerable surge in the number of "proletarian jobs" in every industry and the workplace (Braverman, 1947:62). However, the re-emergence of focus on workers in the labour process highlighted the necessity of workers who were free and creative as opposed to being unconscious and unthinking beings in the labour process (Marcuse, 2002: xxvii). This school of thought argued that workers were constantly negotiating their position in the labour process and in society.

It is widely claimed that work is dehumanizing and alienating experience for workers. Scholars, including Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson and Karl Marx, argue that work in a capitalist industrial society seeks to divorce workers from their own humanity (Edward and Wajcman, 2005: 24). Marx (cited in Baldry *et al*, 2007:4) noted the effects of the labour process on the workers, one of them being alienation. The concept of alienation is widely used to describe workers' subjective experiences. Marx's conception of alienation is essentially an objective condition (Edwards and Wajcman, 2005: 24). It is not just evident through job dissatisfaction or frustration; Marx argues that alienation is experienced intrinsically by workers as a result of the capitalist employment relationship. The 'structured antagonism' that characterises the relationship between worker and employer is at the root of this alienation. Marx argues that, because of the impersonal nature of market processes along with pressures created through competition, work under capitalism is alienating (Edwards and Wajcman, 2005:24).

Social relations within the workplace also contribute to the experience of work. Marx (1992:174) identifies human labour as "conscious and purposive rather than instinctive". This means that the labour process is based on social relations which give meaning and experience to workers. Strong relationships cultivated within the workplace increase the satisfaction and experience of workers within the workplace. Within labour process, social relations are intimately connected to gender-specific roles which largely reflect gendered roles found in the home (Wajcman, 2000: 196). This research study seeks to understand how patriarchy affects the role and experiences of female workers within the labour process. The thesis seeks to understand how intimate the relationship between the productive and reproductive process is through the experiences of seasonal workers. Interview schedules look to unpack how seasonal

workers view the interaction of work against social aspects of their lives. It will be interesting to also see how value is attributed to both the work and social life.

1.4 Theories of Social Reproduction

This part of the chapter outlines theories of social reproduction, guided by the works of Bourdieu, Passeron and Althusser. This section starts by conceptualising theories of social reproduction, then analysing the role that family plays in reproducing social order within the capitalist societies; thereafter, discussing the role of educational institutions in maintaining and reproducing social order. The focus is on how family, educational institutions and class are agents which legitimise and impose social order. Thus, maintaining and reproducing social values and principles. These theories provide a fuller analysis of the labour process.

1.5 Conceptualising Theories of Social Reproduction

There is no single comprehensive 'theory of social reproduction' but rather theories of social reproduction which provide an analytical framework used to discuss trends within the capitalist societies (Macris, 2011:25). It follows then that different theories of social reproduction use different conceptual models to understand why and how relationships of inequality and domination are reproduced through or within groups. Cultural and social reproduction have been concerned with the ways in which "'innocent', yet highly questionable pedagogical policies and practices…contribute to the reproduction of forms of domination and inequality" (Macris, 2011:25).

Ciulla uses theories of social reproduction to explain why and how relationships of inequality and domination are perpetuated within the workplace. He argues that economic power elites sustain their dominance through the reproduction of knowledge that is favourable to their interests, meanwhile, subordinate classes willingly accept their exploitation and oppression without considering themselves as being manipulated or coerced (Ciulla, 2000:24). This relationship between the economic power elites and the subordinate classes is also reflected in the workplace. Thus, for Ciulla (2000:25), the observation of work is an observation of a set of ideas and values which inform interactions within the workplace. Work is not only a kind of activity performed by workers, but a set of ideologies perpetuated in relation to the activity performed (Ciulla, 2000:25). The focus of work is on the dominant ideologies which inform

the worker's behaviour and interactions within the economic production. Therefore, Ciulla (2000:25), argues that it is essential that the study of work is complimented with theories of social reproduction in order to more accurately understand the working conditions of workers. Ciulla (2000:26), urges that sociological studies of work need to debunk the culture of work and unpack the various layers which perpetuate social order. In this way, the economic production (working conditions) and social reproduction (living conditions) are interconnected in ways that shape and limit each other in complex and contradictory ways.

Granovetter (cited in Krippner,2001:776), suggests that individuals do not behave or make decisions as atoms outside a social context or puppets of social categorization. He (cited in Krippner, 2001:77) suggests that to understand and analyse social action, it starts with understanding that individuals exist as intellectual beings negotiating their role and space within capitalist societies (Krippner, 2001:779). Individuals are led and guided by ideas and values in society. A considerable number of individuals are guided by learnt behaviour. Granovetter (cited in Krippner, 2001:777), also suggests that individuals do not necessarily act by the social categories which they happen to occupy. He argues that "social action is embedded in networks of ongoing social relations" (Krippner, 2001:777). It is important to understand that individual behaviour within the labour process is the product of ongoing social interactions and relationships. The social relationships and interactions inform the parameters of individual action. Moreover, that the interaction between social relations and social action is fluid, ongoing and evolving. In the context of the research study, the objective of the research study is to analyse the living conditions of seasonal workers. Particularly, observing how the living conditions of seasonal workers correlate with their working conditions.

1.6 Dominant Ideology

It is important to understand that social relationships and interactions which guide individual action are premised on a dominant ideology. The point of departure for social reproduction theories is the tendency of societies to reproduce themselves (Macris, 2011:24). The deeper interrogation of the tendency of societies to reproduce themselves is how and why they do this. For social reproduction theorists one of the answers is a dominant ideology. A dominant ideology is the base from which fundamental values, principles and ideas are naturalized, legitimised and universalized in everyday discourse within a society (Hoffman, 2004:91). This means then that social relationships and interactions operate in favour of the dominant ideology. For capitalist societies, this follows that the dominant ideology operates in the

interests of economic power elites over the subordinate classes and in favour of men over women (Hoffman, 2004:91). In other words, social reproduction occurs because there is a dominant ideology that is being produced and reproduced in that society. The ideology has its interest groups whom it operates in favour of. In capitalist societies, the dominant ideology will always tend to strive towards the maximization of profit in the interests of the economic power elites (Hoffman, 2004:91). Thus ideas and values found in governmental institutions, educational institutions, community projects and the family are organized to fulfil the dominant ideology.

According to Macris (2011:24), ideology is used by economic power elites to gain power rather than physical force. In developed capitalist countries power is seen to be exercised through a combination of coercion and consent. However, in developing countries it is seen that power is exercised through coercion rather than consent. For Gramsci (as cited in Macris, 2011:24), consent is always supported by coercion. She (Macris, 2011:24) argues that ideologies are transmitted through or within social structures. These ideologies are transmitted through social structures which legitimise and impose themselves on individual action (Macris, 2011:25). Power is an important concept to understand because it helps to guide the research study to understand how and why social reproduction occurs. Furthermore, to understand the link between social reproduction and the economic structure. The main objective of this research study is to analyse the working and living conditions of seasonal workers. Thus, theories of social reproduction facilitate the analysis of how dominant ideologies are mirrored in social structures. Furthermore, how dominant ideologies perpetuate inequalities, exploitation and oppression within society and consequently the workplace.

1.7 Bourdieu and Passeron's Social-Cultural Theory

This section discusses Bourdieu and Passeron's social-cultural theory. The concept of cultural reproduction and symbolic violence play a vital role in understanding and analysing why and how relationships of domination and inequality are perpetuated in capitalist societies (Macris, 2011:32). While economic capital is a core ingredient of domination within capitalist societies, Bourdieu takes it a step further and argues that exchanges of economic capital have symbolic capital in the form of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990:71). Accordingly, understanding economic capital as a form of symbolic capital advances the understanding that domination not only reflects economic power but a more subtle power -

symbolic power (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990: xxv). Symbolic power is imposed by the economic power elites, in favour of their interests and ideologies. Bourdieu and Passeron provide a school of thinking that links class, culture and domination (Macris, 2011:32).

Capitalist societies function to maintain conditions which are favourable to the maximization of capital and ideology functions to perpetuate these conditions (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990:71). Culture and the economy share a complex relationship of domination, subordination, oppression and exploitation (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990:71). All these parts work together to maintain and reproduce the structure of power relations within capitalist societies. Although, dominant fixtures within society may claim to recognise individuals as equal, this is a disguise and legitimise in subtle ways, the arbitrariness of the distribution of power and privilege. Bourdieu and Passeron's social-cultural theory suggests that the economic power elites exercise their dominance through symbolic violence on the subordinate classes. This symbolic violence is referred to as "cultural arbitrariness" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990:57). Cultural arbitrariness, within this context, refers to the arbitrary power used by dominant classes seeking to legitimise social practices (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990:57). The dominant classes impose these social practices by transforming cultural arbitrariness into universal forms of meaning (Macris, 2011:34). Imperative to understanding reproduction within society is the deconstruction of concepts such as "normal", "natural" or "culture".

Bourdieu and Passeron (cited in Macris,2011:33) argue that the dominant classes in society maintain their symbolic violence "by ingraining or legitimising the existing social structures, which are objectively recognized as legitimate authority". In this way, the dominant classes "uphold power and control, while subordinated groups remain disempowered" (Macris, 2011:33). Thus, the dominant classes use cultural capital to maintain and reproduce the existing social structures (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990:13). The process of reproduction occurs continually and consistently through the processes of legitimation and imposition by the dominant classes. Bourdieu's discussion on cultural capital provides an important contribution to the cultural reproduction theory in relation to the research study. The study is based on seasonal workers who form part of the subordinated groups. This also follows that with forming the subordinated groups, seasonal workers are a disempowered class. The research study examines how the concept of 'the disempowered class' also mirrors itself in the economic production. Furthermore, what ideas are perpetuated within communities which maintain and reproduce domination, inequality and exploitation of the disempowered class.

A critical foundation to Bourdieu's discussion is the concept of the *habitus*. The *habitus* refers to transposable values, beliefs and thoughts, which influence practises within society (Macris, 2011:38). These transposable values, beliefs and thoughts are congruent with dominant ideologies which are perpetuated by socially constructed institutions such as family, class and educational systems (Macris, 2011:16). For Bourdieu (cited in Tzanakis, 2011:76), family is key to understanding social reproduction because "[transmissible parental] codes and practices capable of securing a return to their holders". The purpose of which is to "maintain existing life and to reproduce it to the next generation" (cited in Luxtan, 2006:36). The family is central to the reproduction process because within the family - physical, social and cultural capital is exchanged (Tzanakis, 2011:76). This exchange within the family unit, legitimises social norms. The family unit is an agent of maintaining social order and reproducing it to the next generation. According to Burawoy and Wright (2000:473), the family is an agent of social and cultural reproduction at the workplace and society. For this reason, Bourdieu states that social reproduction is the "production of goods and services and the production of life are part of one integrated process" (Luxton, 2006:36).

Simply, economic production and social reproduction are interconnected; both shaping and mirroring each other in complex ways. Social scientists contend with the concept that the social institutions uncritically and unabashedly accept cultural codes of dominant classes (Macris, 2011:16). Individual choice and the theory of social action does have tendencies of being problematic because individuals similarly positioned within the *habitus* may develop personal trajectories that vary (Macris, 2011:17). Bourdieu's argument highlights social influences which directly and indirectly shape social behaviour, not necessarily determine social behaviour (Bourdieu, cited in Tzanakis, 2011:76). The social world is negotiated amongst its members, allowing for a new and acceptable culture. The dominant ideology informs, at least at the structural point, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Bourdieu's social-cultural theory is necessary for recognizing "the subject within objective structures and reconciles structuralism with agency" (Macris, 2011:32).

1.8 Althusser's Theory of Social Reproduction

This section provides a brief discussion on Louis Althusser's theory of reproduction. Althusser's theory attempts to understand the effects of ideology on social behaviour. Althusser

suggests that educational institutions are reproducers of capitalist production (Althusser, 2008:30). He further notes that the educational system is the most important ideological state apparatus used in developed capitalist societies (Althusser, 2008:30). Althusser's theory is significant to unpacking and analysing the effects of ideology and social reproduction. More particularly, to analyse the living conditions of seasonal workers and to understand how ideology has either promoted or deterred their actions within society and the workplace.

Althusseur (cited in Hughes Sharrock & Martin,2003:16) defines society "as a multi-layered complex of interrelated structures, which may well be consistent with each other, in which the form of each is affected by the action of all the others". As suggested, these structures are interdependent as well as interconnected. For Althusser (Macris, 2011:28), these structures function to maintain favourable conditions for the accumulation and reproduction of capital. Societies, in this sense, operate like a prism, with many converging and concaving beams (elements) working with and against each other to produce structural and institutional realities (Macris, 2011:28). For Marx, this prism is made up of two overarching structures, namely, the economic base which consists of cultural productions like art, music, religion while, the superstructure consists of the political and legal systems (Marx, cited in Macris, 2011:28).

According to Althusser, "no other ideological state apparatus has the obligatory (and not least free) audience of the totality of the children of the social capitalist formation eight hours a day for five or six days out of seven" (Althusser, 2008:30). Educational institutions are spaces of indoctrination, serving the purpose of hierarchically sorting and selecting individuals within society. Providing, a homologous reflection of the workplace where capital production is prepared through educational institutions:

> the 'scholastically adapted' youth are then sent into positions of power and privilege (managers, business owners, professionals), while the vast majority, the 'huge mass', are sent into more exploited positions (workers, minimum wage workers etc.) (Althusser, 2008:30).

Ideology determines the dynamics of society: "although culture (the economic base) and politics (the superstructure) are independent (relatively autonomous) of each other, they still share the ideological interconnections which serve to perpetuate the capitalist system" (Macris, 2011:28). For Althusser (2008:30), ideology refers to the "implicit beliefs" that structure social

behaviour (or social practises). In this sense, ideology does not necessarily refer to the mental state, ideas or thoughts informing the individual. For Marx, ideology functions to perpetuate a state of false consciousness thus maintaining the dominant status quo. For Marx, this state would present society as functioning as "normal". Althusser advances this idea by suggesting that within this unconscious state of reality, individuals are made subject to the dominant ideology, construing their relation to the world as being "natural". Individuals, in this state, believe that they are self-determining agents, unaware of the many structural forces suppressing and advancing their autonomy and agency (cited in Macris, 2011:27).

Both Marx and Althusser conceptualise ideology as being a tool of economic power elites to reproduce the status quo. However, both theorists' lack of reference to interconnected issues such as those concerning gender, race and ethnic relations means that their theories do not fully encapsulate the power dynamics which exist in capitalist system (Macris,2011:29). Thus, the implicit class-reductionist approach does not necessarily account for how the intersection of gender, race and ethnicity with class, structure or shape ideology (Macris, 2011: 29). Macris (2011:29) remarks particularly on Althusser's construction of society as not providing clear ways in which knowledge is produced and how it becomes legitimized. This criticism of Althusser's theory is noteworthy as it allows us to understand some of the limitations of his theory.

Unlike Bourdieu, Althusser observes the educational institution as a fundamental apparatus for perpetuating social order in capitalist society (cited in Macris, 2011:28). Whilst Ciulla provides the set of ideas and values established in society as relating to the economic production. As stated, the theories of social reproduction are an analytical framework for understanding capitalist society but fundamentally sustain that reproduction is created by institutions in society including class, family and educational institutions. The theories of social reproduction serve to highlight analyse how and why reproduction persists. This section analysed the link between economic production (working conditions) and social reproduction (living conditions). This section provides a framework for understanding the structural pulls and pushes, which promote or deter seasonal work, by looking to the workers' histories, stories and perceptions. Central to this section is the impact of the family and the educational structures which legitimise and impose social order; it is these set of ideas and values which inform the seasonal worker's behaviour and interaction within the workplace.

1.9 Seasonal Work and Seasonal Workers in South Africa

Before discussing seasonal work within the theoretical frameworks, it is important to understand seasonal work and seasonal workers within South Africa. This section defines seasonal work and discusses the position of seasonal workers within the South African context. It unpacks and explores the concept of non-standard employment in the light of the recent amendments to the LRA, and particularly its impact on seasonal workers.

A seasonal worker is defined as a worker who is employed for a limited period, seasonally or on a fixed-term contract (Fourie, 2008:114). Seasonal work is a form of non-standard employment, usually characterised by the availability of work. Importantly, this work is performed for a fixed period. Henningsen et al. (2014:121), in their study of seasonal workers in a Norwegian municipality, noted that seasonal work is often characterised by informality and the fragmentation of the workforce. This culture of informality and fragmentation aids the capitalist agenda of maximising profits at minimal cost. Henningsen et al. note (2014:122) that, in their case study, "seasonal workers have to rely on the few dominant actors in the labour market for their employment security, creating unequal power geometries and a blurred boundary between place and workplace". As a result of this, seasonal workers occupy a precarious position in society and the workplace.

Seasonal work is often identified as a sub-category of casual work because of its form of non-standard employment structures. Kenny and Webster (1998:229) explain that seasonal work emerged as a form of extra labour to assist during extended or busy hours of the year and it gained close association to casual work. Although casual work is often associated with seasonal work; they remain distinct in nature. Casual work applies to workers who are employed in irregular employment. It is temporary in nature, income and availability are uncertain (Fourie, 2008:111). So, casual workers have a certain level of flexibility in their employment relationship. This level of flexibility in the employment relationship has become more attractive to female workers with family commitments. On the other hand, seasonal work applies to workers who are employed for a duration of the season, often on fixed contracts, with many of the workers returning season after season (Fourie, 2008:111). During this time, seasonal workers are restricted to space, time, designation and under the direct supervision of the employer. So, seasonal workers function as permanent employees even though the employment is limited to a season (Fourie, 2008:111).

Non-standard employment is common in labour-intensive sectors such as retail, domestic service and agriculture, where workers are often afforded little protection with many being subjected to sub-standard working conditions, irregular working hours, having little or no benefits, lacking skills and often facing a lack of trade union representation (which itself means that employers are rarely held accountable for unlawful labour practices) (Loni, 2012:1; see also Dicks, 2007). Given the low levels of collective representation, many of these workers depend heavily on statutory employment standards for basic working conditions (Dicks, 2007:39; see also Theron, 2007). The LRA and the BCEA, along with their amendments, are increasingly designed to address the rights of non-standard workers and to provide protection against exploitative practices. However, it is noted that in practise the efforts of legislation are deterred by the fact that knowledge is in many cases monopolised by management and not easily accessible to workers. The vulnerability to non-standard work is linked in many instances to the absence of a standard employment relationship.

A standard employment relationship is characterised by full-time continuous employment where a worker, defined as an employee works for one employer. The work performed by the employee is at the employer's premise under the employer's direct supervision. Normally, such employment is unionised with access to social benefits that complete the social wage (Doogan, 2009:203). Henningsen et al.'s (2014:122) found, in their interviews with seasonal workers, that seasonal workers were aware of exploitation by their employers. However, they refrained from collective action to improve their working conditions (Henningsen et al., 2014:122). Seasonal work is a form of non-standard employment because it departs from the standard employment relationship. It is commonly linked to increased numbers of women's involvement in the workplace. This trend has strongly emphasized the gendered dimensions of precarious employment (Doogan, 2009; Fourie, 2008). Doogan (2009:203) notes that precarious employment is characterised by four dimensions: 1) the degree of certainty of continuous employment and the degree of risk of job loss 2) control over the labour process 3) the degree of protection from legislation 4) income level. Thus, it can be argued that seasonal work is a form of precarious employment.

Studies conducted by Van der Walt, Singh, Baatjies, Lopata, Jeebhay (2013:1) sought to recognise and investigate the challenges associated with seasonal work. The most notable challenges faced by seasonal workers, who were exposed to chilli peppers, as is the case in the research study, were that many of the workers developed respiratory diseases and/or

occupational asthma. On the other hand, a study in South Korea (Kim, Park, Lee & Kim, 2016:1) found that seasonal workers were challenged by the long working hours and often experienced mental health issues. In this study, it was found that workers in precarious employment, who worked above 68 hours/week, exhibited the highest odds of depressive symptoms compared to permanent workers working 35 to 40 hours a week (Kim, Park, Lee & Kim, 2016:1). The study further noted the "importance of monitoring and addressing the vulnerable groups of employees to reduce the mental health burden of economically active individuals" (Kim, Park, Lee & Kim, 2016:1). In an interview conducted by Robbins with a seasonal worker in a field north Deming, New Mexico, the worker noted:

> it's kind of a harsh environment working out there with the jalapenos and the chilies with the capsaicin in there. It's just a harsh place to be, and some people just can't take it (Robbins, 2013:2).

It is interesting to note that in New Mexico the challenge with producing chilli peppers is the (lack of) availability of workers. This is directly against situations experienced in China, India and South Africa where workers, who can be employed to grow or process chilli peppers, are in excess supply.

In South Africa, recent amendments to the LRA, which came into operation on 1 January 2015, place significant restrictions on the use of non-standard workers, including fixed-term and part-time contracts (Griessel, 2015:1; see also Ramultoa, 2012). Section 198B protects against possible abuse of temporary appointments. This 'abuse' may include workers being employed on a fixed-term contract when the position is not actually temporary in nature (Griessel, 2015:1; see also Ramultoa, 2012). In terms of section 198B, an employer is only allowed to employ someone on a fixed-term contract/s for longer than three months if the nature of the work the person is employed for is of a limited/definite duration or if the employer can demonstrate any justifiable reason for fixing the term of the contract. Subsection 198B (4) makes provision (among others) for such a term to be justified if the employee is employed to perform seasonal work. Hence, not only do temporary employees (who earn below the threshold) now receive greater statutory protection in the workplace, but employers also have clear guidelines when making decisions regarding temporary or part-time employment options.

In short, the new provisions make it less attractive and more difficult for employers to get away with using a temporary or part-time employee where the position is not genuinely temporary

(Griessel, 2015:1; see also Ramultoa, 2012). Furthermore, the BCEA regulates the working conditions of employees. This Act applies to all employers and employees (with exceptions that are not relevant for this research) and prescribes compulsory minimum conditions of employment. It regulates (among others) leave, working hours, employment contracts, deductions, pay slips and termination. This research explores the extent to which the working conditions of seasonal workers comply with these legislative provisions. At a distance, statutes may be found to be present but the most important aspect is the extent to which, in practice, workers are aware of their rights and actually exercise these rights in the workplace. In theory, seasonal workers have the protection of current South African labour legislation, but in practice the unusual circumstance of their employment means that enforcement of their rights is inherently problematic. For example, in theory workers have the right to meal intervals but in practice, as we shall see, some of these workers cannot go on meal intervals because they will not reach the daily targets. The pronounced rights which exist in theory are, in the reality of the workplace, often violated and/or unenforced.

1.10 Understanding Seasonal Work within the Agro-Processing Sector

Above, a broad discussion on seasonal work is presented. In this section, this broad discussion is narrowed to focus on the agro-processing sector. This section focuses on the processes and functions of the agro-processing sector. This section is divided as follows: a definition of agro-processing, and the national and international trends in this industry as well as an outline of the challenges in this industry.

Agro-processing is a subset of the manufacturing sector that makes usable raw materials and inter-mediate products derived from the agricultural sector (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2013:3; see also FAO, 1997). Simply, agro-processing refers to the transformation of products originating from agriculture, forestry and fisheries with the purpose of making usable products such as food, feed, fibre, fuel or industrial raw material. The UNIDO, IFAD and FAO (2008) refer to the agro-processing as comprising of all the post-harvest activities involved in the "processing, preservation and preparation of agricultural production for intermediate and final consumption" (Thindisa, 2014:20). Agro-processing industries relate to techno-economic activities that alter the form of agricultural products for conservation, to improve handling and to increase shelf life (Mhazo et al., 2012:1609). This means that agro-processing also includes processes that follow harvesting and those that add

to the product's value without necessarily altering its form. The United Nations International Standard Industrial Classification System (ISIC, 2013) classifies the following eleven divisions under the agro-processing industry: food, beverages, paper and paper products, wood and wood products, textiles, footwear, leather products, tobacco, wearing apparel, furniture, and rubber products (cited in Pietersen, 2009; Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries**,** 2012). Food is by far the largest agro-processing sub-section followed by paper and paper products and beverages (Pietersen, 2009:219).

Agro-processing also refers to activities that alter the form of agricultural products into various states to improve handling and to increase shelf life (Mhazo et al., 2012:1609). The agro-processing industry has a high degree of interdependence with "forward and backward activities in the agro-processing value chain" (Pietersen, 2009:219). This interdependence involves upstream and downstream industries, where the former is engaged in the initial processing of agricultural activities such as grain storage, fruit packaging, grain flour milling, leather tanning, cotton ginning, oil pressing, saw milling and fish canning. Downstream industries involve further manufacturing of intermediate products made from agricultural products, for example, bread, biscuit and noodle making, textile spinning and weaving, paper production, clothing and footwear manufacturing, and rubber manufacturing (Food and Agricultural Organisation, 2014:4). Agro-processing activities have the potential to contribute to "sustainable livelihoods through food availability emanating from improved shelf-life, improved income from increased profitability, employment, social and cultural wellbeing from limited land" (Thindisa, 2014: ii).

In developing countries, the interest in agro-processing is associated with its potential for "generating demand for primary produce from small-scale farmers, upgrading primary production through small-scale food processing and improving food price stability and food security" (Cardoso, 2000, cited in Pietersen, 2009:219). Employment trends in this sector include both formal and informal employment of employees among all the divisions, footwear, textile, beverages, wood, rubber, food, tobacco, leather, paper and furniture being largely dominated by semi-skilled and unskilled labour (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012: XV,10). Informal employment refers to the total number of jobs in the informal sector (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:17). Informal employment is a substantial contributor to the South African economy and labour market.

The major trends at national and international levels motivating growth within the agro-processing industry, have included the rise in population, higher income growth has increased demand for processed and higher-value food products. Moreover, the greater demand for female participation in the labour force and additional trends of urbanization and internationalization of retail has contributed to the growth of the agro-processing industry (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012). :4). The other advantage to processing plants is that they are not always scale dependent. This means that small operations can be as economically efficient as larger plants that benefit from economies of scale (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2014:4).

Despite international and national trends motivating growth within the industry, there are notable challenges. Among many, strict public and mandatory standards for food safety, the shift from product to process standards, and the rising scope of standards (especially collective private standards) challenge and limit the expansion of agribusiness products (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:133). The challenge of stringent and strict regulations, above the apparent need for a consistent and large volume of supply of outputs by the processing industry means that there is limited access to the market. Thus strict, mandatory and rising standards, though necessary, present as further hurdles. SMEs (small and medium enterprises), most notably within the agro-processing sector, have been challenged and are worthy of mention (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:133). Though SMEs have greater potential of generating jobs in the industry, a lack of access to finance, inadequate skills and inadequate government support are some of the challenges facing SMEs across the divisions, food, beverages, paper and paper products, wood and wood products, textiles, footwear, leather products, tobacco, wearing apparel, furniture, and rubber products (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012: 133.

The main challenges that affect SMEs within the food-processing are of particular interest because Carara Agro-processing, the focus of this study, falls within this sector. The main challenges affecting SMEs are raw-material supply, stringent regulations and standards, access to finances, limited and inaccessible incentives, managerial and technical skills and infrastructure and appropriate technology. At the risk of some generalisation, it must be noted that the supply of raw material continues to be an issue within the agro-processing sector. Seasonal supply and frequent changes in the volume of supply (coupled with a poor quality of

raw materials owing to the peculiar challenge affecting the input providers) means that there is an inability to meet market demands.

According to Mather (2005 cited in DOA 2012:133), stringent and mandatory standards hinder the growth potential of SMEs as well as access to finances, which becomes:

> the biggest bottleneck for business operation and expansion. The main reason that precludes them [SMEs] from accessing finance is high collateral required by financial institutions owing to the high-risk profile attached to them and the inability to provide a track record of financial statements (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:134).

SMEs, for the most part, operate in informal and/or speciality market, which means that requirements which would make sense for large food processors, for example, would be inappropriate for SMEs. This brings us to the following challenge: incentives. Herein, the challenge lies in the fact that incentives are not tailored made for the specific needs of SMEs in the food processing sector (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:134). Requirements for tax clearance certificates and audited financial statements for at least two years can be cumbersome on SMEs. Finally, the lack of managerial and technical skills and appropriate technological advancements within the industry means that there is an overall lack of structural and systemic progress. SMEs are often times characterised by personalized management which results in decisions being limited by short-sightedness as they are based on management's perceptions of the current views and situations.

This lack of skill intake means that there is a threat posed for innovation and competitiveness within the labour market (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:135). The nature of informal employment in the agro-processing industry means that there is a greater number of low skilled workers. The challenge with the industry's intake is also the lack of training programs, which in some enterprises is viewed as being insignificant (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:135). Meaning, that most of the initiatives to address the skill and capacity issues lack true intention, partially because there is a lack of motivation (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012:136). This has made it extremely difficult to identify and regulate the seasonal work.

1.11 Contextualising the Labour Process in South Africa

This section links the labour process theory and workers working in South Africa. It does this by contextualising the labour process theory within South Africa. The discussion commences with a brief history of South Africa. Of importance is the predominantly racialized and discriminatory nature that the labour process has adopted in South Africa. The South African labour process is characterised by racial and gendered divisions. These divisions shape the experiences of workers within the labour process. The main objective of this section is to consider Braverman's theory within the social and historical context of South Africa.

The emergence of South African urban areas was one of the clearest identifiers of class. In Magoqwana's dissertation (2015:56), she explained that "the sale of labour power [in South Africa] was intrinsically linked to the colour of the worker, not the skill". The racial character of the South African labour process was one categorised by race before skill. This is not to imply that decisions made by employers were solely based on racial categorization because objective skills were an essential component of employment; employers were dependent on the very real skills that workers possessed. However, the racial character of the labour process meant that preference was given to workers because of their race (Thindisa, 2014:24). It is from one understanding this backdrop, anchored in racial segregation, that one can contextualise the labour process in South Africa.

The labour market is controlled by economic power elites who monopolise the strongest and most influential aspects of the labour process. Management is assigned the role of maintaining institutional practises by controlling worker's labour (Braverman, 1998:83). Where, the labour process has a racial character, as is the case in South Africa, it implies that the production process reflects elements of advantage and disadvantage based on race. Von Holdt (2003:31) explored the racial character of power relations in the workplace. He argued that racialized divisions of labour meant that managerial positions were monopolised by white people (Von Holdt, 2003: 31). Consequently, this meant that technical and skilled positions were reserved exclusively for white people. This is not to say that "all whites were managers. However, any white had the right to issue instructions to any black person*"* (Von Holdt, 2003: 31). This is still the racial character of the labour process in South Africa. The racial character of the capitalist system in South Africa also means that black workers join the labour market in predominantly 'less skilled' positions (Magoqwana, 2015:8). This follows then that black

workers are disadvantaged within the labour market whilst white workers are advantaged with superior privilege and opportunity (Von Holdt, 2003: 31).

The works of various authors, among whom Webster and Von Holdt, should be mentioned, have explored the racialized character of the South African workplace in their books, *Cast in a racial mould: Labour process and trade unionism in the foundries* (1985) and *Transition from below* (2003), respectively. Webster (1985) shows how the racialized division of labour motivated the emergence of black trade unions in the 1950s and 1970s. Both authors agree that a racialized division of labour was a hallmark of the apartheid era, with skill and managerial positions monopolised by white people (Von Holdt, 2003: 31). Essentially, the workplace was marked by a racialized division of labour as well as racialized structures of power. The South African labour market still mirrors this with many black workers occupying "dirty jobs" with many white workers occupying managerial positions (Magoqwana, 2015:8). Thus, we can anticipate finding in this research study that, in Carara, the majority of less skilled positions may be occupied by black people whilst semi-skilled and skilled positions may be occupied by white people. Understanding the context of the labour process in South Africa, enables us to understand, at a more substantive level, the working and living conditions of seasonal workers.

With the advent of democracy in 1994, the government was very intentional about cultivating a more inclusive market one that gave preference to skill above race, one that allowed progression within the market and the labour process for previously disadvantaged people as well as women. Policies such as Growth, Employment And Redistribution of 1996 (GEAR) and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment of 2000 (B-BBEE) are consistent with their mission to provide previously disadvantaged people greater access to the labour market. Transnational corporations, government, and local organisations are also motivated to shift the structure of the labour market from being racialised and gendered to democratised and diversified (Von Holdt, 2003: 31). However, it is chief to note that this shift is experienced differently in different sectors. For seasonal workers, working in Grahamstown, this experience may be far from true.

More than the shift in the labour process, the South African labour has also changed remarkably over the years, with a workforce that was unthinkable years ago. A few decades ago, the concept of "employee" for instance, conjured up the image of a male worker, employed on an indefinite employment contract, working for one employer and making his way up the

organizational chart with fixed working hours (Monday to Friday), three weeks' leave a year and retiring at the age of 65. The LRA and BCEA seek to protect the employees. However, the problem with the LRA and the BCEA is that they are limited in their protection of workers within the contemporary labour market. The developments in communication technology together with a re-evaluation of the balance between work, leisure, the family and rest, have brought about profound changes for workers.

This is the fundamental issue with the definition prescribed by the LRA and the BCEA – it fails to account for a current and non-standard form of employment relationship; such work having surged with technological advances. Many workers of the 21st century, simply do not subscribe to the ambit of "employee" as provided for by legislation. Many of the current workforce work from home and control their own employment. In a changing world and fast evolving labour market the idea of a non-standard worker must be expanded to include the diversifying market. Until then, the identity of many workers will be lost in blanketed definitions which do not consider their contribution to the labour market. For the employer, this is beneficial but to the worker, this is detrimental. Perhaps a form of regulated flexibility is what the LRA needs to introduce to the debate on non-standard work, particularly seasonal work.

1.12 Contextualising Theories of Social Reproduction in South Africa

Though this discussion is largely theoretical, it is important to locate it within the context of seasonal workers by understanding how social patterns, practises, rituals and structural pressures inform the disposition of seasonal workers. Systemically and racially, apartheid is a definitive start to understand the South African social context as it can in many ways still be seem in the dominant ideas, values and principles ascribed by communities (Kheswa, 2013:24). I did not treat economic production (working conditions) and social reproduction (living conditions) as two distinct spheres of social activity but regarded them as interconnected in ways that shape and limit each other in complex and contradictory ways. In this way, this section builds on the context set in the labour process. Following, the labour process is a mirror of the social context.

Apartheid was a system of racial segregation founded on the political belief that white people were superior to black people. This was the dominant ideology and infiltrated all parts of social life including but not limited to economic, political and social spheres of life (Magoqwana,

2015:8). This system created a pattern of behaviour and culture, with deviance or resistance being met with deadly recourse. The workplace was not exempt from the far-reaching effects of apartheid. “Dirty jobs” within this system were ascribed mainly to black people. These jobs, as suggested by the name were jobs that were driven by manual labour, low wage, low skill, poor and non-standard working conditions (Doogan, 2009:154). Unsurprisingly, non-standard jobs were predominantly occupied by black people from disadvantaged backgrounds (Magoqwana, 2015:8). I anticipate finding reproductions of this within the histories and backgrounds of seasonal workers employed by Carara.

Social reproduction of agricultural non-standard jobs, including seasonal work, has largely been studied in comparison and contrast to commercial farms. As noted by Kheswa (2013:24),

> there is a particular uniqueness to commercial farming which differentiates it from other (but not all) economic sectors, namely the integration of working and living spaces on-site. In other words, the site of economic production (and the labour process) and the site of social reproduction (the domestic sphere) are not spatially separated as they exist together.

The employment relationship within these contexts extends beyond the wage-employment contract. The employment relationship between employers and workers in commercial farms, in many ways defines the agricultural labour process (Kheswa, 2013:24). However, the employment relationship between employers and workers within seasonal work differs. Seasonal workers are not necessarily bound to live on the employer’s premise and usually leave after completing work for the day. The research study of seasonal workers becomes of interest because it reveals a different character to work, particularly work in the agro-processing sector. Seasonal work is unique to workers from commercial farms in that most studies show a tendency within seasonal workers to relocate from their place of work when their ‘seasonal contracts’ end (used loosely). Intriguing is the question of the social and economic strategies adopted to manage the non-standard employment relationship.

1.13 Conclusion

The main sections of this chapter included a discussion on non-standard work. Following this, a discussion on the main theories, namely the labour process theory and the social reproduction

theories, respectively. The main argument was that the labour process, through capitalism created the necessity for individuals to work for their livelihood and ultimately their survival. Thereafter, the discussion progressed to observe the role that management played in the labour process. The main argument was that management control and organize the organization of work, consequently, exploiting the worker's interests and rights within the labour process. Legislation becomes the means of regulating this antagonistic relationship.

Social reproduction theories commenced with a discussion to conceptualise social reproduction theories, mainly that capitalist society is organized for the interests of the dominant classes and the exploitation and oppression of the subordinate classes. The main argument was that culture, educational institutes and the family are the main contributors to reproduction as they legitimise the existing social order. Moreover, legislation also becomes a tool to create and sustain social reproduction.

The last part of this chapter included discussions on the role of the agro-processing sector in South Africa and its relationship with seasonal work. These discussions observed and analysed seasonal work and its relevance within current discussions of work, particularly non-standard work in South Africa. The main argument was that non-standard work is not given as much recognition as full time permanent work. Precarious employment has made it difficult to research non-standard work, particularly seasonal work. This research suggests that until a point is made to recognise seasonal work within society, it remains susceptible to exploitation and abuse. One of the issues is that non-standard work is so broad and diverse that it becomes difficult to conceptualise its nature and character within the labour process and its contribution to social reproduction. The consequences are that legislation, namely the LRA and BCEA fall short in addressing the rights of non-standard workers, particularly seasonal workers. Furthermore, systems of inequality, exploitation and oppression are perpetuated in the labour process.

Currently, labour laws inadequately protect workers in non-standard forms of employment (Fourie, 2008:110). One of the fundamental issues for the courts has been trying to distinguish and categorise workers. The definition of "employee" in the LRA and BCEA has added to the difficulty of protecting workers under precarious employment. This definition has inadvertently served to segregate workers within the labour market; placing privilege and power to some workers while exploiting and oppressing others. It is important to find a form

of regulated flexibility which will find the cooperation of employers, government, trade unions and workers (Loni, 2012:45). This would include regulations for non-standard employment, making employers accountable and hopefully more responsible in their exercise of control and organization within the labour process. I did not treat economic production (working conditions) and social reproduction (living conditions) as two distinct spheres of social activity but regarded them as interconnected in ways that shape and limit each other in complex and contradictory ways.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN

> "The institutional separation of paid employment from other spheres of social has affected how contemporary social science conceptualises work" (Edward and Wajcman, 2005:20).

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methods and processes used to conduct this study. Research methodology refers to the methods used to gather data. These methods may include measurements and data analysis. The aim of research methods is to obtain the objectives of the study. According to Durkheim (1999:29), research methodology is a strategic framework for action used to connect the research questions to the implementation of the research.

The research study is conducted through qualitative research using in-depth interviews. This method assists with understanding the experiences of seasonal workers in the labour process as well as the sphere of social reproduction. In this study, the economic production (working conditions) and social reproduction (living conditions) was treated as one sphere of social activity. Therefore, this study wanted to understand and analyse the complex and contractionary ways in which these two distinct spheres are interconnected and function to shape and limit each other. This chapter is divided as follows: a section on the research objectives, a discussion on qualitative research and its relevance in the study. The sampling methods utilised, the data collection process and the data analysis. This chapter further examines ethical issues and challenges that may be faced in this study.

2.2 Research Objectives

The primary goal of this dissertation is to analyse the working and living conditions of seasonal workers in the agro-processing sector, with specific reference to Carara Agro Processing Services (Pty) Ltd.

The secondary aims of this dissertation are:

1. To understand whether the Labour Relations Act and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act provide a means of protection to seasonal workers.
2. To examine the working conditions of seasonal workers living in an urbanised-rural area (Grahamstown)
3. To examine the exploitation within Carara Agro-Processing Services.
4. To understand the livelihood strategies of seasonal workers when they are not employed by Carara Agro Processing Services.
5. To understand factors which promote or deter seasonal work

2.3 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is used in this study to examine, investigate and understand the working and living conditions of seasonal workers in Carara Agro processing Pty (Ltd). According to Haralambos and Holborn (2004:870), qualitative research refers to (among others) a methodological approach used to analyse the *causes* of large-scale changes in society. Qualitative research provides in-depth and multi-layered understandings of practices and events (Maxwell, 1998:75). It furthers understanding as to *why* practices take place and continue to take place (Maxwell, 1998:75). In this way, qualitative research affords the researcher the opportunity to gain information-rich insights from personal and semi-structured interviews. This approach enables the researcher to understand the respondents' perceptions. By conducting in-depth interviews with seasonal workers, the researcher is able to ask follow-up questions to truly understand the respondents' lived experiences and find the meaning in their responses. Semi-structured interviews also allow the respondents to express themselves in their own way.

The main research objective of the researcher is to gain an in-depth understanding of the working and living conditions of seasonal workers, from their perspective. The focus is on the perceptions and experiences of seasonal workers in the production process as well as the sphere of social reproduction. As such, quantitative research, which focuses on generating statistical information, would be inappropriate in this study.

Ethnography is a qualitative methodology that lends itself to the study of beliefs, social interactions and behaviours (Naidoo, 2014:1). The purpose of ethnography is to give an analytical description of culture (Naidoo, 2014:1). In this way, ethnography is ideal for the study beliefs in the context of culture or an organization (Hodson, 2004:5). In the context of

the research study, ethnographic methods are used for a deeper understanding of the attitudes and beliefs of workers:

> the workplace has long been a central venue for ethnographic studies. The centrality of the workplace as a focus for sociologists reflects the centrality of work in people's lives (Hodson, 2004:6).

According to Hodson (2004:4), ethnographies are essential in providing a "systemic overview of the findings and implications of these potentially huge bodies of work". The use of ethnographic methods provides a full, expansive and deeper understanding of the organization as well as the attitudes and behaviours of workers. In-depth interviews facilitate an opportunity for contextualised understanding. The primary respondents are the seasonal workers of Carara. Ethnographic methods provided understanding of the beliefs, experiences and perspectives of seasonal workers within the workplace and within social spaces.

The other research method used is life histories. Life histories are concerned with gaining fine-grained detail about the research subject's beliefs, values, views, wishes through in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Russel, 1995:100). The life history is essential in highlighting the living and working conditions of the respondents. The respondents were assessed in following criteria: age, gender, educational background and place of origin. This criterion was used to provide analysis of the responses received from the respondents. Women have different roles to men and a person born 10 years ago will share a different perspective to a person born 20 years ago simple because of age and wisdom. The place of origin also shapes the perspective a person may have; a person who has grown up in the farm different knowledge and experience to someone born in an urban area. The demographics of each respondent helped to find differences and similarities in the perspectives shared.

2.4 Research Design

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:270), a research design refers to a concrete research plan or strategy which locates the researcher within the intended empirical world. This involves an enquiry into how the research will be conducted (Berg, 2001:28). The methodological approach used to conduct this study is qualitative. Empirical evidence will be gathered through documenting and recording real events as spoken by the respondents. Empirical evidence can also be gathered by observing specific behaviours and studying written documentation (Neuman, 2003:146). This research primarily made use of in-depth interviews and

documentary research as the means of collecting data. These methods provide a rich analysis of the working and living conditions of the seasonal workers (Bloor and Wood, 2006:57).

The point of departure for qualitative research is the insider's perspective (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:270). This 'perspective-dependant' form of research means that information gathered is useful insofar as it provides substantial in-depth or thick description or understanding of social phenomena and social action (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:270). By using qualitative research, social action can be understood in its own context which would include historical, social and economic factors. For this case study, considering the historical, social and economic context of Carara as a firm located within Grahamstown is critical. Further evaluation of the seasonal workers' contextual position will facilitate and support a fuller analysis of their perceptions of working and living conditions.

Maxwell (2005:3) suggests that an interactive design provides an opportunity for the researcher to navigate themselves within various components with the collection of data and essential for assessing the research questions, methods and the threats of invalidating the integrity of this research. In this way, the research design will inform the researcher to interrogate the data collected against the theories used. Where social scientists have focused primarily on economic production and social reproduction as distinct spheres of social activity. This research seeks to understand how these two distinct spheres are interconnected in the lives of seasonal workers.

2.5 Sampling

According to Wisker (2001: 138), sampling refers to "the selection of a particular section or group of the population upon which you carry out the research". The purpose of using the sample of subjects is to make inferences of some larger population by investigating and examining a smaller one. Purposive sampling was used to collect data. Purposive sampling refers to choosing research respondents who are relevant to the research. In this sense, purposive sampling allowed the researcher to collect data from respondents who fit the researcher's criteria (Silverman, 2010:141). Moreover, the researcher can focus specifically on a case because it illustrates some feature or process of interest to the researcher (Silverman, 2010:141).

The purpose of this research is to understand the working and living conditions of seasonal workers employed at Carara by gaining insight into their experiences of an agro-processing

firm. To achieve this objective, it was only necessary to conduct research with seasonal workers who were working or had worked at Carara.

Snowballing sampling was also used to collect data. Snowball sampling is also known as the chain referral sampling (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981 :141). This method yields a study sample "through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest" (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981 :141). The basic strategy of snowballing involves identifying several people with relevant characteristics and interviewing them. Thereafter, these respondents are asked for the names of other people who may possess similar attributes (Berg, 2001:33). Thus, a network of connections, relevant to the researcher, is identified through a snowball effect (Neuman, 2003:214).

The seasonal workers of Carara were identified through the process of snowballing. The first respondent was asked to connect me to other workers who are working or had worked at Carara. The network of workers, gained within the close-knit community of Grahamstown, meant that this task was not very difficult. It was not important to find 'key' workers; what was important was to get in touch with workers who had worked at Carara for at least one season. The seasonal workers who had been involved with the organisation for several years were able to provide valuable connections.

The table below provides the respondents' biographical details.

Table 1: Research Respondents

Pseudonym	**Gender**	**Place of Residence**	**Race**	**Job**	**No. of seasons at Carara**
Abongile	Female	Port Alfred	Black	Corer	2 seasons
Babalwa	Female	Grahamstown	Black	Despatch	3 seasons
Cebile	Female	Grahamstown	Black	Corer	2 seasons
Delisile	Female	Grahamstown	Black	Corer	2 seasons
Elethu	Female	Port Alfred	Black	Corer	1 season
Fezile	Female	Grahamstown	Black	Corer	2 seasons

Among the respondents, the majority are resident within Grahamstown, although they are from different parts of the Eastern Cape.

2.6 Research Site

According to Morse (1994:222), it is critical to identify a suitable research site. Poor site selection and poor sample decisions may invalidate eventual findings (Berg, 2001:29). Obtaining access into the research site is a vital component in collecting data.

Some of the challenges which may be experienced with interviewing respondents outside of the research site may include issues around privacy and confidentiality. It is important to provide safe spaces where respondents can easily and freely express themselves. For this case study, the Rhodes University campus was a suitable place for conducting interviews. The implications of this decision included costs for food and transport.

2.7 Research Challenges and Ethics

Ethical decisions must be considered when embarking on research. According to McNiell and Chapman (2005:12-14), there are some broad guidelines which facilitate ethical conduct. Firstly, respondents must be fully informed about the research being conducted so that they are able to provide full consent. Having disclosed fully informed the respondents, it is necessary to safeguard the respondents' privacy (McNiell and Chapman, 2005:12-14). It can never be emphasised enough how important it is to keep confidentiality and anonymity between the researcher and the respondents involved, this ensures the integrity of the research. According to Bloor and Wood (2006: 59) it is the responsibility of the researcher to "brief respondents in appropriate detail and in terms which are meaningful to the lay public about the following: the nature of the research, what would be required from their participation, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken and how it will be disseminated and used". This ensures voluntary and consensual participation where respondents provide informed consent.

Other ethical considerations include ensuring that respondents are protected from any physical or emotional harm; this includes avoiding any conduct that may involve criminal or otherwise behaviour which may put the research into question (McNiell and Chapman, 2005:12-14). In addition, all ethical protocols in the Rhodes University Higher Degrees Guide are followed. From fully informing all respondents about the nature of the research and its purpose, to ensuring confidentiality by promising anonymity and the strict usage of the data for research purposes only. Respondents were informed that pseudonyms were to be used instead of their real names.

In conducting the interviews, one of my biggest challenges was confidentiality and anonymity. Most of the respondents were insecure of disclosing information about Carara. This challenge was overcome by reassuring respondents about my obligations, along with the translator's obligations, to complete confidence. Finally, I explained that the purpose of the interviews was to understand the experiences of the workers at Carara as opposed to trying to expose anyone or anything. This reassurance eased tensions almost immediately. This need for security highlighted how insecure the workers felt within the labour market and I needed to be sensitive to this internal battle.

Another challenge was the language barrier. As a fourth-language Xhosa speaker, it was clear for me from the onset that language would be one of my biggest challenges. All the respondents' mother tongue (and language of conversation) was Xhosa. This challenge was overcome by requesting the assistance of an translator during the interviewing process, who was a graduate in a joint Honours degree in Xhosa and Sociology. Further, she conversed comfortably in Xhosa and English. Time was also a challenge as I was conducting face-to-face interviews. The respondents' availability was a challenge as all the respondents working, including the translator. I would have to work around the respondents' time plus negotiate interview schedules with the translator. This had a major impact on venue choices and travel costs. These challenges were overcome by finding venues which would be the most convenient for the respondents. This choice meant that I could minimise on travel costs for the respondents. Some of these stresses resulted in cancelled interview meetings and improvised interviews with other respondents.

2.8 Data Collection

The method of collecting data was through a series of interviews. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000:633), interviews are used to generate useful information about lived experiences and meanings associated with them. This tool is used to understand people. This tool is usually utilized in face-to-face interviews, usually individual, to gauge and engage the respondent (Fontana and Frey, 2000:645).

Interviews were in-depth and semi-structured. The interview style allowed me to minimise two extremities of interviewing: one that is completely standardised and one that is completely unstandardized. In this way, interview questions were premeditated but there was enough freedom to digress and probe answers received from the respondents (Berg, 2001:70). This type of interviewing style allowed me to probe respondents to deepen my understanding of the

experiences expressed by the respondents. Through this approach, more information was gathered, creating an opportunity to investigate and interrogate blind spots within the research. The benefits of this type of interviewing are that the interviewer is able to ask follow-up questions, rephrase where necessary and adapt questions with the aim of obtaining the research objectives.

Note-taking was also a vital tool utilized during the collection of data. This was mainly utilized to jot down important points during the interview. However, digital recording was utilized to fully capture the interview. Furthermore, this tool was used to refresh memory and further highlight important points perhaps overlooked during the interview process. Both techniques, note-taking and digital recording, were used with the permission of the respondents. With Xhosa needed as the main medium of communication, this meant that the assistance of a translator during the interviewing process was critical. For this reason, I selected a friend who was fluent in isiXhosa. Each interview was distinct in character; from the length of the interviews to the depth of engagement with the issues experienced. For those that no longer worked at Carara, there was a disconnect, at times, to the struggles experienced during their time at Carara. But unanimously it was clear that these experiences, even if difficult to recollect chronologically, were fixed in their minds.

There are approximately 2,500 seasonal workers employed by Carara Agro Processing Services. Of these, only six respondents were selected for interviewing. The interviews were conducted in December 2016. This time frame allowed me to conduct follow-up sessions with the workers, where necessary, to gain clarity. The decision to conduct interviews in early December 2016 meant that the units of analysis had to include seasonal workers who had previously worked at Carara. Typically, the seasonal period for workers starts from early January to the end of June/July.

Specified selection of the workers was not necessary as I required to find understanding of the working and living conditions of seasonal workers working in Carara. The purpose of the respondents was to provide perspective of their conditions. All of these workers were interviewed by me with the help of a translator, a Rhodes University Xhosa major student.

Of the seasonal workers interviewed in this study, four were previous workers at Carara, with only two looking to resume their employment in the following year. All were black females and South African citizens. Only three of the six workers were born in Grahamstown; one became resident in Grahamstown as a result of employment in Carara, while the remaining

three workers remain ‘travellers’, commuting between Grahamstown and their places of residence. Many of these workers had been employed at Carara for more than two seasonal terms. This is with exception to one worker, who resigned after having only worked in Carara for one season. Most of the workers were recruited through word-of-mouth and all had a similar account of how they heard of recruitment at Carara Agro-Processing: ‘I heard from someone who was working there about employment at Carara. The only thing I had to do was send my CV and wait for a phone call.’ (Babalwa, 5/12/16).

The level of education was identical for all respondents having only managed to pass grade 11. All attempted grade 12 but failed. As a result of financial constraints did not attempt grade 12 again. Many of these workers had parents who were employed in the agricultural sector as farm workers or employment of a similar nature. All of the workers grew up or had some exposure to agriculture. Hence, the workers’ first contact with the agricultural sector was not through Carara.

All the respondents formed part of the general workers in the workplace. None of the workers interviewed were supervisors or managers. The exclusion of managers and supervisors allowed the voice of the worker to be heard in an unfiltered and unbiased manner. Much of the literature I engaged with echoed the voices of the managers rather than the workers. Thus, this purposeful attention to seasonal workers provided a quality perspective to ideas surrounding work within the labour market, labour process and ultimately their experiences in the agro-processing sector.

The interview schedule was separated into six main headings, each contributing towards understanding the working and living conditions of seasonal workers. Briefly, each topic was prepared to engage and answer the main concerns or points which this research study sought to uncover and understand. One of the headings in the interview schedule sought to unpack the conditions within the workplace. Questions, in this instance, focused on unpacking how interactions between respondents and supervisors were especially in situations of conflict. Another heading in the interview schedule, sought to unpack the livelihood strategies adopted by respondents. To answer this question, the respondents were asked to describe the household and the dynamics of the household. These questions, guided by semi-structured interviews, allowed for a direct understanding of the experiences which seasonal workers may have in the workplace and within social lives.

2.9 Data Analysis

In analysing qualitative data, the purpose is to search for patterns in data. These patterns may include recurrent behaviours, objects and/or body language (Neuman,2003:146). In this instance, data is organised, synthesised and broken into units during the analysis process in search of patterns (Neuman, 2003 :147). At this stage of analysis, it is important to focus completely on the data. This approach to the analysis of data enables the researcher to build and formulate an analysis of the data. In this way, concepts derive directly to the researcher (Neuman, 2003 :147). This approach builds credibility, receptivity and sensitivity for the research.

The next step in the data analysis process involves coding and classifying or organizing the data (Neuman, 2003: 148). By transcribing the data, I was able to compartmentalise the respondent's responses, compare notes and responses to the data transcribed, interpret and analyse the data (Henning, 2004:104). I used the research objectives to categorise important and relevant data. Only the data relating to the research objectives was utilised. In the research process, I made use of labelling and coding, which enabled me to identify patterns of consistency, inconsistency, similarity and difference. In formulating themes for analysis this technique was very beneficial. This process allowed me to code and analyse the data gathered. Texts were organised into codes, and then related codes were grouped together. These codes were guided by the themes raised in the literature review and the conceptual framework adopted by the research.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research design utilised to achieve the stated objectives, mainly an understanding of the working and living conditions of seasonal workers at Carara. The research was qualitative in nature, which is best suited to understanding social issues. More importantly, this process also allows the researcher to understand the respondents' feelings, beliefs, motivations, aspirations and perceptions. Through this study, seasonal workers, who were working or had worked at Carara were given an opportunity to share their experiences of the workplace as well as their social experiences. This includes discussions around the motivations, influences and challenges of being a seasonal worker. The following chapters will present the findings of this research.

CHAPTER 3

WORKING CONDITIONS OF SEASONAL WORKERS AT CARARA

> The meaning of work for the worker is therefore measured as "the part that work plays in the totality of his/her life" (Baldry et al., 2007:12).

3.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the responses provided by the respondents regarding their conditions of work. The six respondents provided detailed insights into their experiences at work. The first part of this chapter describes the responses by the respondents and the second part highlights the similarities, differences and commentary-worthy responses by the respondents. Finally, this chapter analyses the respondents' experiences against the labour process theory. The value of which is to compare, contrast and unpack the discussion on the working conditions of seasonal workers in Carara. This chapter also explores and analyses the role of work within the totality of the worker's lives.

3.2 Seasonal Workers' working conditions in Grahamstown

3.2.1 Abongile

Abongile is a 32-year-old women from Port Alfred who now lives in Grahamstown. She worked at Carara from 2014. She has two children, who live with her mother in Port Alfred. She initially moved to Grahamstown because of work at Carara.

Abongile worked as a corer at Carara. She explained that she heard of work at Carara through word-of-mouth from relatives and posters in the community. She describes that she was notified to come to Carara and arrived early in the morning. Thereafter, she was allocated to the coring department. Skills or qualifications were never looked at to allocate her. She expresses that upon arrival on her first day at Carara she 'felt like there were thousands of workers'.

She describes the working area/factory as being a huge hall with various parts. A part of the hall is designated to the receivers, who receive the chilli peppers and sorted and ascertained

whether the chilli peppers were ripe for use or not. At another end of the factory are the corers, who take the chilli peppers and core them. Once cored, the chilli peppers are sent to another part of the factory – the dispatch – where the chilli peppers are bottled, labelled and dispatched for consumption.

There are various supervisors in the departments walking in and out of the hall. The most distinct character of the factory is the wet floors. There are many women in this hall and some men who assist the receivers and dispatchers. The work was not fairly distributed between the three departments. “Fairly” in this context refers to the sharing or distribution of work within the departments. Abongile felt that the distribution of work was not fair as the corers’ work is based on a completely different set of rules and the demand on corers is far more strenuous than on a receiver or dispatcher, whose tasks were much lighter. She stated that whilst receivers and dispatch earned their daily income without having set targets, corers worked on a daily target and wages were calculated according to the number of buckets that were filled. A corer earns R12.80 per bucket.

The managerial structures of Carara are constituted as follows: there are two supervisors who oversee the work of the workers in each department. Above them were the managers, who oversee the work of the supervisors. In the coring department, there was a coloured woman and a young black male who would oversee the affairs and activities of the corers. Much of the population group is black female - middle aged. The workers who worked the day shift started at 4am and finished at 1pm, and the workers on the night shift worked from 1.30pm to 10pm. When asked about the purpose of the managerial system, Abongile responded that it seemed to hold each party in the system accountable for their actions and it allowed workers to have their concerns heard.

When asked whether she found her supervisors approachable, she explained that she did. While she was working at Carara, there were employee representatives in each department. The job of the representative was to express the views of the workers. The workers gathered outside the factory and had the meeting scribed. Thereafter, the representative would present the views of the workers to the supervisor. She noted that she was not too knowledgeable about her rights within the workplace but she knew that she had a right to be respected by workers, managers and supervisors; and she also had the responsibility of respecting authority in the factory. When probed about what rules or practises existed in the workplace, she was only aware of the rules she was told by the supervisors, on the first day of work at Carara. Abongile pointed out that

she felt that the supervisors listened and implemented some of worker's concerns but most of the worker's concerns were unattended because they never received any feedback or saw any progress. There were many delays between expressing the worker's concerns and finding resolutions from the supervisor.

When asked whether she felt safe within the workplace she described the working environment as being both volatile and unpredictable, safe and unsafe. Each day was different and the demands of the day varied. She described issues with working only with women: emotions easily got out of hand. In the coring department, this situation was rife and the consequences dangerous because of the instrument used by the workers to core the chilli pepper. She described the instrument as being a light and sharp instrument. When conflicts broke out in the factory, workers would use this instrument as a weapon and cut or stab one another. She says the danger of conflict in the workplace was that workers can use these dangerous instruments.

The fumes from the chemicals, used to sterilise the factory was her biggest issue and "created an unsafe working environment". She described the fumes– sprayed before and during working hours – as being strong and unpleasant. Although masks were provided by the company, she often did not wear the mask because she did not see the purpose of wearing the mask. The fumes were too strong for the masks provided and this is well- known in the factory. When asked what measures were put in place by the company to ensure a certain level of safety, the response was that there were safety boots, masks and gloves which were accessible to them.

She reported that she really did not feel safe at all while working in Carara and that everything was done to create a façade rather than to legitimate the concerns of the workers. The one example used to substantiate this was the floors which were constantly wet. She described the working conditions as "degrading". She explained that, as much as there were safety boots provided for workers, the water at times was so high that her feet were wet during the whole shift.

When workers were injured while at work, the ambulance would be called. She explained that there was no concept of paid leave, even in these circumstances. There was also no medical cover or benefit. She narrated an incident when gas exploded outside the factory and where more than 10 workers fainted because of the fumes emitted by the gas. The workers were rushed to hospital. The following day it was business as usual and everyone was expected to be at work. The workplace was a hostile space where seasonal workers did not feel protected within the workplace.

When asked to discuss how workers interacted with supervisors and managers –especially on matters that were of great concern – she stated that whilst they could approach superiors, the black male supervisor would make it clear that, at the end of the day, "*uyawazi lo msebenzi owkhethile*" loosely translated 'you know the kind of job you are in' (Abongile, 5/12/2016). She also noted that he would make it clear that, if she remained unsatisfied, she was free to go and find another job. Finally, she explained that she used the money she received from Carara to fund her studies towards being a security guard.

3.2.2 Babalwa

Babalwa is a 40-year-old woman from Grahamstown. She worked at Carara from 2007 to 2012. She was 31 years old with two children.

Babalwa was introduced to Carara by family members, two of whom were working at Carara. She was employed as a corer. She explained that she heard of work at Carara through word-of-mouth from relatives and posters around the community. Thereafter, she was randomly allocated to the department which she worked in. She described the working area as being a huge hall with about 300 - 400 corers, coring the chilli peppers into buckets, with supervisors walking in and out of the hall. The floors were constantly wet. There were many women in this hall and some men who assisted the receivers and dispatchers.

Babalwa explained that Carara was racially divided, with most of the workers being black, even though the factory is located in a coloured area. The next largest population group is coloured. It was mostly black and coloured women who worked in the receiving, coring and dispatch department, whilst white men occupied the managerial positions. She explained that the company structure was as follows: about four (white) managers who stayed in their offices. Next, there were 16 supervisors. Thereafter, there were the general workers who worked in one of the three departments. Finally, there were men within the youth age groups, who assisted around Carara, by lifting or carrying items. The work was organised around two shifts: a day and night shift.

Babalwa explained that, if she had an issue at work, she would tell one of the supervisors in her department. The supervisor would speak to her about the issue in an office. If it was not resolved at this level, she could go to the managers but would not be comfortable doing that as she felt that she might be marked as a difficult worker. She described that concerns which she had which should have been dealt with within a week or two would be delayed and eventually

forgotten about. The workers were permitted to approach the managers but in reality, they wouldn't approach the managers and consequently only the supervisors approached the managers. Therefore, if the supervisor chose not to take the worker's concern to the manager, then the concern would not be dealt with. Furthermore, there was no benefit or loss to the supervisors to deal with the worker's grievance. She explained that ultimately, she felt that the job of the supervisors was "to suffocate the concerns of the workers" (Babalwa, 5/12/2016).

Babalwa noted that she did not feel like she had any power as a worker as concerns given to the supervisors were not really taken seriously. She felt that the managers were not held accountable to answering the workers' concerns and as a result lacked the motivation to do so. She explained that there was no progress, no training or promotion in the kind of job she was in. The structures were "as steady as the walls of Carara" and felt unshakeable (Babalwa, 5/12/2016). This speaks to the power dynamics and forms of domination which often plague the employer-worker relationship in non-standard employment.

When she was asked whether she found the supervisors in her department to be approachable if confronted with issues or concerns in the workplace, she expressed that she was not comfortable with approaching her managers. She explained that as much as her supervisor would listen to her complaint, the supervisor would say:

> things have been like this long before you came. They have been like this and they will continue like this – unfortunately, this is how things are and will be (Babalwa, 5/12/16).

She noted that workers are not encouraged to approach supervisors or managers with complaints or concerns. When she arrived to work in Carara, the existing managers and supervisors were already there. During her time, no worker was promoted and she felt that it was also impossible to be promoted in Carara because the systems were rigid and not favourable to the workers.

Babalwa explained that while at Carara, workers tried to form a trade union but it failed mainly because of the seasonal nature of their jobs: in every department, every worker was crying; each worker had their own issue and complaint about that department. There were no representatives to speak on behalf of workers. She explained that there was no legislation or information board to inform workers about their rights. The only information on the notice boards was from the managers on how workers must behave in the workplace, general codes of conduct for workers, public holidays and working schedules.

She explained that corers were expected to work towards a target. Each day there were targets placed on the notice board and corers were expected to reach these targets. She described having to produce a minimum of 12-14 buckets (7l each) a day and the extent of both physical and emotional toll these seemingly impossible targets would take on her and co-workers. If employees were not able to reach some of the daily targets, this affected how much they got paid. She explained the daily pressures of these targets and having to reach them so that she would be paid accordingly. To reach these targets, workers had to arrive every day an hour early, organise themselves into their stations, lift and stack crates in which the chilli peppers would be placed after coring and then clean the stations before leaving that day or that shift. She noted the strain on her family and social life because she was constantly fatigued. She explained that 'many of the workers she worked with were now in Fort England [a hospital for mentally-ill patients]' (Babalwa, 5/12/16).

Babalwa described the workplace as being both safe and unsafe. There were measures put in place to ensure a certain level of safety, which included safety gloves and safety boots. However, the greatest hazard was the chemicals which were used to clean the working stations. She described how the chemicals were sprayed around the workstations periodically, releasing strong fumes throughout the workplace. Carara in this instant would provide workers with chemical masks to prevent or minimise inhalation of these dangerous fumes. However, these chemicals could in some cases cause or aggravate workers' respiratory issues. This was the primary cause of some of the workers leaving Carara. At times, the chemical fumes would be sprayed before the next shift and the workers who were starting the shift would inhale these chemicals. She described safety masks as being impractical and ineffective because workers would still be inhaling these fumes. This also meant that there was a lot of water on the floors, usually ankle deep. This meant that the worker's feet were wet most of the time. Even though safety boots were given to each worker, she explained that these boots did not prevent the water from seeping through the boots. She noted that she was wet almost every day from the water in the workplace.

Babalwa explained that the safety gloves did very little to assist her in coring the peppers. In fact, she described the safety glove as being a great hindrance to her productivity. The safety gloves are big and not ideal for coring. She also noted that, as a result of the dysfunctional design of these gloves, she did not use them. The effects of working without the safety gloves was that her hands constantly had a burning sensation. The instrument used for coring was made of plastic and very sharp. At times, it would slip and cut or bruise the workers' hands

She also explained that there were no safety measures in place. Further explaining that there was no medical aid or cover even if workers were injured during working hours. The procedure was to just call the ambulance but she never heard of further benefits/assistance given to the injured workers. Days taken off by these workers would be counted as normal working days and not leave. So, the injured worker was paid in proportion to the amount of work done or targets reached, as though they were normal workers. In fact, workers were incentivised to work every day to be legible for an attendance bonus.

3.2.3 Cebile

Cebile is a 40-year-old woman who lives in Grahamstown but is from Salem. She worked at Carara from 2009 to 2010. She is married and has three children.

Cebile worked in dispatch. Dispatchers were expected to sort the chilli peppers which had be cored by the corers. The sorting process involves inspecting the chilli pepper to see whether it was properly cored and acceptable for human consumption. She described the department as having an assembly line with the chilli peppers passing along the line as workers sorted, weighed, added preservatives and sealed the containers. After this process, the product is ready for consumption but waits on the approval of the supervisors. She noted that, whereas other parts of the factory are based on manual labour, dispatch combines mechanical and manual labour.

She explained that on the first day of work each worker was randomly allocated into each department. The only way to be moved from one department to the other is if there were substantial reasons for example, pregnancy. Skills or qualifications were not considered in the selection process. When asked how they were trained for her job, she responded that she would be trained while working. The training was usually done by experienced workers in the department. She described that there was no formal training however, the supervisor would tell workers about the basic etiquette expected of the workers as they were handling food – for example, taking off earrings and wearing hair nets, safety boots, safety gloves and masks.

Cebile felt that the distribution of labour was not fair. Dispatch had a constant salary each month which was not dependant on what they produced. So, the pressure of having to meet targets was not the same. Furthermore, dispatch was not as work intensive as the other departments because there was minimal interaction with the actual product. She describes

dispatchers as being basic supervisors of the product because they just checked whether chilli peppers were adequately handled and sorted before consumption.

Cebile also explains that she did not see the value of the structures in Carara. She felt that workers should have been able to approach managers and not depend on supervisors to transmit concerns. She felt that the concerns she had while working at Carara should have been addressed with the boss, not the supervisors or managers. She further explained that these structures would create unnecessary delays. She stated that she found her supervisor approachable and if she had a serious problem, would be comfortable with approaching the supervisor. She was asked how she became aware of these structures and the rights she had in terms of these structures – her response was that there were not any rules or rights that they were told about but they observed the culture within the factory and followed that. On the first day of work, the workers were addressed by the supervisors who explained the rights, policies and procedures of Carara.

When asked about whether she found her job safe or unsafe – she stated that working at Carara was quite safe and there were no real dangers or concerns in the department that she was in. However, she felt that the fumes from the chemicals were the most pressing concern for most workers. She describes that she was a better fit for dispatch rather than coring because of the fumes. She often felt that the fumes were too aggressive on workers. If caught in the coring department, while chemicals were being sprayed, she described being out of breath and feeling suffocated by the fumes. Furthermore, she expressed that these fumes aggravated chest conditions that workers had and created some respiratory issues. In her case, she describes experiencing severe breathing impairments whilst working at Carara as a result of inhaling the fumes. There weren't any precautionary measures taken by the company to prevent this danger and neither were there any medical aids, covers or policies in the event of injury or illness, she explains. However, she also noted that "…the only problem was with the money" (Cebile, 5/12/2016)

3.2.4 Delisile, Elethu, Fezile (Focus Group Interview)

Delisile is a 31-year-old women from Pedi. She worked at Carara from 2014 to 2015. She moved to Grahamstown to be with her girlfriend. Subsequently, she heard of the opportunity to work at Carara and applied. She is currently living in Vukani (Grahamstown).

Elethu & Fikile are both from Port Alfred and come to Grahamstown to work at Carara. They had both been working in Carara from 2015 to 2016. Elethu is a 30-year-old woman and Fikile is a 31-year old woman. Both of them, live in Vukani (Grahamstown).

Delisile, Elethu, Fikile are in the coring department. Delisile heard of work at Carara through word of mouth from acquaintances and friends. She described the form she had to complete. Disclosures such as health conditions were required and mandatory. However, she explained that the actual selection process into different departments was random and not based on skills or qualifications. Elethu added that the process of selection and allocation followed no order or structure and was done on the first day of work.

Fikile explained that the factory was a big hall divided into various departments and each department had a purpose and a goal. The objective of each department was different and the concerns varied. She explained that the one universal concern was the fumes from the chemicals which created many issues at the factory. While at the factory, she noted that three people had died because of the fumes. She explained that many of the workers especially in the coring department were overworked and the fumes from the chemicals caused respiratory issues and some workers died. There were several workers who were working in Carara who were in Fort England Hospital with chronic illnesses.

Each of the respondents pointed out that there was not much that could be done if they felt the supervisors or managers did not fairly decide on a matter or concern. Secondly, they also felt that they were working in Carara for money and not necessarily there to invest themselves emotionally into the running of the company. Thus fairness was not a primary concern for them. As long as they were paid – they were fine. Thirdly, workers were not unified and each had their own interest. Delisile noted that she was not satisfied with the working conditions. Elethu (5/12/16) added that no one was satisfied with their working conditions and dissatisfaction with work ought to be understood and accepted. She described her experiences as being generally okay – saying it was better for her to work, be paid and provide for her family back home then not. Therefore, her job satisfaction did not change her facts or realities. She described the desperate situation she had at home with an unemployed parent and more than five children needing to be taken care of at home. She explained that life was satisfying because “there are people with choices and others without” (Elethu, 5/12/2016)

Fikile said that the nature of the job and the risks associated with the job necessitated structures in the workplace. More so, these structures exist to protect workers, supervisors and managers.

Delisile added that these structures can be used to facilitate efficiency but it was not the case for them. She described an incident when one of the workers had an issue with the chilli pepper on her hands. Her complaint was heard by the supervisor, who explained that there was not much that could be done about this situation and it was not severe enough for the manager's attention. Thus, nothing was done about that concern. Elethu came from a different angle and explained that these structures were there to conceal the dangers and risks within the job they were expected to do. She added that there was no choice or alternative provided – you dealt with your problem or you left the job. She described several workers who had complaints about the fumes from the chemicals and how they were always "hushed" down. To her, it felt like there was no real motivation behind their complaints probably because there was no scarcity of people looking for jobs, especially in Grahamstown.

Elethu described the working environment in Carara as a great opportunity to gain fast money and to leave. It was equally expected that workers would earn their keep. To the supervisors, it was all about the targets and money; there was no care beyond that. She described situations where workers would faint on the floor and the next day be expected to meet the targets. Fikile added that, to the managers and supervisors, "we are not human beings; we are numbers on a page". To answer the question above, the supervisors and managers were approachable in the hypothetical sense, but they were not approachable in practise. Delisile added that, in a space such as Carara, if you had a concern you would deal with it by yourself or speak to a friend in Carara.

3.2.5 The similarities and differences of the seasonal workers' working conditions

It is worthy to note that similarities and differences found in the experiences from the respondents were based on the departments in which the respondents were working. Accordingly, corers had a similar view on many aspects, including working conditions at Carara, whereas the respondent from dispatch had views that were different to those of the other respondents. The main reason for the differences in opinions and experiences was the differences in departments within Carara.

Cumulatively, the workers have worked in Carara since 2008 to about 2016. All agreed that communication with supervisors and management was not encouraged within the workplace. However, the levels of interaction within the workplace differed from respondent to respondent. Further, the reasons for the bureaucratic systems in Carara varied. While some

suggested that these structures were designed to build a level of accountability and efficiency, others felt that the structures were to suppress any dissent from the workers. All seemed to accept the notion that the workplace was divided into “them”(supervisors and management) and “us”(workers). The workers similarly noted that lines of communication with supervisors and management were minimal (for various reasons). As a result, workers felt that concerns relating to their working conditions were never adequately addressed. The difficulty confronting seasonal workers, as expressed by Babalwa, was that bonds with other workers were hard to form. Babalwa explained that there were attempts to form a trade union representative while she was working in Carara but it failed. The respondents did not know their rights but seemed to be aware of what they could be and were only informed of their rights on the first day of work by the managers. The culture of Carara informed the worker’s behaviour. There were no posters around the workplace which promoted or furthered workers’ rights or interests.

The respondents also noted a lack of promotion, benefits and skills development at Carara. Most claimed that they had never seen any promotion of the shop floor, including workers who had been working in Carara for several years. They also suggested that there were no training programmes available for them to expand their skills. Finally, even when injured at work, respondents pointed out that there were no benefits available to the workers. In fact, days missed by the injured workers would be to their disadvantage as pay was based on daily targets and days present at work.

All respondents – except Cebile – explained that the working conditions in Carara were unsafe. Cebile, who pointed out that her working experience in Carara was safe, did highlight that it was safe only because she was in dispatch. However, that if she was in the coring or receiving department this would not be the case. Similarly, all the respondents indicated that the working environment was not safe. Adding that the safety gloves, masks and boots provided by Carara did not mitigate the immediate dangers associated with the jobs – this also being known in the workplace. The main concern amongst the workers was the fumes from the chemicals used to sanitise the corers’ stations before shifts and during working hours. When asked whether this concern or issue was addressed with the supervisors or members of management, workers expressed similarly that the environment within the workplace did not encourage these forms of communication. In many instances, the absence of an employment relationship means that respondents struggle to voice and follow up with their concerns. They indicated that workers were also afraid of being ostracised or labelled as being difficult because this would heighten

their level of vulnerability within the workplace. There is a sense when speaking to the respondents that there is great insecurity in their jobs, which is aggravated by the fact that there have been no promotions since the workers had started working there and many workers failed to return and were easily replaced.

Respondents similarly witnessed and experienced that there was violence in Carara – within the coring department – and that this violence against each other made it difficult to be comfortable within the factory. Respondents also expressed how violent fights would break out in the factory and no one could do anything about it because workers would use dangerous weapons. This created a sense of constant tension amongst the workers, especially within the coring department. This is also known within the workplace yet nothing has been done or said about it. The primary reason for this is that supervisors and management are unaccountable to the workers.

Cebile differed in that her department experienced no violence whilst she was working there. This also strongly affected the level of satisfaction the respondents had while at Carara. For the dispatcher, there was a lower sense of satisfaction in the workplace as there was not a strong sense of violence, daily targets to determine her income and there were fewer workers in her department. On the contrary, all the corers expressed a strong sense of dissatisfaction with working conditions at Carara – largely, as a result of the daily targets, fumes from the chemicals and violence. A few of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the transport especially since they worked very early shifts and very late shifts –there was especially a danger for females walking or waiting for transport.

Respondents also voiced that, as a result of working in Carara, their physical health was compromised, including respiratory diseases, asthma and mental health were noted concerns respondent. Furthermore, several respondents pointed out that a considerable number of workers were also in Fort England, a hospital for mentally ill patients.

3.3 Exploitation within the agro-processing sector and the role of the LRA and BCEA

The respondents' perception of seasonal work seemed to determine how they participated in situations of conflict or protest in the workplace. When asked to define seasonal work, respondents seemed to describe it as irregular employment (casual work) rather than fixed term employment. In this case, seasonal workers perceived themselves as being disposal and replaceable, even after years of working at Carara. The lack of training programmes and

promotions also facilitated the thought that they were not valued within the workplace. In this way, the respondents had a higher inclination to compromise fundamental rights afforded to them by legislation, including the right to form trade unions, receive medical care or cover in the event of injury whilst in employ, and so on. Henningsen et al. (2014:122) found, in their interviews with seasonal workers, that these workers were aware of the exploitation by the employers. However, workers would refrain from collective action to improve their working conditions, in the case of these respondents, because of how they identified themselves within the labour market. By perceiving themselves as irregular workers within the labour market, rather than fixed term workers, the respondents seemed diminish the position they had in the labour market.

Kenny and Webster (1998:229) argue that, though seasonal work may be non-standard in nature, as is that of casual workers, it would be inaccurate to see the two forms of work as being synonymous. The character of seasonal work is quite formal in structure for the fixed period or seasonal employment. At Carara, seasonal work begins during the autumn, and once they are employed, seasonal workers anticipate yearly renewed contracts. It may be argued that such workers expect to receive their contracts each year, as they usually return to the same employer to perform the same work for consecutive years. This is a critical point of analysis because for seasonal work to get the recognition that is required by the new amendments of the LRA and BCEA, there has to be a shift in how seasonal workers understand their work. Seasonal work is not irregular employment, though non-standard, it is a form of fixed term employment.

The monopolization of knowledge, within non-standard employment, also plays a role in how workers perceive themselves within the labour process. All the respondents were unaware of their basic rights but made aware of their legal obligations by supervisors and management. The monopolization of knowledge is also a key component to non-standard forms of employment, primarily because it opens workers up to various forms of exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, the monopolization of knowledge hampers the process of negotiation and bargaining power between workers and management (Marcuse, 2002: xxvii). Abongile described having worked in Carara from 2014 and having never been given the opportunity for promotion. Similarly, Babalwa explained that, since working in Carara from 2007 to 2015, she has never seen workers being trained at least or promoted at most. Both respondents noted that the only difference between the new seasonal workers and old seasonal workers was experience. When probed about why Babalwa thought this was the case in Carara, she explained that whilst there were a few opportunities for promotion they were never extended

to the seasonal workers. This seems to illustrate that the monopolization of knowledge within the labour process disenfranchises workers from having a voice to speak up against practises of discrimination or unfair practises adopted by Carara.

The identity of seasonal workers is blurred within the labour process and infiltrates to legislation. The power of seasonal workers lies in their ability to define and establish their role within the labour process. The first step is the establishment of trade unions. It seems that establishing trade unions would help to provide necessary knowledge and power to the hands of seasonal workers but more progressively, be able to establish seasonal work as a form of fixed term employment. Babalwa explained that while at Carara, workers tried to form a trade union but it failed mainly because there's usually not enough time to place structural frameworks which can establish trade unions. Seasonal workers are nomadic which means that there is a constant turnover of workers, which also means that relationships have to be renewed. The precarious employment poses difficulty in establishing trade unions and a forum of recognising, protecting and empowering seasonal work.

Several factors play to suppress the voice and value of the respondents within Carara. The first is the idea that they are disposable and easily replaceable. More than that, it is the idea that the concern of the organization is less on the workers and more on the product and profits. Ultimately, how seasonal workers identify themselves is the starting point and perhaps establishing a trade union may yield better outcome for the recognition of seasonal work. This recognition will provide the necessary framework to empower seasonal workers within the workplace.

3.4 Push and Pull Factors

The push factors associated with seasonal work were long working hours, the inadequate financial benefits, inadequate medical cover or compensation in the event of injury at the workplace, lack of workers' representation, abusive and exploitative practices. The push factors will be discussed in this section. Thereafter, the pull factors associated with seasonal including availability of work with the growth within the agro-processing industry and convenient location of Carara. The push and pull factors will be discussed, respectively.

A push factor for respondents was the violence and danger associated with their work. Respondents expressed how violent fights would break out in the workplace and the supervisors or managers and workers did not stop these fights as the fighting parties would use

dangerous weapons, usually found at the workstations. This created constant tension amongst the workers especially within the various departments. Although, Cebile differed in that her department experienced no violence whilst she was working there, she admitted that Carara was a violent place to work. A few of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the transport especially since they worked early shifts and very late shifts - so there was a great level of danger for respondents and co-workers. Some of the respondents and co-workers would walk home after their shift or wait for transport. The working conditions in Carara, seem to have presented considerable danger; the danger being towards their life. These working conditions had to accepted as the risks and dangers associated with their job. However, there was a clear desire for the respondents to find other jobs which were less dangerous as they were breadwinners or main breadwinners, some with children.

Respondents, except Cebile, also explained that exploitative and abusive practises exercised by the supervisors and management were a push factor for them. They noted that if a co-worker was injured at work, there was no compensation that the co-worker would get. If a co-worker was injured, the respondents explained that supervisors would call the ambulance or send the worker home and that was it. Abongile narrates an incident when gas exploded outside the factory – she describes that more than 10 workers fainted as a result of the fumes and were rushed to hospital. The following day it was business as usual and everyone was expected to be at work the following day. She pointed out that she felt that there was not much that could be done by the workers to protest these practises. Babalwa noted that the supervisors and managers are maximising the extent of labour from workers to maximize on profits – in a season. The issue with this, as expressed by the opinions of the respondents, is that they are overworked and have to endure unfair, abusive and exploitative practises. For Braverman (1998:32), the labour process has an inherently exploitative nature. Workers were at the complete mercy of the supervisors or managers. Thus, workers were forced to tolerant the conditions in Carara until they found other jobs.

The health implications of working in Carara was another push factor. Elethu argued that the gravity of labour-intensive work also had effects beyond the physical, it was emotionally draining and strenuous. She suggested that the nature of work in Carara also affected her overall health and wellbeing. All the respondents affirmed this, except Cebile. While at the factory, she noted that three people had severe illnesses as a result of these fumes which, made her nervous and anxious. She explained that many of the workers especially in the coring department were overworked and the fumes from the chemicals caused respiratory issues.

Another factor for the respondents was the mental strain that working in Carara took on them. Fikile explained that some of her co-workers were either in Fort England Hospital, a hospital for mentally ill patients or struggling with chronic illnesses. It has been found that non-standard workers exhibited the highest odds of depressive symptoms compared to permanent workers (Kim, Park and Lee, 2016:1). In this sense, it is important to note the need for regulatory reform for non-standard forms of employment to protect workers from the physical and emotional challenges involved with seasonal work. Robbins (2013:1) notes that seasonal worker the environment for seasonal work was "a harsh place to be, and some people just can't take it". These are some of the factors which push seasonal workers from the agro-processing industry and hold true when compared to the responses received from respondents at Carara.

Finally, work at Carara was only on a fixed-term basis. This was a push factor for the respondents as they felt that they needed to work for the entire year. Respondents showed a strong desire for standard, permanent employment. They felt that there was greater security in this form of employment. Abongile expressed that work at Carara was a stepping for permanent work. She used some of the money earned in Carara to study and eventually work as a security guard at Rhodes University. Respondents seemed to see seasonal work as a steppingstone for permanent work, not a chosen alternative. Permanent work was regarded more highly than seasonal work because of the benefits, privileges and inceptives associated with such work. This perspective meant that the respondents preferred permanent work as opposed to seasonal work.

On the other hand, there were pull factors, one of which is the considerable demand for workers. The motivators for growth in the agro-processing industry have been the rise in population growth rates and higher income growth has increased demand for highly processed and higher-value food products, female participation in the labour force and increased ownership of household appliances (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012: 17). Additional trends such as urbanization and the internationalization of retail have also been identified as contributors to growth in the industry, more particularly in developing countries. It seems the demand for workers in the agro-processing industry is opening opportunities for job creation and job opportunities. The opportunity for work is a pull factor, especially since South Africa has high unemployment rates (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2012: 17). Most of the respondents were breadwinners within their families and work was a necessary part of their lives. This means that the agro-processing industry is quickly becoming

sought by the unemployed workers seeking employment. The other highlight, especially in the agro-processing industry is its acceptance of female workers. Carara is also forging its way of job creation by employing workers, particularly female workers. The respondents pointed out that they decided to work in Carara because there was an opportunity to work there and earn an income.

According to the respondents, the convenient area which Carara was located was another pull factor. The demographic of people working at Carara is mostly black middle-aged women, who come from backgrounds of poverty. Carara is in one of the poorest areas in Grahamstown. This also means that workers could more easily travel to and from Carara, as it was in the township area of Grahamstown. There was also an interesting trend observed, that all the workers did not have a matric. There is something to be said about the type of worker Carara was taking. Another common trend was that most of the respondents were black. It should be expected that most workers in any sector should be black, as black people make up the largest population group in South Africa. However, it seems that black females, with a grade 11, are the prototype workers employed by Carara. The point of analysis is why would Carara seek this prototype worker. Could this prototype worker be a product of the economic needs of Carara and merely the growth of national and international trends within the labour process. The convenient location of Carara suggests that Carara is intentionally seeking a certain type of employee, from a certain type of background.

Working at Carara guaranteed an income at the end of the month. The consistency of income, motivated respondents to continue to work in Carara even when they were confronted with difficulties. Fikile expressed that she preferred to work in Carara because she received a guaranteed income at the end of the month. When she was not working at Carara, she had to search for possible job opportunities. This meant that some months she would receive money for work performed and some months she would receive nothing at all. The inconsistent income was incredibly frustrating to her. Delisile on the other hand, explained that when she was not working at Carara, she sold fruits at Grahamstown's town to make money. She described that it was stressful. She explained that she did not enjoy the inconsistent income. Some days she sold a lot of fruits and on other days she did not sell any fruits. She noted that this was the major difficulty with this work. When she sold the fruits, she had to make do with what she had. She said she preferred working at Carara because there was more money to be made in Carara than in selling fruit.

3.5 Exploring the Differences in the Seasonal Workers' Experiences

Workers experience the labour process differently. Peck (2005:220) notes that the differences in experience among workers are created by segmentation within the labour market. It is notable that Cebile shared a different experience to that of the other respondents. This section seeks to explore how differences in experience inform differences in responses.

The emphasis of segmentation is on the roles of class struggle, structural reproduction, institutional forms and processes. According to Peck (2005:220), "what distinguishes segmentation from mere division is that each segment functions according to different rules". In Carara, the objective of each department was different, and the concerns varied. Fikile explained that Carara was divided into various departments and each department had a purpose and a goal. Though the workers were from similar backgrounds, but these backgrounds also did not mean similar experiences. All the respondents seemed to share similar sentiments and views but the fact that Cebile worked in a different department meant that she shared a different perspective of work. Although, aware of the experiences of other workers in Carara, she rarely shared a similar opinion. Cebile's experience seemed to differ as she felt that she could easily address her concerns or issues and would find a resolution for it. The main concern amongst the workers was the fumes from the chemicals used to sanitise the corers' stations before shifts and during working hours. This would also heighten their level of vulnerability to dismissal and unfair and nuanced abuse (Henningsten et al., 2014:122). Cebile's experience in Carara was governed by the set of rules which formed part of her segment, also the case for the other respondents. It is note appreciating these differences as form a full understanding of work for the workers.

3.6 Challenges with Seasonal Work

Carara is made up of a diverse segment of workers. The first layer of the workers is receivers, corers and dispatch. The workers in this layer have low skill levels. The second layer of workers are the supervisors. The workers in this layer are semi-skilled. The third layer of workers are managers. The workers in this layer are highly skilled. This research study focused on the first layer of workers who provided perspective and a point of analysis of the working conditions in Carara. The respondents explained that interaction within all these levels had challenges and

difficulty. Furthermore, depending on which layer a worker occupied also determined the level of insecurity within the labour process. The interactions between the layers also revealed the power dynamics and domination within the workplace. Babalwa explained that one of the challenges with the bureaucratic hierarchy was that there was no progress or promotion for the first layer of workers. The structures were "as steady as the walls of Carara" and felt unshakeable. She also explained that she did not found the supervisors or managers approachable. She explains that as much as her supervisor would listen to her complaint, the supervisor would say, fatalistically:

> things have been like this long before you came. They have been like this and they will continue like this – unfortunately, this is how things are and will be.

She worked at Carara from 2007 -2012 and explains that the promotion in the factory was impossible. When she arrived to work in Carara the managers and supervisors were already there. During her time, no seasonal worker was promoted.

According to Littler (1982:21), workers occupy a precarious position in the labour process in that workers have to sell their labour power for money. Money then becomes the commodity used to navigate the employment relationship (Littler, 1982:21). This means that money, which, to workers is a means of survival, becomes the centre point of negotiation and navigation. Thus, there is a great sense of precariousness for workers. This precariousness may vary and look different in each case; however, the principle can still be applied. It follows that the process of meaningful bargaining and negotiation within the labour process requires that the interests of the worker are protected. Specifically, seasonal workers are vulnerable and insecure because of the exploitative nature of capitalism. For this reason, seasonal workers occupy their own precarious position within the labour market, aggravated by the fact that there are no representatives or unions to echo and protect the voice of the workers. In the interviews conducted, the respondents were aware of the exploitative and abusive practises in Carara, however they also felt that there was little that they could do because they did not want to jeopardise losing their job.

All the respondents expressed that there was not much that could be done to combat any unfair and unwarranted practises in Carara. They felt that they were working in Carara for money. Overtime, they expressed that they accepted their working conditions and focused their energy on the benefits of working at Carara. Elethu describes that she is the breadwinner and cannot afford to resist these practises. The degree of economic dependence largely hinders resistance

from workers, and in the case of Elethu was the contributing factor to her. Another factor which diminished the workers' political will to resist unfair practices was a lack of unity among the workers. Respondents explained that there was no sense of comradery or collective power.

Braverman (1998:41) argued that the worker was compelled to enter into and remain part of the labour process, reproducing the systems of the labour market while doing so. The supervisors and managers occupy the position of the watch dog over the workers, ensuring that they adhere to the principles of capitalism. None of the respondents had approached the managers to express their concerns. However, there were respondents who did approach the supervisors with concerns, and these concerns were not dealt with. When asked to discuss how workers interacted with supervisors and managers especially in matters that were of great concern, she stated that whilst they could approach superiors, the black male supervisor would say to her that at the end of the day she had options to resign and go find a job more suitable for her.

Supervisors and management are oftentimes unaccountable for their behaviour, unless regulated by legislation. It goes without saying that even with rights empowering workers, like those enshrined in the BCEA and the LRA, feelings of precariousness often lead workers to not exercise their rights within the workplace. It follows then that the negotiation of the employment contract and employment relationship are often stifled by fear and insecurity, on the part of workers. The ideas of openness and transparency becomes more of a one-way line from management to workers rather than an active exchange of thoughts and ideas surrounding ways in which labour power can be more efficiently transformed into actual labour. Simply, the imbalance in the employment relationship continues to create an imbalance in bargaining power. This is especially prevalent in workplaces where employees have a lack of representation. Bravernman (1974:83), suggests that the structures and systems within the workplace are designed to concentrate power in the hands of management. The role of management then, becomes that of organising, supervising and controlling workers to ensure that they retain power within the employment relationship and ultimately in the labour process.

The levels of interaction with the supervisors differed from respondent to respondent. The respondents who were corers rarely communicated with the supervisors whilst the respondent who was in dispatch maintained regular communication. All the respondents explained that the employment relationship was clear and distinct. The clearly definable lines of engagement automatically created a sense of allegiance by virtue of positions occupied by parties in the

workplace (Henningsten et al., 2014:122). The difficulty, expressed by Abongile, with seasonal workers was that relationships could never really be built. Relationships among the workers were usually established prior to working in Carara and interactions would be based on these relationships. Abongile describes that workers communicated within these circles. This culture of interaction amongst the workers also created conflict as certain groups would not get along with other groups. Personalities would clash and escalate within these circles, without a mediator to find resolution within these groups. The supervisors' lack of interaction with seasonal workers meant that supervisors could not find ways to intervene within conflict situations within the workplace.

3.7 Labour Law and the Protection of Seasonal Workers

Often non-standard employment implicates labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture where workers are with little protection and subjected to sub-standard working conditions (Loni, 2012:5). Given the low levels of representation, many of these workers depend heavily on statutory employment standards for basic working conditions.

Legislation is designed to regulate the employment relationship. It places significant restrictions on the use of 'non-standard' workers, including fixed-term and part-time contracts (Griessel, 2015:1). The most important aspect of legislation is the extent to which, in practice, workers are aware of their rights and actually exercise these rights in the workplace. In theory, seasonal workers have the protection of current South African labour legislation, but in practice the unusual circumstances of their employment mean that enforcement of their rights is inherently difficult. For example, in theory, workers have the right to meal intervals. But in practice, some of these workers cannot go on meal intervals because they will not be able to reach daily targets set by management. While these pronounced rights exist in theory, in the reality of the workplace they often cannot be exercised. The respondents echoed this by stating that the targets were so high that meal intervals were not feasible.

According to the respondents, working relationships were not regulated. They felt that the structures and systems in Carara were not receptive to the workers. Plus, the structures did not encourage open and free communication between workers, supervisors and management. Rather, respondents expressed that they felt unheard within the structures primarily because they could not exercise what they considered to be fair practises. There was little motivation

from the workers to express their concerns on matters which were important to them. What would strengthen the voice of seasonal workers? To Marx, the goal was in collective action and consciousness (Marx, 1992:174).

Delisile felt that she was exploited at Carara because she was overworked and underpaid. She happened to see the product in Pick 'n Pay (Grahamstown) and was shocked at how much it cost compared to what they earn to produce the product. When asked how this experience affected her, she expressed that she felt devalued and dehumanised. To some degree, this is the effect of the capitalist logic, which perpetuates tendencies within the workplace which degrade and disenfranchise the worker: mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically by separating the conception of labour from its execution (Braverman, 1974:115). Fikile said she felt numb to the issues relating to the working conditions. She explained that at first, it was hard to adapt to the working conditions but over time, she "accepted it". She described how the social relations at Carara made her detach herself from her work. The emotional, physical and spiritual toll that work had on the respondents compromised the workers' levels of motivation and satisfaction. The labour-intensive work and practises within the workplace, determined the respondents' experience at Carara.

3.8 Conclusion

The chapter started by briefly discussing the challenges associated with seasonal work. This chapter discussed the respondents' perceptions of seasonal work. The main analytical point was that respondents viewed seasonal work as form of irregular employment (casual work) rather than a form of fixed term employment. This meant that they refrained from enforcing their rights out of fear of being dismissed. This also explained the lack of motivation to form trade unions. There are many complexities to non-standard employment, one of which was consistently expressed by the respondents - job security.

Seasonal workers were aware of exploitative or abusive practises by supervisors or management however, they expressed little to no resistance within the workplace because respondents felt that their job security would be compromised and threatened. The fear of job security affected the interaction of the workers within the workplace. The workers in the first layer had low skill levels. The second layer of workers was semi-skilled. The third layer of was highly skilled. The layer a worker found themselves determined their level of interaction within the workplace. It further determined the privilege and power which workers would have. The interaction between the layers of workers revealed the power dynamics and the need for greater

regulation within non-standard jobs. Interestingly, if Marx's notion of the labour process is adopted to understand this, it would imply that all the workers within the workplace occupy a precarious position in the labour process because they all sell their labour power for money. However, the feelings of precariousness would differ from worker to worker, depending on a number of factors which are based on the worker's background.

The inclusion of section 198B of LRA and the BCEA is an integral regulator of seasonal work. Supervisors and management are oftentimes unaccountable for their behaviour, unless regulated by legislation. On the other hand, respondents felt unheard within the bureaucratic structures primarily because they could not exercise what they considered to be fair practises. The main argument being that seasonal workers felt devalued and dehumanised as a result of their working conditions. They felt emotionally, physically and spiritually disenfranchised from their means of subsistence. The difficulty for unskilled worker within the workplace stills lies in their inability to access knowledge and skills. Perhaps, the introduction of section 198B for the employers rather than the workers. Ultimately, the employers are prompted to act in accordance with the legislation and consequently carry the burden of enforcing fairer labour practises. The fear in this instance, for the employer, could prompt fairer practises within the workplace.

CHAPTER 4

LIVING CONDITIONS OF CARARA'S SEASONAL WORKERS

> "The centrality of the workplace as a focus for sociologists reflects the centrality of work in people's lives" (Hodson, 2004:6).

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses responses provided by the respondents relating to their living conditions as seasonal workers. This chapter describes the responses by the respondents and the second part comments on the similarities, differences and important responses from the respondents. Next, these comments are analysed in the light of the theoretical framework outlined in chapter one. This chapter interrogates the understanding of seasonal work within South Africa and explores the respondents' personal experiences, stories and backgrounds in order to provide a fuller understanding of the livelihood strategies adopted to aid their living conditions.

4.2 Livelihood experiences of seasonal workers in South Africa; specifically in Grahamstown

4.2.1 Abongile

Abongile lives in Grahamstown when working in Carara. She explains that there are 4 members in her household. When working in Carara, she explains that she lives alone in a backroom which she rents in a township of Grahamstown. But, when she is not working in Carara she goes back to Port Alfred to live with her two children and mother. She notes that when working in Carara, she does not go to Port Alfred but sends money to the family and saves some of the money. She describes living apart from her family as having been difficult at first but she got used to it over time. Her mother looks after her children whilst she is working at Carara.

The money she earned from Carara was used to sustain her family in Port Alfred. In Port Alfred, she lived in a township area. Her family mostly worked casual or piecemeal jobs – the eldest, for instance, worked in a kitchen for the elderly. When she was not working in Carara she worked at Rhodes University as a security guard. She explained that working two jobs was strenuous because she felt that there were no opportunities for growth within either job. Furthermore, as the main breadwinner, she had to accept the conditions in Carara until she could find an alternative job. She said that she remained optimistic because the money she earned in Carara was sufficient for what she needed it for. She saved the money she received from Carara and used it to sustain herself and the family for the second half of the year.

Abongile claimed that she became a seasonal worker because of her personal circumstances and the scarcity of jobs, more especially for someone without a matric. She described that working in Carara was difficult work – the early hours, intensive work - standing the whole day, daily targets and fights breaking out in the factory. Prior to working in Carara she had worked in a farm. She heard through a friend that there were vacancies in Carara and applied. The friend also worked in Carara in the coring department. She felt relieved with the fact that she could share her experiences, both good and bad, with her friend.

Abongile explained that her mother worked in a nature reserve for most of her life and rarely got to see her while growing up. She grew up on a farm and then later moved to the township to live with her siblings and grandparents. She has three siblings. The one sibling worked at Fort England as a cleaner, the second worked as a casual worker, and the third was unemployed. The highest grade she completed was grade 11. She failed grade 12 and her family could not afford to put her through matric again. These were some of the social struggles which informed understanding of the respondents' living conditions.

When asked about her working experience at Carara, she responded by saying that it gave her an opportunity to feed her children and her family. However, the working environment was toxic, abusive and unfair with little benefit, when compared to the amount of work she had to do. Alternatively, when asked how her living condition was while working at Carara, she responded that her living conditions were also difficult. The conditions which she was exposed to while working at Carara made her living conditions difficult. She described having to work late nights and early mornings and the dangers associated with travelling at both times. The consuming feeling of constant tiredness. She was constantly tired but had to also live up to the daily duties of being a breadwinner. She described the conflict of feeling drained against that

of feeling grateful for the opportunity to work. She missed many family events because when she was not working, she had to tend to 'her household duties'. Abongile also worked as a casual worker at Rhodes University

She expressed that she would not want her children to be seasonal workers because the working conditions are harsh and require a lot of emotional and physical will power. She noted that she did have friends while working at Carara, but because of the social relations within Carara she preferred to keep to herself. Within the hostile working environments in Carara, respondents were likely to be more alienated and isolated within the workplace.

4.2.2 Babalwa

Babalwa lives in Grahamstown with her cousin and 2 children. She explained that she rarely spent time with her cousin and children because she was either at work or attending to household chores which included cooking, cleaning and washing her children's and her clothes. She said that it was difficult working at Carara, especially at first, because she felt 'mother's guilt'. She explains that over time she managed this guilt and was eventually fuelled by this guilt, to work hard and to persevere through the hardships.

Babalwa claimed that the money she earned at Carara was used for transport to and from Carara and the remainder of the money, she used for her household. She was the main breadwinner in the household but had assistance from her cousin who worked as a cleaner in a private company. She pointed out that the income was also supplemented by the social grant from her two children. The social grant money was also used when she was not working at Carara. She explained the intense strain and pressure she experienced having to maintain a household and make sure that her children had food to eat.

Her mother was unemployed and her father was working in a farm as a herder. Her father was living at a farm, close to Vukani (township in Grahamstown). She had three siblings. The one was a caretaker at a creche, the second was a casual worker, the third worked on a farm. Her highest grade completed was grade 11. She failed grade 12 and her parents could not afford to pay for her to repeat matric. By then, she explains that she also had no interest in school because of the financial burdens at home.

Prior to working at Carara, Babalwa worked at a cleaning services company as a casual worker but the position was discontinued so she had to find another job. Her decision to work at Carara

was primarily driven by the financial obligations and the fact that there were no jobs available at the time. She explained that she did not enjoy working at Carara because it was high pressured environment with low wages and no benefits. The persistent 'itching' sensation on her hands due to having constant contact with the chilli peppers also made working in Carara less appealing to her. The low wages also played a role in determining her levels of enjoyability.

Babalwa also expressed that her living conditions were also difficult. The conditions which she was exposed to while working at Carara made her living conditions difficult. She described how she was constantly stressed and fatigued. Although grateful for the opportunity to work at Carara, she pointed out that there were many aspects of the job that were harsh and dehumanizing. She did not feel that her dignity was respected and protected. She was introduced to Carara by family members, who helped her to overcome some hurdles which she faced at work and home.

She also claims that the nature of the job at Carara was not for everyone. The rights of workers were rarely afforded to them, which meant that there were many times where abusive or exploitative practises were exercised by supervisors or management. The nature of the work was all consuming, especially for corers, who had to endure the effects of being in daily and constant contact with the chilli pepper time. When not working at Carara, Babalwa remained unemployed. The normal day-to-day household duties were left to her. She noted that she wanted her children to be educated so that they would have "a choice in this life" (Babalwa, 5/12/2016).

4.2.3 Cebile

Cebile lived with her mother and child when working in Carara. There were three members in her household. She explained that she had enough time to spend with her family and friends whilst working in Carara, although at times it was difficult. She had three siblings, all of whom worked as carpenters. Her highest completed grade was grade 11. She failed grade 12 and her parents could not afford for her to do matric again because there was a change of syllabus therefore, she would need to repeat grade 11 and grade 12. She adds that by then, she had little interest in school because of family pressures.

She explained that the money she earned whilst at Carara was not a lot as she only earned R1 200, 00 per month. She pointed out that the money she earned could not sufficiently cover the needs she had. In the household, she was the main breadwinner. She explained the intense

strain and pressure she experienced having to maintain a household with the little salary she received. The supplementary income came from her child who at the time who was on social grant. The social grant money was also used when she was not working at Carara. Cebile expressed that she enjoyed working in Carara but her only issue was that it was not permanent. She enjoyed getting to build relationships with the people in her department. She found the work she did enjoyable and an opportunity to gain a broader understanding of the industry. She notes though, that if she was asked to work in a different department, like coring, she does not think that she would hold this opinion. She described that her working experience at Carara was good. However, it was not the easiest work to do. Her working and living conditions while at Carara were complementary and brought a sense of relief to her as she was able to provide for her family.

4.2.4 Delisile, Elethu and Fikile (Focus Group Interview)

Delisile lived in Vukani (Grahamstown), with two members in the household. Elethu and Fikile were both from Port Alfred. Whilst working in Carara, they would rent out backrooms. Elethu sends money to her family and saves some of the money she received from Carara. When not working in Carara, Elethu went back to Port Alfred to live with her family and Fikile stayed in Grahamstown.

Delisile explains that she grew up with her aunt who was a clerk. She has 10 siblings – some were employed in casual jobs like herself and others were unemployed. Elethu was apprehensive about sharing these details, but she did note that she left home when she was very young as she had many siblings. On the other hand, Fikile grew up with her mom. Her mom was a casual worker who worked piecemeal jobs. All 3 respondents completed grade 11 but did not pass matric. The respondents expressed that did not repeat matric because the educational structures were not perceived as a place to learn and meaningfully develop in society.

Delisile claimed that she enjoyed the fact that she gained independence and could take care of herself. As a whole – she described that there was this stigma in society which affirmed that if you were not working you were lazy. She explained that as much as working in Carara was not great but there was this weird pride that came with saying “I’m employed – I feel like somebody” (Delisile, 5/12/2016). Elethu and Fikile both explained that their living conditions changed when working at Carara because of the early mornings and late nights. Moreover, it was difficult to spend time with family and make family engagements. There were also

difficulties with being in the coring department like the fact that they could not touch water, expose their hands to the sun or expose their hands to any form of heat. Elethu describes that when she went to the clinic, she was told that there was not much that they could do to help her because of the close contact she had with the chilli peppers and any remedy would come with her not being in contact with the chilli pepper. In the circumstances, she continued to work and had to endure the discomfort she experienced whilst at Carara. She was also uncomfortable at home because of the far-reaching effects of working at Carara.

Delisile sold fruits around town to make money, when she was not working in Carara. She described the job as daunting as some days she would sell most of the fruits and sometimes, she would sell nothing. She explained that she struggled with the unpredictability of the work. She points out that she suffered from anxiety during that time. Elethu goes back home to Port Alfred when she was not at Carara and was afforded shelter and food by relatives and friends. Fikile worked odd jobs whenever she found or heard of possible job openings. She preferred to work at Carara because she was receiving a stable income. When she was not working at Carara she had to always be on the watch out for possible job opportunities so money would come and some months she would receive nothing at all.

4.2.5 The similarities and differences in the respondents' living conditions

Many of the similarities and differences found in the experiences of the respondents were based on the histories and circumstances in which the respondents were in. Accordingly, some respondents had similar experiences on many aspects of the living conditions while at Carara.

All the respondents were from a similar age, racial and gender group – all black women between 30 and 35 years of age. Except for two, the other respondents had children and were either sole breadwinners or main breadwinners in their households. Some of the respondents experienced mom's guilt. Social construct defines the role of the women as being at home and not in the workplace. The shifting times and demands of the household are creating the necessity for women to women, especially in women-headed households. In the interviews, Babalwa, expressed that she had a sense of guilt for having to work whilst she could not take care of the children and the household adequately.

None of the respondents completed matric. The common denominator was that the families could not afford to keep the respondents in school any longer. All the respondents heard about Carara whilst they were unemployed through friends, family and community members. Most

of the respondents received social grants to supplement the income of the household and help to support the household when seasonal workers were not working at Carara. All the respondents had siblings, family members like aunts and uncles, fathers or mothers who were also casual workers. When asked for reasons, all responded that they had no choice and would have preferred to be permanent workers. The desire of the respondents was to work permanently so that they could be paid more money and have access to more benefits. They further pointed out that money was important to them and the central drive to work at Carara. They needed to work and earn an income, no matter the income so that they could provide for their families. Corers were more dissatisfied with their jobs than the dispatch worker. Cebile substantiated this by saying that she

> would never prefer to be in the coring department because there is too much stress in that department. From the daily targets they have to meet to the number of workers there. I wouldn't cope.

The respondents were all main breadwinners or breadwinners and needed work to bring income into the household. Central to their drive and motivation was their families. Each of the workers, except for Delisile, had strong allegiances with family affairs and had to work for their family's livelihood. There was a constant balance and pressure to balance household and family responsibilities. Largely, led by the ideals of patriarchy, respondents felt that they had to fulfil their household duties and work obligations. Each of these obligations requiring negotiation by the respondents.

Similarly, all the respondents were from backgrounds which were disadvantaged and opportunities for work were scarce; so, working was of high priority for them and gave them a sense of pride. There was also a trend of family members who were also seasonal workers in Carara. This contact allowed respondents to easily access Carara. The relationships in Carara, though not strong, gave the respondents some sense of belonging and strength during difficult times at home and work.

Similarly, the working conditions at Carara affected the living conditions of the workers – both positively and negatively. The direct contact with the chilli peppers meant that the corers were left with a burning sensation even after they stopped working, after contact with water or chilli peppers. All similarly had a deep sense of pride for being able to provide for their households. The ability to a contribute to the household was important to the respondents and this was the reason that motivated them to work in Carara.

When not working in Carara, for the next six months, respondents varied in the livelihood strategies used to sustain them – for most the social grant became the main contributor for the households, for some alternative casual work was another livelihood strategy adopted to cope with not working in Carara. Fikile, worked odd jobs wherever she could find work. She preferred working in Carara because she could receive a monthly income.

They all seemed to express a similar view that there were exploitative practices at Carara which influenced the time spent with family, friends and the community. Abongile explained that when working at Carara, she would go home feeling exhausted as a result of the amount of obligations which she had to fulfil at work, some which were unreasonable and dangerous. As a result of work, she would hardly spend time with her family or friends and on the days when she was not working, she would attend to her household duties. However, all shared a similar focus on money being the main point of work; whether the working environment was exploitative or not, money was at the heart of why they worked. Living conditions also improved as a result of the money, so this further motivated their commitment to work and preserver through the challenges of working as seasonal workers at Carara.

4.3 Livelihood strategies around seasonal work

Extrinsic reasons were also found as factors that determine work centrality. It was found that age, race and gender were factors that contributed significantly to understanding the importance of work in a worker's social life. All the respondents interviewed were black women between 30 and 35 years of age. Most of the respondents had children and all were either sole breadwinners or main breadwinners in their households. All the respondents heard about Carara whilst they were unemployed through friends, family and community members and these relationships supported them and gave them a sense of belonging at Carara. Finally, as a result of being so integral to the income in the households, work was more central to them. When Delisile was not working at Carara, she was selling fruits around town to make money. She describes that the job is less harsh then working at Carara but is has its challenges. One of the main challenges being the inconsistent income. For this reason, Delisile said that she preferred working at Carara because there was steady income. Other respondents did not work any other jobs, outside of Carara. Work centrality and the study thereof is less defined on structured frames of work but is becoming a means of falsifying the traditionally and rigid idea of work.

All the respondents were either sole breadwinners or main breadwinners in their households, the pressures of occupying these positions influenced their decision to be seasonal workers and to continue as seasonal workers even when working conditions were unfavourable and harsh. Their histories or backgrounds all seem to take a similar route – all respondents did not complete matric and the common denominator is that the families could not afford to keep the respondents in school any longer. They heard. The majority of the respondents have social grants and these grants help to support the household when they are not working at the plant. All the respondents had siblings, family members like aunts and uncles, fathers or mothers who were also casual workers. When asked for reasons for this all responded that they had no choice and would have preferred to be permanent workers. Common to all the respondent was the fact that they were the main breadwinners in the household.

Cebile was exemplary of this point as she was the main breadwinner – living with her elderly mother and young child. She explains the intense strain and pressure she experienced having to maintain a household with the little salary she received. She says receives R1 200, 00 per month to maintain the entire household and her income does not sufficiently cover her basic needs. She supplemented her income with social grant for her child. She was mainly responsible for the household. She explained the intense strain and pressure she experienced having to maintain a household. In the case of Babalwa , who did not disclose her income she did express that she was not the only breadwinner in the household – her cousin who worked as a cleaner in a private company was also a contributor. When asked whether the two salaries were the only form of income they had – she explains that she receives social grant for her two children which she used to supplement these incomes. It seems that first – income is an issue for seasonal workers who are forced to occupy the positions of being main or sole breadwinners.

Cebile , when asked whether she would have continued to be a seasonal worker as her conditions in dispatch were satisfactory – she responded that she would have continued if the position was permanent and there was a good salary – she notes in the interview that "…the only problem was with the money*"* (Cebile, 5/12/2016). This idea of conceptualising work was reiterated by all the respondents who were dissatisfied by the working conditions in Carara but which dissatisfaction could be resisted if there was a greater amount of income received. However, socio-economic pressures of being unemployed also contribute to the lack of worker resistance as there is this "stigma in society which says that if you are not working you are lazy*"*. She explains that as much as the income and the working environment in Carara was

not great but there was a sense of pride that came with being employed. According to Taylor (cited in Baldry et al., 2007:15), the level a worker is paid has become indicative of an individual's social citizenship. This means that workers are socially classed and discriminated by the work done within the workplace. Thus status is attributed to some workers and not so much to other workers.

When not working in Carara, for the next six months, respondents varied in the livelihood strategies used to sustain themselves – for most, the social grant became the main contributor for the households, for some alternative casual work was the alternative. Fikile worked odd jobs wherever she could find them. She preferred working in Carara because she could receive a weekly income. When Delisile is not working at Carara, she opted to sell fruits around town to make money. She described the job as daunting as some days she would sell well and other days she would not. When income was quiet, she had to make do with what she had. As compared to Carara, she said she prefers working at Carara because there is more money to be made in Carara then in selling fruit. Admittedly, she explains that perhaps with time she will be able to let go of the dependence on Carara but is still a steady income provider for her. Fikile, when not working at Carara works odd jobs whenever she finds or hears about possible job openings. She noted that she preferred to work in Carara because at Carara, she was receiving stable income whereas when she was not working at Carara she had to always be on the watch out for possible job opportunities so money would come and some months she would receive nothing at all. However, most of the respondents use social grants to help to support the households when they are not working at Carara.

All the respondents had siblings, family members like aunts and uncles, fathers or mothers who were also casual workers. When asked for reasons for this all responded that they had no choice and would have preferred to be permanent workers with higher pay. It seems that this is where literature differs to the respondents' opinions surrounding work, particularly family leisure. For the most part, the respondents sought to provide for their families more than to consider the idea of leisure time being a necessary part of work. However, the other aspect which must be appreciated is the worker's pay. The income was so little that the respondents were almost forced to constantly come up with strategies for survival – from social grants to selling fruits. For some, the only option when not employed at Carara was to wait to be employed in the following season. The socio-economic and political state of employment within the South Africa cannot escape the racially discriminative narrative which is often also very gendered.

Hardest is for black female demographic to penetrate and secure their place within the labour market in South Africa, so these strategies can be expected and almost anticipated.

Social grants have become a main contributor to seasonal worker's livelihood strategies. Whilst working seasonally, some respondents expressed that they were able to save some money to further their studies and provide basic needs for the household. Abongile expressed that she saved the money she received from Carara and was able to sustain herself and the family for the second half of the year. Unfortunately, this was not the case for the other respondents who had to depend on social grants to assist and supplement income to the household. Social grants have become a commodity, in this sense for the respondents and the livelihood strategies adopted are closely connected to it.

The households had between four and ten members, mostly dependent on income received from the respondents. As previously discussed, the respondents were sole or main breadwinners. This money was able to cover the basic needs only with the assistance of social grants. Abongile and Cebile were able to study from the money they received from Carara and were able to obtain certificates to be security guards. Both the respondents desired to work as security guards for more money, greater security and safety.

4.4 Social influences which promote or deter seasonal labour

To understand the perceptions of the respondents it is important to understand the influence of processes and institutions of social reproduction on their decisions to become seasonal workers. For Bourdieu (cited in Tzanakis, 2011:76), the family is central to the reproduction process because in this social space physical, human, social and cultural capital is exchanged. In this sense then, social reproduction theory shows how the "production of goods and services and the production of life are part of one integrated process" (Luxton, 2006:36). This research study unpacks and analyses the relationship between the family and the production process.

Family is a factor which influences the decisions which individuals make. Babalwa's mother was father was a herder and lived in the farm throughout her upbringing. Her mother and her lived in Vukani (Grahamstown). She had three siblings who worked in different places. The one sibling was a caretaker at a crèche, the second was a casual worker, the third worked on the farm. For purposes of simply connecting elements of reproduction and Babalwa's choice of work, this is a factor for consideration. The fact that Babalwa's father was a herder did not determine that she would be a herder or in the agro-processing industry. However, in interviews

she explained that her exposure to the farm in which her father worked meant that when a family friend told her to apply for work at Carara she was familiar with the kind of work she would have to do in Carara. Thus Carara and the work advertised felt familiar and in a sense comfortable to her.

Bourdieu and Passeron view social reproduction as patterns of continuous behaviour which are passed through codes, mainly the family. All the respondents interviewed expressed that they had parents or siblings or family members who occupied non-permanent positions. They came to be aware of work at Carara through the community, friends or family. Furthermore, adverts were placed around areas in the township and predominantly through word-of-mouth. Interestingly, though the backgrounds or histories of each respondent differ, what is consistent is their level of exposure to agro-processing and fixed-term work. This also means that the same kind of worker, with similar backgrounds, is sought and accepted by Carara. The typical profile being of a black, female worker with no or little skills and education, in their mid-twenties and early thirties.

Delisile also commented on the educational system. She stated that she had no interest in going back to school, because she did not observe the "educational structures as being a place to learn"(Delisile, 5/12/2016). Interestingly, during the time that the respondents were in school, all of them were taught under the apartheid regime and educated in a specific way referred to as Bantu Education. This form of education trained students to become manual labourers (Thobejane, 2005:1). The notion of intersectionality explains in many ways how various forms of oppression and disadvantage based on race, sex, class and place interact and reinforce each other to place the women interviewed at the lowest end of the job market (Norris *et al*, 2007:334). Bourdieu and Passeron's social-cultural theory provides a link between culture, class and domination, largely based on educational institutions (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985). The respondents also seemed to be greatly influenced by the social and cultural pressures and connections rather than in the systems provided in their schools. Pressures from family motivated their decision to work from an early age. The social circumstances were variables which broaden and deepen the discussion of the seasonal workers imposition to start working at an early age. The other factor is that whereas education may be a privilege to others unfortunately, the social position of these respondent's meant at various points in their lives, the need to work was prioritised.

In circumstances where respondents had to find work to support their family, money was very important to them. Money gave context and added value to their lives. This also meant that money in many ways was the surveillance of their behaviour and choices within the workplace. The lack of worker resistance in the workplace was not necessarily because of the role of management, although that did play a large role, but rather the value that money brought to the respondents. Abongile noted that Carara gave her an opportunity to feed her children and her family. Yet, her living conditions were still difficult because she had to juggle her household duties, work obligations and the effects of work on her physical, mental and emotional state of being. She described travelling during late nights and early mornings and the dangers associated with both times. The consuming feeling of constant tiredness. She missed many family events because when she had an off day, she would tend to her household duties. The essence of work was therefore, in the gain and value of working. Similarly, all the respondents shared a similar sentiment on what money enabled them to feel about themselves and their contribution to the community and their family.

According to Baldry et al. (2007:13), social support and interaction also plays a role in influencing social behaviour. Baldry et al (2007:13), focused on the patterns of socializing within the workplace and the relationships created there in bringing value and a sense of belonging to the worker. This was evidenced in an interview with Abongile, who explained that her imposition to become and stay a seasonal worker was driven by relationships she shared with fellow co-workers. She described that working at Carara was difficult– the early hours, intensive work, standing the whole day, daily targets and fights breaking out in the factory. However, she noted that her friend, who worked in the same department, gave her relief because she could share her experiences, both good and bad, with her. She ended up working at Carara for three seasons.

The respondents claimed that they did not find enjoyment from being seasonal workers. They did not enjoy being on a fixed-term contract because they experienced a considerable deal of financial stress when not working at Carara. This follows that the time spent with family and friends was also not enjoyable because of the respondents' financial constraints and consequentially, the lack of independence. Thus, as much as they appreciated being at home and being a part of the community, the inability to financially provide for their families tormented them more. Elethu argued that the fact is that she needed to work in order to support her family and this was a top priority for her.

Work and non-work life impinge on each other blurring the separation. Marx (cited in Baldry et al, 2007:12) speaks about the worker feeling both physically and mentally exhausted as the result of labour-wage. Central is the need for the worker to survive within the capitalist system through working. The need to survive invades the time of leisure. Thus, the meaning of work for the worker is the combination of both work and non-work life. In this sense then non-work life which would include family, class, educational background, local community structures and values is seen as a "meaning-creating context for attributing meaning to work" (Baldry et al, 2007:12). When asked how much leisure the respondents had during the week, Abongile said that work at Carara had two shifts for workers in Carara – the day and night shift. These shifts varied weekly. This meant the workers of Carara were waiting for transport either extremely early in the mornings or extremely late at night – both dangerous times for middle-aged women, who were likely to be travelling alone. This interrupted work and non-work life because it meant that respondents were deprived time and money meant for their personal affairs, including family. Cebile said that there was no transport provided by the company, so they formed a transport group whereby each worker would pay. Babalwa explained that the majority of her income was used for transport to and from Carara. All the respondents seemed to consider that work affected non-work life and vice versa.

The nature of work, society, the labour market, culture and the family has also changed to encourage the participation of women in the market – more especially because of the increased number of female-headed households. Some of the households of the women interviewed, were women headed or required the respondents to contribute as main breadwinners in the households. This is key to understanding how work has shifted along gender lines. This also means that these gendered roles are also evident within the workplace. Women tend to imitate the roles found in the home or social setting within the workplace (Wajcman, 2000: 196). In many ways this is the limitation for women in work. Society is dominated by patriarchal systems and these systems are also imitated in the workplace. This means that it is difficult for women to be recognised in the workplace and are usually placed in subservient roles (Wajcman, 2000: 196). Within the workplace, the respondents, suggested that the bureaucratic hierarchies in Carara almost entirely mimicked this. The dynamics of employment and in particular seasonal work are complex – as the market is not accessible to women, especially in roles of power. For Bourdieu and Passeron, culture and the economy serve to reproduce basic social order (Macris, 2011: 29).

Within Carara, the relationships which existed between supervisors, managers and the workers were a reproduction of the social order, in many ways. The relationships were ones centred around dominance, with seasonal workers struggling to express their opinions to superiors for fear of being ostracised or targeted. When asked whether this concern or issue was addressed with the supervisors or members of management, workers noted that the environment within the workplace did not encourage open forms of communication. They observed that workers were afraid of being ostracised or labelled as being 'difficult' because this would heighten their level of vulnerability within the workplace. According to Bourdieu and Passeron(cited in Macris, 2011:29), the dominant classes exercise symbolic violence on the dominated classes. This symbolic violence is inflicted on the dominated classes through power relations which seek to legitimise social practices on the dominated classes (Macris, 2011:29).Therefore, this symbolic violence is also mimicked in social relations within the workplace. The supervisors and managers use power structures to control, dominate and to reproduce order within the workplace.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter started by providing a discussion on how social interactions and structures influence seasonal workers, particularly, the sense of pride and status that comes with working. This pride motivated the respondents in their daily struggles. Further, the fact that they shared their daily struggles with co-workers gave them a sense of belonging and strengthening. This chapter placed emphasis on how the increase in female-headed households and the nature of work has encouraged the participation of women in the market. However, there remains a need for considerable change within the workplace, in terms of truly accommodating and promoting the participation of women within the workplace. The respondents also pointed out that they had not known of a co-worker promoted whilst at Carara. This spoke to a deeper social issue – the recognition of women within the areas of work which requires address legislatively and through reforms within social structures.

This chapter also argued that social structures and interactions put pressure on seasonal workers to manage both household duties and work. The gendered roles performed within the household were still expected of the workers even though they expressed that they were tired and exhausted by the work performed at Carara. This also explained how gender roles and behaviour within the workplace may be attributed to the roles respondents play within the household. This chapter further argued that intersectionality provided an explanation to the

interaction of social markers such as race, sex, class and sexual orientation reinforce and interact in various ways to create various forms of oppression and disadvantage. The seasonal workers were black females from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. These factors were social markers which helped to understand how various forms of disadvantage and oppression are prevalent in the seasonal workers' living conditions. Most of the respondents live hand to mouth because they usually do not have the privilege of being born under different social circumstances.

Seasonal workers are also driven by the ability to make money more so than job satisfaction or enjoyment. This chapter pointed out that the central desire to work was driven by the family. They were disadvantaged in many social aspects which compelled them to be seasonal workers. However, seasonal workers expressed a strong desire to work a more permanent jobs so that they could provide greater resources and improve living conditions. There were various livelihood strategies adopted by seasonal workers. The income earned at Carara was not sufficient to cover their basic needs, in most cases, and the respondents needed social grants as supplementary income for the households. When the respondents were not working in Carara, they either stayed around Grahamstown awaiting a new season, for work at Carara, or they migrated to places where family was and occupied the task of tending to the household chores.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

> **"**What goes on inside the hidden abode of the productive system says a great deal not only about people's dignity but also about their exposure to risk and many other things" (Edward and Wajcman, 2005:2)

This thesis analysed the working and living conditions of seasonal workers. Chapter one, started by addressing the concept of work and non-work life, within the capitalist system. This discussion examined how the relationship between work and non-work is an integrated and interconnected sphere that gives meaning to the other. This chapter introduced the two main theories, namely the labour process theory and the social reproduction theories, which were used to understand the working and living conditions of seasonal workers in Carara. These theories, namely the labour process theory and the theories of social reproduction, were discussed respectively. The main starting point was that the historical dispossession of the labour process, through capitalism, from the worker has meant that workers always occupy a precarious, insecure and vulnerable position within the labour process. Non-standard workers, being the most vulnerable workers, are usually characterised as having a workforce that is unskilled, lacks representation, is poorly remuneration and has a previously disadvantaged background. The research study addressed how vulnerable seasonal workers are to exploitative and abusive practises. The working conditions affected the social relations within the workplace, of interest was the role of management. This discussion addressed how management use control and organization within the labour process to continuously exploit the interests of the worker. Ultimately, the chapter discussed how the labour process disenfranchise the worker physically, emotionally and spiritually from their work. This chapter analysed how legislation is the means of regulating this antagonistic relationship.

This chapter argued that labour laws inadequately protect workers in non-standard forms of employment (Fourie, 2008:110). One of the fundamental issues is the limited definition of "employee" in the LRA and BCEA. The argument was that this definition inadequately accommodates for non-standard workers. Thus, the definition serves to segregate workers within the labour market, placing privilege and power on some workers whilst exploiting and

oppressing others. It was suggested that the solution is to introduce a form of regulated flexibility which will find the cooperation of employers, government, trade unions and workers (Loni, 2012:45). This would include regulations for non-standard employment, making employers accountable and hopefully more responsible in their exercise of control and organization within the labour process.

This chapter also discussed that non-standard work remains susceptible to exploitation and abuse because it is not recognised within the job market and society. One of the issues with defining non-standard work is the ever changing and diversifying forms of non-standard work. Social systems of inequality, exploitation and oppression are perpetuated by the labour process. Theories of social reproduction examined how the capitalist society is organized for the interests of the dominant classes and the exploitation and oppression of the subordinate classes. The main argument was that culture, educational institutes and the family are the main contributors to reproduction as they legitimise the existing social order. Moreover, legislation also becomes a tool to create and sustain social reproduction. I did not treat economic production (working conditions) and social reproduction (living conditions) as two distinct spheres of social activity but regarded as interconnected. Each one shaping and limiting the other in complex and contradictory ways.

Chapter two outlined the methodological approach and research design that the research adopted. The main objective of the research study was to understand the working and living conditions of seasonal workers. The process of purposive snowballing sampling was utilised. The interviews were specifically conducted with seasonal workers in Carara who were working in receiving, coring and dispatch department. The qualitative nature of research, entailed semi-structured interviews with the respondents, was vital as it allowed for follow-up questions to be asked when necessary. Furthermore, this provided clarity for the conditions of the seasonal workers. The research was guided by the theoretical frameworks which explored the employment relationships within the workplace as well as the social relationships outside the workplace. This approach saw the various connections between the one economic production and social reproduction. Ultimately, power dynamics in capitalist economy are mimicked by society. The interviews were conducted in Grahamstown. The data was transcribed, notes were taking regarding the interviews and analysed accordingly.

Chapter three discussed the challenges of seasonal work in the agro-processing industry. This chapter found that seasonal workers regarded their work at Carara as a form of irregular

employment (casual work) rather than a form of fixed term employment. This perception influenced how seasonal workers behaved in the workplace. They were aware of exploitative or abusive practises by supervisors and management however, there was a lack of worker resistance to these practises because workers felt that their job security would be threatened. The fear of job security affected the interaction of the various layers and divisions within Carara. The first layer of workers had low skills. The second layer of workers were semi-skilled. The third layer of workers were highly skilled. The interaction between these workers revealed power dynamics which required the necessity for regulations within non-standard jobs. The inclusion of section 198B of LRA and the BCEA was found to be an integral regulator of seasonal work where supervisors and management are oftentimes unaccountable for their behaviour, unless regulated by legislation. It was suggested that perhaps the LRA is for the employer who can comprehend the consequences of non-compliance rather than the worker who has little to no knowledge about legislation. In this way, employers are burdened with ensuring that the basic conditions of employment are seen to be adhered to.

Chapter four dealt with the increase in female-headed households and how the culture of work has shifted to accommodate the introduction of women within the workplace. There remains a need for considerable change within the workplace, in terms of truly accommodating and promoting women within the workplace. The seasonal workers were females who were under pressure to manage household duties and employment obligations. The patriarchal regime under capitalism meant that gendered roles within the household were still expected of the workers. Even though the respondents expressed that they were tired and exhausted by the work performed at Carara, they were still expected to perform their household duties. However, central to the seasonal workers drive to work was the family. Money was the most important reason for working, rather than satisfaction or enjoyment. Though seasonal work did not sufficiently cover the respondents' basic needs, they still took pride in working to provide for their families. There were various livelihood strategies adopted by seasonal workers. Social grants were used as supplementary income. When the respondents were not working in Carara, they either stayed around Grahamstown awaiting a new season, for work at Carara, or migrated to places where family was. Some seeking odd jobs to support their family.

Generally, respondents negatively related to non-standard work. The main concerns were that there was a lack of representation, low wages, exploitative practises. The respondents strongly expressed their desires to work full time permanent positions for greater employee protection, benefits and an opportunity to earn more money. The introduction of section 198B is a

necessary component of the LRA and it will compel employers to improve basic conditions of employment. The pressures of work infiltrated into the social spheres of life, including time spent with family. The respondents had to manage household duties and work duties. Finally, respondents were influenced by social interactions to occupy subservient positions at home and at the workplace.

APPENDIX
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Own observation

1.1 Female/Male

1.2 Black/Coloured/Indian/Other

2. Background

2.1 How old are you?

2.2 What is your marital status?

2.3 Are you from Grahamstown?

3. Working conditions of seasonal workers living in Grahamstown

3.1 What time did you get to work?

3.2 What time did you leave?

3.3 How far did you live from Carara?

3.4 How would you travel to and from Carara?

3.5 Would you travel alone or with other workers?

3.6 What would happen of you were late?

3.7 Did you have lunch breaks?

3.8 How long were the lunch breaks?

3.9 Did all the workers have lunch breaks at the same time?

3.10 Did you work during public holidays?

3.11 Was working during public holidays regarded as overtime work?

3.12 Was working during public holidays optional?

3.13 Did you have leave?

3.14 How could you request leave?

3.15 Did you receive a standard salary each month?

4. Exploitation in Carara and the role of the LRA and BCEA

4.1 Where did you work, in Carara?

4.2 How were allocated where you worked?

4.3 Was it possible to be rotated to another department?

4.4 Was there a fair distribution of labour?

4.5 Would you consider your job to be safe overall?

4.6 Why?

4.7 What is the most unsafe / dangerous aspect of your job?

4.8 Why?

4.9 What precautions did Carara take to make the workplace safe?

4.10 How would you gain access to the equipment?

4.11 Was the equipment always accessible to you?

4.12 If a worker was injured at work, how would Carara assist?

4.13 Have you ever been injured whilst at work?

4.14 Were / did you receive some medical benefit or cover from Carara?

4.15 If you were absent from work as a result of the injury, would your salary be affected by this?

4.16 Describe the different departments in Carara?

4.17 Why do you think these departments exist in Carara?

4.18 How do you get promoted from one department to another?

4.19 Are there any workers who have been promoted in Carara?

4.20 Can workers freely interact with everyone in these departments?

4.21 If there is a concern in the workplace, would you feel free to voice it out?

4.22 Are representatives accessible to communicate concerns or issues to management?

4.23 Do you feel that management take the concerns of workers seriously?

4.24 What if you are not satisfied with how management has handled your concern, is there any alternative relief?

4.25 Did you ever feel that management was abusive in how they handled your concerns?

4.26 What rights do you have as a worker in Carara?

4.27 How did you become aware of your rights as a worker in Carara?

4.28 What do you understand LRA / BCEA to mean to you as a worker?

4.29 Do you think the law (LRA / BCEA) helped you to express your concerns to management?

5. Livelihood strategies of seasonal work

5.1 How many people in the household?

5.2 How much time do/did you spend with family whilst working in Carara?

5.3 What were some of the social difficulties or challenges you faced whilst working in Carara?

5.4 What were some of the social triumphs you gained whilst working in Carara?

5.5 Did roles at home change whilst at Carara, how so?

5.6 How many breadwinners are there in the household?

5.7 Are you the main breadwinner in the household?

5.8 Do you have dependants?

5.9 How many dependents do you have?

5.10 With the income you make, per month, do you need supplementary income?

5.11 If so, where does the supplementary income come from?

5.12 How do you sustain the household when you are not working in the plant, Carara?

5.13 Is the strategy you use when you are not in Carara sufficient to cover the basic needs of the household?

6. Social influences which promote or deter seasonal work

6.1 Do you have previous experience with seasonal work?

6.2 Do you have any relatives that work in Carara with you?

6.3 Have any of your relatives ever worked in Carara?

6.4 How many years have they been working in Carara?

6.5 Why do they continue to work in Carara?

6.6 Have you had any relatives who have also been seasonal workers?

6.7 How long have they been working seasonally?

6.8 Why do they continue to work seasonally?

6.9 What influenced your decision to work as a seasonal worker?

6.10 Would you like your children to be seasonal worker?

6.11 Why?

6.12 Do you have friends in the plant?

6.13 Are all your friends in the same division/location in the production line?

6.14 Which division are they in?

6.15 When would you be able to connect / socialise with them, outside of the working times?

6.16 Did you have time to develop new / existing friendships whilst at Carara?

6.17 Did you have time to interact with workers from other departments in the plant, Carara?

6.18 Were your friends in the workplace supportive?

6.19 Do you feel a sense of ‘family’ / community with the people in Carara?

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